Alberta Urban Municipalities Association

Strategies to Improve Your Inclusiveness

A supplementary resource of AUMA's Measuring Inclusion Tool for Municipal Governments

As of August 30, 2019

Welcoming & Inclusive Communities
Together we shine

Strategies to Improve Your Inclusiveness

Strategies to Improve Your Inclusiveness is a supplementary resource of AUMA's Measuring Inclusion Tool for Municipal Governments. It was developed based on adaptations of the 2014 and 2017 versions published by the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association (AUMA).

For questions or support, please contact us:

The Welcoming and Inclusive Communities Initiative
Alberta Urban Municipalities Association
Alberta Municipal Place
300, 8616 – 51 Avenue NW, Edmonton, Alberta T6E 6E6

Email: wic@auma.ca
Phone: 780-433-4431

Contents

Introduction

This document is a supplementary resource for users of AUMA's Measuring Inclusion Tool for Municipal Governments.

Strategies to Improve Your Inclusiveness offers over 200 strategies or actions that your municipal government can implement to become more inclusive. It is organized using the same areas of focus as the Measuring Inclusion Tool so that you can easily connect the strategies to the specific areas of focus that you are trying to improve. The lists of strategies are also categorized by each rated level of inclusion, so it is easy to identify the strategies that are most applicable to your current state of inclusion.

Levels of Inclusion

The Measuring Inclusion Tool for Municipal Governments uses four levels of inclusion for rating the inclusiveness of a municipal government. The levels are defined as:

Invisible	We do not recognize that there is a problem.
Awareness	We know there is a problem, we are taking tentative steps, but we are not sure how to proceed.
Intention Inclusion	We have acknowledged the importance of diversity and inclusion and are taking steps to eliminate all forms of discrimination through systematic change.
Culture of Inclusion	Inclusion is normal and part of our culture.

A detailed definition of each level of inclusion is available in AUMA's Measuring Inclusion Tool for Municipal Governments.

How to Use This Guide

This guide can be used in several different ways:

- After rating your municipality using AUMA's Measuring Inclusion Tool for Municipal Governments, use this guide to identify potential strategies and actions that can form your long-term plan to improve your inclusiveness.

- If you are completing the Measuring Inclusion Tool in a group-based environment, bring this guide to meetings to inspire conversation and ideas about how your municipal organization can take action.

- Even if you are not using AUMA's Measuring Inclusion Tool, this guide still offers a comprehensive list of suggested strategies and actions that your municipal government can implement to be a more inclusive employer, service provider, and leader in the community.

Strategies by area of focus

Strategies and actions that municipal governments can implement to be a more inclusive employer, service provider, and leader in the community.

A.   Leadership

All residents and municipal staff benefit when elected officials and administrative leaders of the municipal government are involved and accountable in validating issues of discrimination and demonstrating commitment to building inclusion and equity.

Invisible --- **Awareness**

- Develop a vision for a welcoming and inclusive municipality that clearly outlines the short and long term benefits of achieving the vision.
- Get buy-in and support from decision makers, champions and "change agents" within your municipality who can help to identify organizational needs, influence decision makers and facilitate change.[1]
- Include responsibility for inclusion at the management level.

Awareness --- **Intentional Inclusion**

- Ensure that municipal leaders have the information necessary to communicate the social and economic benefits of a welcoming and inclusive community to all levels of the municipality and to residents.[2]
- Create opportunities for municipal leaders to communicate the progress being made towards inclusion to citizens and community groups.
- Identify stakeholders and potential partners within the community that can support and provide feedback on municipal inclusion initiatives.
- Add a section to all council Request for Decision documents that evaluates the impact of the potential decision through a diversity lens.
- Sign on to join the Canadian Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities to communicate your municipality's commitment to equity and social justice, to create accountability, and to gain access to networks of municipalities working towards the same vision.[2]
- Create an annual diversity/inclusion report card to be shared with council and community stakeholders, to provide a mechanism for accountability and success stories upon which to build momentum and commitment.
- Develop programs to encourage the election of underrepresented candidates to municipal office.[3]
- Examine the diversity of municipal committee members to identify segments of the local population that are not represented and implement strategies to ensure diverse voices are at the table.

---

[1] How do Municipalities Benefit, p. 9-10. Alberta Urban Municipalities Association, Welcoming and Inclusive Communities Toolkit, https://www.auma.ca/advocacy-services/programs-initiatives/welcoming-and-inclusive-communities/tools-resources/auma-toolkits-guides

[2] Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities Toolkit. Canadian Commission for the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, https://en.ccunesco.ca/networks/coalition-of-inclusive-municipalities

[3] Protégé Program: Community and Mentor Guide. Federation of Canadian Municipalities, http://www.fcm.ca/Documents/tools/Women/Protege/Community_Guide_EN.pdf

Intentional Inclusion --- **Culture of Inclusion**

- Integrate inclusion and equity objectives into specific municipal plans and initiatives such as municipal sustainability, economic development and community development, and other organizational documents.
- Train managers on the importance of following inclusion-related policies, and of responding effectively to reports of harassment and discrimination.
- Support other municipalities by sharing innovative approaches, lessons learned and expertise. Participate in municipal networks that are working towards similar goals.
- Educate newly-elected councilors about the value of diversity and inclusion and the efforts the municipality makes to maintain a culture of inclusion.

