



# Elgin County and Local Municipal Partners Joint Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan 2024-2026



Municipality of  
**Dutton Dunwich**



MUNICIPALITY OF  
**West Elgin**



the **TOWNSHIP** of  
**MALAHIDE**  
A proud tradition, a bright future.



TOWNSHIP OF  
**Southwold**

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## **Decolonization and Reconciliation**

The County of Elgin and its Local Municipal Partners are supportive of all communities and will continue to foster meaningful relationships and collaborate with Indigenous communities and partners to advance mutual diversity, equity and inclusion goals.

The County of Elgin supports the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's work to implement the 94 Calls to Action. The County further supports and encourages its employees to participate in activities and wear orange shirts to honour the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, which takes place annually on September 30. The County recognizes that decolonization and reconciliation go beyond the scope of the Commission's recommendations, and the County has and continues to work with Indigenous leaders to support the recommendations and other relevant initiatives.

The County of Elgin has implemented a Land Acknowledgement Statement. The full report on the development of a Rural Indigenous Strategy can be viewed in the County Council Agenda Package August 10, 2021, on page 319.

### **Purpose**

The County of Elgin and its Local Municipal Partners are regulated by the *Ontario Human Rights Code*, the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, *Employment Equity Act*, *Ontario's Anti-Racism Strategic Plan* and so forth, and are dedicated to responding to and eliminating patterns of unfair treatment and forms of systemic discrimination that still take place, often resulting from bias, stereotypes, and prejudice. The County and its LMPs recognize that creating a community that celebrates diversity and inclusion ensures that goods, services, and facilities provided meet the needs and ambitions of the entire population.

One of the main objectives of the DEI Plan is to enhance staff awareness and knowledge of diversity, equity, and inclusion, and how it impacts the workforce. Staff will be provided with training, tools and resources that help increase DEI across the County and Local Municipalities.

This Plan strives to:

1. Increase the County and LMPs understanding and deepen the commitment to DEI.
2. Strengthen DEI within the organizational culture and workplace morale.
3. Engage staff in DEI efforts, and foster opportunities for leadership, advancement and development.
4. Identify, remove and prevent barriers to DEI across the County.
5. Determine and implement industry best practices regarding DEI initiatives.

### **Statement of Commitment**

The County of Elgin and its LMPs are committed to creating a workplace environment and community that is diverse, equitable and inclusive for all.

The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Plan aims to:

- Identify and address any forms of discrimination that create barriers to services, community engagement, inhibit flexibility, participation and equity in the workplace.
- Work with marginalized groups to counter historical, attitudinal, structural, systemic, and institutional practices that hinder inclusivity.
- Implement training, programs, and initiatives that recognizes the full range of human differences and ensures fairness and justice.
- Embrace differences amongst employees and residents with empathy and curiosity.
- Create a workplace culture/environment that is safe, open, and inclusive for everyone.
- Increase awareness of the different barriers that prevent DEI in the workforce.

The plan seeks to make employees and residents feel valued and accepted. Further, it strives to remove barriers so that all community members can participate in an equitable environment. The plan emphasizes the importance of recognizing the systematic, structural, unified and intersectional aspects of discrimination, and the benefits of undertaking inclusive action. The plan acts as a framework for embracing diversity in the workplace, and seeks to create policies, procedures and practices that are fair, just, and non-discriminatory.

### **Scope**

This plan applies to all persons who deal with members of the public or other third parties on behalf of the County and its LMPs, whether the person does so as an employee, member of Council, agent, volunteer, student placement, Committee member, or otherwise and all persons who participate in developing the County's policies and procedures governing the provision of goods, services or facilities to members of the public or other third parties.

### **Legislative Authority**

The plan adheres to the legislative requirements set out in the following:

- *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (AODA)
- *Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation* (ISAR)
- *Accessible Canada Act*
- *Ontario Human Rights Code* (OHRC)
- *Employment Standards Act* (ESA)
- *Occupational Health and Safety Act*
- *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*
- *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*
- *International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination*
- *The Citizenship Act*
- *Canadian Multiculturalism Act*
- *Employment Equity Act*
- *Ontario's Anti-Racism Strategic Plan*

In addition to the above legislation, several policies and agreements set out requirements, recommendations and frameworks relating to Indigenous-Municipal governance:

- [Treaties](#)
- [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#)
- [Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples](#)
- [Truth & Reconciliation Calls to Action](#)
- [National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Calls for Justice](#)

**Plan Coordination**

This plan was created through a collaborative effort between the County Accessibility Coordinator, Human Resources Department, and Local Municipal Partners. All staff are responsible for identifying, removing and preventing discrimination across the County.