B. Commitment of Resources

Advancing inclusion and equity is made possible when the municipality provides human resources and funding to support the work.

Invisible --- **Awareness**

- Articulate the benefits of allocating resources to building inclusion and equity and create a resource plan based on determination of need and an assessment of where the best opportunities for success exist.
- Develop a resource list of local and provincial organizations working towards inclusion and equity that could support municipal initiatives.[4]
- Include responsibility for inclusion at the management level.

Awareness --- **Intentional Inclusion**

- Review existing resources in municipal departments to see how they can be leveraged to provide support for inclusion related initiatives.
- Create a welcoming and inclusive communities (WIC) committee that includes municipal staff, representatives from community organizations and/or community members to ensure that the committee has access to expertise in a variety of areas.[5]
- Collaborate with other municipalities and community organizations to share resources (e.g. via regional economic development alliances, provincial Family and Community Support Services networks).[6]
- Track and apply for funding from provincial and federal governments for inclusion-related work.[7]
- Develop annual budgets that reflect council's and senior leadership's commitment to equity and inclusion by providing adequate human and financial resources to support the work.

Intentional Inclusion --- **Culture of Inclusion**

- Integrate inclusion and equity objectives into specific municipal plans and initiatives such as municipal sustainability, land-use planning, economic development and community development, and into key organizational documents.
- Establish a mandate and responsibilities for inclusion within every department.

---

[4] For your local list, start with the Chamber of Commerce, schools, libraries, health organizations, non-profits and businesses. Provincially, AUMA's Welcoming and Inclusive Communities initiative (http://wic.auma.ca) and the Alberta Human Rights Commission (http://www.albertahumanrights.ab.ca) are great places to start.

[5] How to Guide on Creating a Successful Terms of Reference for Your Municipality's WIC Committee. Alberta Urban Municipalities Association, https://www.auma.ca/sites/default/files/so_you_want_to_form_a_wic_committee.docx.pdf

[6] Funding is often available through the Alberta Human Rights Commission, https://www.albertahumanrights.ab.ca/grants/Pages/education_fund_grants.aspx

[7] Locating Resources, p.36, Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities Toolkit. Canadian Commission for the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, https://en.ccunesco.ca/resources#

- Establish protocols for working with other municipal, institutional and community based organizations engaged in equity work to provide ongoing access to knowledge and expertise and to augment available resources.
- Support other municipalities by sharing innovative approaches, lessons learned and expertise. Participate in municipal networks that are working towards similar goals.
- Regularly review the outcomes of the inclusion committee and any barriers that may be limiting its impact on the organization.

C. Planning, Implementation, and Measurement

Creating a shared vision of an inclusive, equitable community provides a framework for planning, policy, and action by the municipality. By measuring the municipality's progress, the municipality can make informed decisions on the next steps needed.

Invisible --- Awareness

- Conduct an analysis of demographic data regarding inclusion, access, equity and discrimination in your community. Relevant areas might include employment, poverty, access to health, and other community services.[8]
- Conduct an environmental scan to identify inclusion initiatives and activities in the municipality and the community and create a catalogue of this work.
- Research characteristics of a welcoming and inclusive community and good practices being used by other municipalities.[9]

Awareness --- Intentional Inclusion

- Create a vision and a municipal policy framework to provide overall direction for inclusion related initiatives.[10] [11]
- Assess municipal capacity and readiness to undertake work that promotes inclusion by inventorying available skills and expertise within the organization.
- Conduct consultations with key representatives of marginalized communities and organizations that serve these communities to determine the most pressing needs. Incorporate the insights gained into your action plan.[12]
- Create a committee or working group that will share responsibility for achieving the vision of a welcoming and inclusive community. Create terms of reference for the committee to clarify roles and assign responsibilities.[13] [14]

---

[8] Count me in! Collecting human rights-based data. Ontario Human Rights Commission, http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/count-me-collecting-human-rights-based-data

[9] Characteristics of a Welcoming Community. Integration Branch of Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2010, http://p2pcanada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/Characteristics-of-a-Welcoming-Community-11.pdf

[10] Diversity and Inclusion Framework and Implementation Plan. City of Edmonton, https://www.edmonton.ca/city_government/documents/Final_Diversity__Inclusion_Framework__Implementation_Plan.pdf

[11] Using a Framework to Create a More Inclusive Community. Webinar by Alberta Urban Municipalities Association, 2016, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dui7MMDY630

[12] Our Welcoming Community. North Shore Welcoming Action Committee, http://www.cnv.org/~/media/105DC99F3E3B407487DF99590355C33A.pdf

[13] How to Create a Terms of Reference for a WIC Committee. Alberta Urban Municipalities Association, https://www.auma.ca/advocacy-services/programs-initiatives/welcoming-and-inclusive-communities/tools-resources/auma-toolkits-guides

[14] Regional Advisory Committee on Inclusion, Diversity and Equality, Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, http://www.woodbuffalo.ab.ca/Municipal-Government/boards_committees/Regional-Advisory-Committee-on-Inclusion--Diversity-and-Equality.htm

- Create an action plan for inclusion initiatives within the municipality based on the vision. Include goals, actions, time lines and success indicators. Obtain senior leadership and council buy-in and support for the plan.[15][16]
- Communicate the municipality's vision and plan to stakeholders, community organizations and citizens, particularly those involved in the consultations.

Intentional Inclusion --- Culture of Inclusion

- Create performance measurement and evaluation systems to provide data on outcomes achieved. Regularly review this data to ensure that actions are effective in achieving the goals and vision of the plan.[17][18]
- Review your action plan regularly to ensure that emerging gaps and needs are being addressed.
- Encourage all municipal departments to integrate inclusion related goals and actions into their strategic plans.
- Provide senior leadership with success stories that can be regularly shared within the municipality and the community.

---

[15] Planning Together: Guide to Municipal Immigration Action Planning in Alberta. Alberta Urban Municipalities Association, https://www.auma.ca/advocacy-services/programs-initiatives/welcoming-and-inclusive-communities/tools-resources/auma-toolkits-guides

[16] City of Brooks' Welcoming and Inclusive Communities Partnership Plan. City of Brooks, https://www.brooks.ca/288/Welcoming-Inclusive-Community

[17] Indicators for evaluating municipal policies aimed at fighting racism and discrimination http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001496/149624e.pdf

[18] Literature Review: Outcomes and Indicators of Welcoming and Inclusive Communities and Workplaces Initiatives. Social Planning and Research Council of BC, https://www.amssa.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/WelcomeBC_report.pdf

D. Human Resource Policies & Practices

Policies and practices that promote equitable recruitment and retention ensure that the municipal workforce is representative of the diversity of the community and that employee diversity is respected and supported.

Invisible --- Awareness

- Review existing human resource policies to ensure compliance with human rights and other equity related legislation.[19]
- Elicit informal feedback from employees to identify any consequences of inequitable human resource policies and practices.
- Survey the demographics of employees to compare the diversity of the workforce with the diversity of the available labour force.[20]
- In human resource materials, emphasize that the municipality welcomes applicants for job postings from a variety of backgrounds.
- Include references to employment equity, human rights, discrimination and diversity resources on the human resource website.
- Inform managers about the importance of and practices in how the organization can accommodate the needs of employees (e.g. disability, religion, gender, etc.).

Awareness --- Intentional Inclusion

- Educate human resource staff on how to recruit and support a diverse work force. Put programs into place to facilitate the hiring and advancement of underrepresented groups.
- Provide information to leadership about human rights and other equity related legislation.
- Access employment agencies and organizations that serve the needs of marginalized individuals and use their networks to ensure job postings reach diverse communities.
- Review municipal job postings and hiring practices to eliminate unintentional barriers.
- Develop code of conduct, respectful workplace and accessibility/accommodation policies to foster respectful, ethical and safe behaviour in the workplace, and to promote accessibility and accommodation.[21]
- Create a process and allocate adequate personnel with expertise on inclusion and equity to respond to complaints of exclusion and discrimination.[22]

---

[19] Human rights in the workplace. Alberta Human Rights Commission, https://www.albertahumanrights.ab.ca/employment/Pages/employment.aspx

[20] The City of Calgary and City of Edmonton conduct a bi-annual survey.

[21] Respectful Workplace Administrative Procedure. City of Edmonton, https://www.edmonton.ca/city_government/documents/PoliciesDirectives/Respectful_Workplace_Administrative_Procedure.pdf

[22] Discrimination and Harassment Policy, Municipal Policy Handbook. Strathcona County, https://www.strathcona.ca/council-county/bylaws-and-policies/municipal-policy-handbook/human-resources-policies/

- Organize career fairs targeted to underrepresented groups (e.g. new immigrants, Indigenous peoples and persons with disabilities).
- Train managers on the importance of following inclusion-related policies, and of responding effectively to reports of harassment and discrimination.
- Train hiring managers and teams about unconscious bias as it relates to hiring decisions.[23]
- Implement a tracking process to record complaints and resolution efforts, in order to ensure consistent follow up on discrimination related complaints in the workplace, and to create accountability at all levels of leadership.
- Create quiet rooms/spaces to support individuals' need for prayer time or quiet time.
- Create awareness of and celebrate holidays and notable dates that are important to staff of all religions and cultures.

Intentional Inclusion --- Culture of Inclusion

- Use an inclusion lens to ensure that new HR policies and practices are inclusive and do not pose any new barriers.[24]
- Integrate diversity and inclusion measurements into all job competencies and adjust performance appraisals to include a review of these competencies.[25]
- Communicate the results of engagement surveys and complaint resolutions to all employees in order to articulate a commitment to openness and transparency about issues of equity.
- Develop internship/mentorship programs to facilitate equitable advancement for underrepresented groups within the municipal workforce.
- Educate staff at all levels about how accommodation of needs supports the overall mandate of the organization.
- Regularly gather data and track demographics of employees to compare the diversity of the workforce (by department and leadership levels) with the diversity of the available labour force.[26]
- Regularly review the diversity of the hiring panel in comparison to the diversity of the available workforce.

---

[23] Training is best completed in person but the Government of Canada's online Gender-based Analysis Plus (GBA+) course can serve as an introduction to the issue of bias. https://cfc-swc.gc.ca/gba-acs/course-cours-en.html

[24] Equity and Inclusion Lens. City of Ottawa, https://ottawa.ca/en/city-hall/get-know-your-city/statistics-and-economic-profile#equity-and-inclusion-lens

[25] Human Rights Maturity Model Continuum. Canadian Human Rights Commission, http://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2015/ccdp-chrc/HR21-79-1-2012-eng.pdf

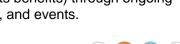[26] The City of Calgary and City of Edmonton conduct a bi-annual survey.

E. Employee Engagement & Education

When municipal employees receive training and support about inclusion, they are more prepared to respond to the needs of a diverse public as well as foster an inclusive workplace. The knowledge and perspectives of employees and residents with lived experience can be valuable to inform planning and decision-making to ensure services are delivered in an inclusive manner.

Invisible --- **Awareness**

- Conduct a workplace engagement survey to determine the overall climate of the workplace, and to identify barriers to inclusion.8
- Conduct a review of current internal educational programs on diversity, inclusion and equity.
- Conduct a review of current professional development programs to determine if they adequately address issues of inclusion.
- Elicit feedback from employees to determine how educational programs can be adjusted to meet specific needs for inclusion related awareness, knowledge and skills.
- Compile a list of education programs offered by external organizations such as educational institutions, non-profits and consulting companies. Review these programs for their applicability and usefulness to your organization. Provide the selected list to employees and update regularly.
- Articulate your municipality's commitment to inclusion (and its benefits) through ongoing internal messaging such as posters, staff newsletter articles, and events.

Awareness --- **Intentional Inclusion**

- Regularly communicate information on inclusion related initiatives to all municipal employees.
- Build a library/website of materials on diversity that is available to all staff.
- Develop education programs for leadership that provide knowledge and skills on how to create inclusion at all levels of the organization, including service provision.
- Develop educational programs to dispel myths and stereotypes and to provide skills for negotiating difference.
- Ensure that educational programs address a wide range of dimensions of diversity, not just 'culture'.
- Partner with external organizations such as educational institutions, human rights organizations, non-profit organizations and consulting companies to develop and offer new educational programs.
- Create a culture where all employees are familiar with how to report incidents of discrimination.
- Ensure that the process of reporting incidents of discrimination includes an option to bypass an immediate supervisor if that individual is the perpetrator
- Involve employees from all levels and departments to help identify ways that the municipality's services may be excluding certain groups of residents.

Intentional Inclusion --- **Culture of Inclusion**

- Develop a long-term educational strategy for delivering education on inclusion and equity to every municipal employee.
- Integrate inclusion and equity related content into other training and professional development offerings (e.g. supervisor training, leadership development, customer service training etc.).
- Track metrics on participation in learning and development to ensure that opportunities and participation are equitable for all employees.
- Regularly elicit feedback from employees about how workplace culture can be improved to ensure that difference and diversity are being recognized and worked with effectively.
- Regularly review the results of employee engagement surveys and implement programs to address reported issues. Create a process to communicate back to employees on how issues have been addressed.
- Ensure that champions and change agents for inclusion are recognized for their work. Establish an award program to nominate an employee who has been a champion of inclusion.
- Implement a mandatory respectful workplace policy training program for all employees that outlines the policy and related procedures for initiating complaints and resolving issues. Periodically provide refresher training.[27]
- Regularly train managers on how to appropriately respond to a report of discrimination.
- Include information on the respectful workplace policy in new employee orientation programs.
- Develop modules on inclusion and equity related issues that can be used by leadership in various settings such as meetings and retreats to increase knowledge around inclusion and equity.

---

[27] Bullying and Harassment Resource Tool Kit. WorkSafeBC, https://www.worksafebc.com/en/health-safety/hazards-exposures/bullying-harassment/resource-tool-kit

F. Infrastructure & Land Use

When municipal infrastructure is inclusive and accessible, all residents can actively participate in the life of the community. The community becomes more inclusive when land use planning considers the health, economics and history of all residents.

Invisible --- **Awareness**

- Review the locations of public infrastructure projects. Compare them with locations of low-income, Indigenous, or racialized communities and assess the positive and negative impacts on quality of life.
- Review recent research, standards and good practices in urban development and designing healthy communities.[28]
- Review demographic shifts within neighbourhoods to better understand trends in diversity.
- Perform an accessibility review of municipal facilities.[29]

Awareness --- **Intentional Inclusion**

- Engage municipal staff, agencies, organizations, businesses and consultants involved in real estate development, housing, transportation, landscape architecture and project financing to share the results of a good practice review.
- Make municipal staff, contractors and consultants aware of safety and physical accessibility standards in public and non-public facilities.
- Encourage municipal infrastructure staff to better understand the needs of marginalized communities.
- Use your municipal development plan (and supporting land use documents) as vehicles to express the municipality's approach to inclusion in infrastructure planning and development.
- Involve marginalized communities/neighbourhoods and social service organizations in conducting their own community infrastructure/assets reviews.[30]
- Develop a plan for making facilities more accessible for employees with mobility restrictions, based on the findings of the accessibility review.
- Identify public spaces where residents can meet and gather in a safe, non-threatening environment.
- Educate municipal leaders about the history of Indigenous peoples, land rights and Treaty agreements to support relationship building with Indigenous communities.
- Create quiet rooms/spaces to support individuals' need for prayer time or quiet time.

---

[28] Creating Equitable, Healthy, and Sustainable Communities. United States Environmental Protection Agency, https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2014-01/documents/equitable-development-report-508-011713b.pdf

[29] Review of Accessibility Features. London's Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee, http://www.london.ca/city-hall/accessibility/Documents/Facility%20Assessment%20Form%20PDF.pdf

[30] Good Practices in Participatory Mapping. International Fund for Agricultural Development, https://www.ifad.org/documents/38714170/39144386/PM_web.pdf/7c1eda69-8205-4c31-8912-3c25d6f90055

Intentional Inclusion --- **Culture of Inclusion**

- Create an interdepartmental committee of municipal staff to give input on new developments. The committee should include a representative(s) who can assess and make recommendations on building inclusion into development plans.
- Implement policies and strategies to ensure residents with accessibility challenges are involved in the design of public facilities and spaces.
- Encourage the setup of a design award for innovative residential, commercial or institutional facilities that encourage inclusivity.
- Develop a community care program that engages all communities to care for public infrastructure as a common good (e.g. public green spaces, murals).
- Seek input from Indigenous communities on land-use policy, planning and development processes.
- Engage communities in public renewal or new design projects (e.g. schools, transit centres, clinics, etc.) to incorporate a variety of cultural symbols and concepts.
- Regularly engage diverse residents on how designated public spaces can be improved to support personal safety

G. Municipal Social Services

The breadth, quality and inclusiveness of municipal social service programs can be a key factor in supporting residents to actively participate in the social, cultural and economic life of the community. This area of focus is specific to recreation, libraries and other social programs run by the municipal government. This may not include social programs that are funded by the municipality, but day-to-day operations are delivered by a non-municipal organization due to the municipality's lack of control over operational practices.

Invisible --- Awareness

- Review key documents to make sure they use clear, simple language free of jargon.[31]
- Research barriers to information accessibility (e.g. cognitive impairment, no internet access, low literacy, language barriers) and design appropriate formats for information delivery. Consider the need for special formats such as large print, Braille, etc.
- Review service provision locations (including access routes, bathrooms, etc.) for safety, accessibility for people with mobility issues, availability outside normal day-time business hours and for those using public transportation.
- Collect demographic data on the use of services and compare this to the demographic data of residents. Review to determine why certain groups may not be accessing municipal services.

Awareness --- Intentional Inclusion

- Communicate the intent of the municipality to become more inclusive through various outreach activities and events.
- Conduct a needs assessment in various communities to assess areas of exclusion and barriers to accessing municipal services. Consult with community organizations and service providers to help gather data.
- Have ready access to interpreters or translators that can be called on at short notice.
- Create a welcome package/newcomer guide with information about the community that will help new residents get settled in the community.
- Develop a reference resource poster to tell people where to obtain municipal services.
- Develop and deliver educational programs for front line service providers that will enable them to provide quality services to diverse clients.
- Offer programming that celebrates multiculturalism in the community.
- Review and update documentation to be gender-neutral.

Intentional Inclusion --- Culture of Inclusion

- Create a new arrival information centre to create a 'one-stop shop' for essential information on services within the community.[32]

---

[31] A Plain Language Audit Tool. North West Territories Literacy Council, http://en.copian.ca/library/learning/nwt/auditool/audit.pdf

[32] Citizen and New Arrival Information Centre. City of Edmonton, https://www.edmonton.ca/programs_services/for_new_residents/citizen-and-new-arrival-information-centre.aspx

- Invest in programs designed and delivered by immigrant and refugee communities to address settlement and integration needs of newcomers.[33]
- Ensure that recreation services are inclusive and accessible in a variety of ways.[34]
- Update the municipal website so it can be translated into the main languages spoken in your community and is accessible to people with disabilities.[35]
- Have the newcomer guide available in a variety of languages. Translate the guide into the main languages spoken in your communities.
- Ensure employees are trained in how to respond and seek assistance when there is a language barrier in communicating with a client.

---

[33] Emerging Immigrant and Refugee Communities Grant Program. City of Edmonton, https://www.edmonton.ca/programs_services/funding_grants/grant-emerging-immigrant-refugee-communities.aspx

[34] Everybody's Welcome: A Social Inclusion Approach to Program Planning and Development for Recreation and Parks Services. Social Planning and Research Council of BC, https://www.sparc.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/booklet-everybodys-welcome.pdf

[35] Introduction to Web Accessibility. Web Accessibility Initiative, http://www.w3.org/WAI/fundamentals/accessibility-intro/

H. Resident Engagement

When the municipality works to engage the opinions all residents, this can lead to better involvement in municipal decision-making and participation in community life. Municipal communication is then meaningful and accessible to all community members.

Invisible --- Awareness

- Create mechanisms for regular communication with the public via the Internet, media releases, and accessible public meetings.
- Research good practices in effective community engagement.[36]
- Conduct public sessions on municipal inclusion initiatives to provide opportunities for input and to identify interested community leaders.
- Market community events to diverse groups to ensure broad participation. Consult with these groups to determine the most effective methods of marketing (posters in certain neighborhoods, ethnic radio stations, flyers at other community events, etc.)
- Identify local organizations that work with marginalized populations and potential opportunities to partner in engagement.
- Encourage the participation of underrepresented voters in municipal elections.[37]

Awareness --- Intentional Inclusion

- Organize town halls to offer residents an opportunity to discuss and be heard on issues of discrimination in the municipality.[38]
- Invite elders, key community representatives and leaders to municipal planning meetings to provide their perspectives. Make sure discussions are in plain language and meeting processes are explained or adapted to encourage dialogue.[39]
- Organize focus groups in communities that are under-represented in public involvement (people living in poverty, Indigenous, youth, temporary foreign workers, etc.) to elicit feedback on major policy areas such as housing and transportation.
- Organize diversity cafés, living libraries or forums to provide citizens the opportunity to meet and talk to a variety of people from diverse backgrounds about issues of inclusion.
- Explore opportunities to meet marginalized residents in places that they commonly frequent, where they feel safe to share their opinions.

Intentional Inclusion --- Culture of Inclusion

- Create a standard of practice for community engagement that outlines the processes that will be used to respectfully and genuinely engage public involvement with under-

---

[36] Pathways to Change: Facilitating the Full Civic Engagement of Diversity Groups in Canadian Society. Government of Alberta, https://www.albertahumanrights.ab.ca/Documents/PathwaysToChange.pdf

[37] Every Vote Counts. Ethno-Cultural Council of Calgary, https://www.calgary.ca/CSPS/CNS/Documents/Social-research-policy-and-resources/EveryVoteCounts.pdf?noredirect=1

[38] CitizenU. City of Vancouver, http://www.vancouveryouth.ca/CitizenU

[39] Multiculturalism in Communities: A Guide to Developing and Sustaining Dialogue. Government of British Columbia, https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/british-columbians-our-governments/multiculturalism-anti-racism/research-media-education-rom/dialogue_guide.pdf

represented groups. Include guidelines for accessibility, respectful communication, provision of appropriate food, compensation, etc.[40]

- Form partnerships with other institutions (such as education, health, justice, policing, business, labour, and the voluntary sector) to jointly develop initiatives to promote inclusion and access to services.
- In consultations and dialogues, use language that will draw people in rather than create resistance. Research what might be the most appropriate language by consulting with various groups or key leaders.
- Create mechanisms such as advisory councils for various groups (youth, Indigenous, newcomers) to give these groups a voice in the creation of municipal policies and programs.[41]
- Hold annual forums to bring together municipal staff, stakeholders, community organizations and citizens interested in creating a welcoming and inclusive community.[42]
- Review the demographics of governance structures (agencies, boards and commissions, etc.) to ensure there is representation from diverse groups and communities.[43]
- Regularly review documentation and communications related to public engagement to ensure it is presented using plain language.

---

[40] Community Engagement Toolkit. Social Planning and Research Council of BC, https://www.sparc.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/community-engagement-toolkit.pdf

[41] Mayor's Advisory Council on Youth. Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, http://www.rmwb.ca/Municipal-Government/boards_committees/M-A-C-O-Y-.htm

[42] The City of Lethbridge held an inclusion conference in 2012, 2014 and 2016.

[43] Diversity Matters: Changing the Face of Public Boards. Maytree, http://www.maytree.com/PDF_Files/DiversityMatters.pdf

I.   Economic Development

The community benefits when municipal economic development principles and strategies are created based on the understanding that diversity benefits the economy. This area of focus is specific to economic development initiatives that are under the direct control of the municipal government.

Invisible --- Awareness   ●●○○

- Conduct a needs assessment with various communities to assess barriers to accessing economic opportunities.
- Consult with community organizations and service providers to determine gaps in economic development for various groups.
- Review public information about economic development to make sure they use clear and simple language free of jargon. Consider the need for special formats for print materials such as large print, Braille, etc.
- Review economic development practices in similar jurisdictions and industries to identify useful inclusion related strategies and programs.
- Include information on economic development at the new arrival information centre or in the welcome package.
- Identify local demographics that are not represented on municipal economic development committees.

Awareness --- Intentional Inclusion   ○●●○

- Implement a strategic plan on how the municipality will support the attraction, integration, and retention of immigrants to support economic stability and growth.[44]
- Market the municipality provincially, nationally and internationally as a community of choice for people of all backgrounds.
- Create a welcome business package with marginalized communities in mind (e.g. language, size of font, etc.) to help residents engage in economic opportunities.
- Encourage business leaders to meet with newcomers in English language classes and provide information on economic development services.
- Encourage small business training in local colleges on local business practices/business development skills.
- Develop and deliver educational programs for economic service providers (financial institutions, business advisers, lawyers, accountants, labour unions, etc.) to enable them to provide appropriate services to diverse clients.
- Engage the local Chamber of Commerce and financial institutions in developing strategies for economic engagement.
- Encourage members of marginalized communities to become board members of business associations (e.g. Chambers of Commerce, trade associations) and participate in economic strategy development.

---

[44] Planning Together: A Guide to Municipal Immigration Action Planning in Alberta. Alberta Urban Municipalities Association, https://www.auma.ca/sites/default/files/Advocacy/Programs_Initiatives/WIC/wic_planning_together_guide.pdf

- Facilitate links between immigrant serving organizations and employers. Support the creation of formal or informal groups to provide mechanisms for this collaboration.[45]
- Work with business associations to offer training on inclusive hiring and workplaces.[46]

Intentional Inclusion --- Culture of Inclusion

- Set up local incubators and training for businesses from marginalized communities.
- Engage economic development advisers and business leaders in exploring mutually beneficial economic links with immigrant communities' countries of origin.
- Work with economic development practitioners at other levels of government to make attraction and retention efforts part of existing economic development strategies.
- Create a business recognition program that recognizes businesses that have made diversity and inclusion a priority in their hiring practices.[47]
- Create municipal policies to support a living wage.[48]
- Regularly collect and review economic data related to the diversity of the community and use it to inform economic planning.
- Engage marginalized communities in the design and update of municipal economic development plans.
- Regularly review the diversity of economic development committees to ensure they are representative of the demographics of the labour force.

---

[45] Example organizations include the Calgary Region Immigrant Employment Council (https://www.criec.ca/) or the Edmonton Region Immigrant Employment Council (http://eriec.ca/)

[46] The Alberta Human Rights Commission regularly offers workshops, forums and e-learning to educate organizations about human rights and diversity. https://www.albertahumanrights.ab.ca/education/Pages/education.aspx

[47] The City of Brooks offers an annual award to a business that demonstrates leadership in inclusion.

[48] Municipal Living Wage Policy Toolkit. Living Wage for Families Campaign, http://www.livingwagecanada.ca/files/7813/8304/9906/municipal_toolkit.pdf

J.   Emergency & Protective Services

All residents benefit when the municipality takes steps to ensure that emergency and protective services is inclusive of the diverse needs of residents. This area of focus is specific to emergency and protective services that are under direct control of the municipal government. As such, this area of focus may not apply to municipalities that receive primary policing support through the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP).

Invisible --- Awareness

- Conduct a review of current professional development programs to determine if they adequately address issues of inclusion.
- Train emergency and protective services staff on how to respond and seek assistance when there is a language barrier in communicating with an individual.

Awareness --- Intentional Inclusion

- Train emergency and protective services staff about unconscious bias and how it can impact judgement and decision-making on the job.[23]
- Ensure that educational programs address a wide range of dimensions of diversity, not just 'culture'.
- Take steps to broaden the language and cultural expertise in emergency and protective services staff.
- Develop educational programs to dispel myths and stereotypes and to provide skills for negotiating difference.
- Review the hiring framework to identify barriers that may limit diverse populations from applying.
- Implement a school engagement program to build relationships with youth.
- Engage with residents of marginalized communities to understand how emergency and protective services can be more inclusive.
- Educate emergency and protective services staff about the history of Indigenous peoples in Canada, including historical experiences with law enforcement and how that impacts relationships today.

Intentional Inclusion --- Culture of Inclusion

- Develop a long-term educational strategy for delivering education on inclusion and equity to all protective and emergency services staff.
- Regularly elicit feedback from emergency and protective services staff about how workplace culture can be improved to ensure that difference and diversity is being recognized and worked with effectively.
- Develop a long-term strategy for how emergency and protective services will engage with residents and build trust in the community.

K. Transit

All residents benefit when the municipality takes steps to ensure that transit services is inclusive of the diverse needs of residents. This area of focus is only applicable to municipal governments that offer a public transit service.

Invisible --- **Awareness**

- Review pubic transit coverage levels in low-income and racialized neighbourhoods as well as coverage levels in industrial areas and how that may impact economic outcomes of marginalized groups.
- Perform an accessibility review of all public transit facilities.

Awareness --- **Intentional Inclusion**

- Train transit staff on how to respond and seek assistance when there is a language barrier in communicating with a transit user.
- Train transit staff on how to respond if transit users are promoting, provoking, or actively directing hate towards a person or group of persons.
- Implement a policy to ensure that public transit coverage is inclusive of all residents and users.
- Engage marginalized communities to understand how public transit services can offer a safe and positive environment.
- Develop a plan for making transit facilities and vehicles more accessible for persons with mobility challenges as well as persons with limited hearing or visual abilities.
- Take steps to broaden the language and cultural knowledge in transit services staff.
- Consider the installation of security cameras in public transit facilities and vehicles to discourage acts of hate or discrimination and improve safety of users.
- Train emergency and protective services staff about unconscious bias and how it can impact judgement and decision-making on the job.[23]
- Ensure that educational programs address a wide range of dimensions of diversity, not just 'culture'.

Intentional Inclusion --- **Culture of Inclusion**

- Implement policies and strategies to ensure residents with accessibility challenges are involved in the design of public transit facilities and vehicles.
- Regularly engage diverse residents on how designated public transit can be improved to support personal safety.
- Regularly review how transit information is communicated to ensure it is accessible (e.g. cognitive impairment, no internet access, low literacy, language barriers) and design appropriate formats for information delivery. Consider the need for special formats such as large print, Braille, etc.
- Develop a long-term educational strategy for delivering education on inclusion and equity for transit staff.

L.   Housing

All residents benefit when the municipality takes steps to ensure that local housing is inclusive of the diverse needs of residents.

Invisible --- **Awareness**

- Conduct a study to understand the proportion of residents in need of affordable housing.[49]
- Build internal knowledge of the outcomes of affordable housing in other communities (e.g. crime, property values, etc.) to counter any misinformation in your community.
- Conduct a review to understand the proportion of residents that live with physical disabilities, including age-based disabilities.
- Build internal knowledge of how market-based housing can be designed to be more accessible.
- Engage residents of marginalized groups to understand any challenges in accessing rental housing in the community.

Awareness --- **Intentional Inclusion**

- Research methods to positively involve the community in discussions about the need and community benefits of affordable housing.[50]
- Track and apply for funding from provincial and federal governments for affordable housing.[51]
- Develop annual budgets that reflect council's commitment to affordable housing in the community.
- Update development plans and bylaws to encourage the diversification of housing types to meet the diverse needs of residents (e.g. housing size, price ranges, accessibility).
- Update development plans and bylaws to encourage diversity of housing types in all neighbourhoods.
- Engage developers and builders about the municipality's goals to improve inclusion and accessibility in housing and what role industry can play (e.g. creating homes that meet the principles of visit-ability[52]).
- Research and implement plans to encourage the affordability of both market-based and non-market housing in the community.[53]
- Create a public awareness campaign or offer educational workshops on the rights of renters.

---

[49] Housing Hub: How to Get Started. Alberta Urban Municipalities Association, https://auma.ca/advocacy-services/programs-initiatives/housing-hub/how-municipalities-can-act/how-get-started

[50] Housing Hub: Strategies to Overcome NIMBYism. Alberta Urban Municipalities Association, https://auma.ca/advocacy-services/programs-initiatives/housing-hub/how-municipalities-can-act/strategies-overcome-nimbyism

[51] Developing and Renovating. Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, https://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/en/developing-and-renovating

[52] What is VisitAble Housing? VisitAble Housing Canada, http://visitablehousingcanada.com/

[53] Housing Hub: Strategies to Support Housing Affordability. Alberta Urban Municipalities Association, https://auma.ca/advocacy-services/programs-initiatives/housing-hub/how-municipalities-can-act/strategies-support-housing-affordability

- Invite landlords to a learning session on cultural awareness to break down myths and misinformation about cultures in the community.

Intentional Inclusion --- **Culture of Inclusion**

- Create or update development plans and policies to encourage new housing developments to have the front door and main floor accessible to persons with physical disabilities.
- Regularly review opportunities to reduce barriers for residents to access rental housing.
- Use policy to implement strategies that encourages residential neighbourhoods to be economically diverse through a mixture of housing sizes and types.
- Continually advance awareness of your municipality's vision and plans for the affordability of housing.
- Regularly track statistics to measure your progress to reduce the number of residents in need of affordable housing.

Acknowledgement

Strategies to Improve Your Inclusiveness is an adaptation of AUMA's 2014 version of the Measuring Inclusion Tool, which was developed by Zenev & Associates.