The plan went through several phases of revision, and was taken to the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee for feedback and input. A DEI Survey was circulated amongst staff at the County to identify areas needing improvement and to provide input. Input from the survey was incorporated into the goals section of the DEI Plan.

The final DEI Plan was received and approved by County Council. After County Council approved the plan, it was sent to all LMPs to take to their respective Councils to be received and adopted.

The plan is available on the County and LMPs websites in accessible format.

**Participating Municipalities**

The Municipality of Bayham	56169 Heritage Line, PO Box 160 Straffordville, ON N0J 1Y0
The Municipality of Central Elgin	450 Sunset Drive, St. Thomas, ON N5R 5V1
The Municipality of Dutton Dunwich	199 Currie Road, Dutton, ON N0L 1J0
The Municipality of West Elgin	22413 Hoskins Line Rodney, ON N0L 2C0
The Town of Aylmer	46 Talbot Street West, Aylmer, ON N5H 1J7
The Township of Malahide	87 John Street South, Aylmer, ON N5H 2C3
The Township of Southwold	35663 Fingal Line, Fingal, ON N0L 1K0

**Implementation**

In order to implement the DEI Plan, the County and its LMPs will undertake the following actions:

- Review County and LMP documents to ensure the use and incorporation of inclusive and gender-neutral language.

- Collect, analyze, and interpret data and feedback to assist with identifying ways to enhance DEI within the organization, as well as opportunities for engagement with the community.
- Review policies and practices to ensure it aligns with goals outlined in the DEI Plan.
- Increase workplace DEI activities and events to increase engagement and awareness.
- Engage with local businesses and communities to provide recognition of diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives that have a positive impact across the County.
- Create an Intranet and web page for DEI that includes resources and important DEI dates that highlights and celebrates DEI.
- Promote staff awareness and participation in internal and external events for DEI (Black History Month, Women’s History Month, Pride Parade, Orange Shirt Day etc.).
- Ensure recruitment, selection and retention practices account are diverse, equitable and inclusive.
- Provide free training information through the DEI plan and offer training to staff on topics not covered through the free training.

### **Evaluation, Reporting and Outcomes**

The success of the DEI Plan requires that information and communication is transparent, and that the evaluation, reporting, and intended outcomes of the plan are clearly stated.

As laid out in the Ontario Human Rights Code, all employees have a right to Freedom from Discrimination with respect to five social areas and seventeen personal attributes.

The protected grounds for the five social areas include:

1. Employment
2. Housing
3. Services
4. Unions and Vocational Associations
5. Contracts

**The protected grounds for the seventeen personal attributes include:**

1. Citizenship
2. Race
3. Place of Origin
4. Ethnic Origin
5. Colour
6. Ancestry
7. Disability
8. Age
9. Creed
10. Sex/Pregnancy
11. Family Status

12. Marital Status
13. Sexual Orientation
14. Gender Identity
15. Gender Expression
16. Receipt of Public Assistance (housing)
17. Record of Offences (in employment)

The Plan will focus on addressing diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workplace and community, and combat any form of discrimination, direct or indirect. The plan will be updated on an annual basis, as necessary. The DEI Plan provides an overview of diversity, equity and inclusion, and the County and its LMPs goals regarding DEI spanning 2024-2026. The purpose is to provide a high-level overview of all DEI projects and initiatives, and the way that each municipality intends to approach different topics relating to DEI.

### **DEI Progress Reports**

The DEI Plan will be assessed and updated on an annual basis as needed. A DEI Progress Report will be completed annually to demonstrate commitment to implement the DEI Plan goals.

### **DEI Topics**

This list is not exhaustive, there are many other topics that connect to DEI.

- Anti-racism and anti-oppression
  - Indigenous awareness
  - Lasting impact of colonialism
  - Addressing unconscious and implicit biases
  - Black and racialized Canadians
  - Micro-aggressions
- LGBTQ2+
  - Gender identity
  - Sexual orientation
- Accessibility
  - Disability awareness
  - Barriers to accessibility
  - Accommodations in the workplace
- Women
  - Understanding feminism
  - Sexism in the workplace
- Immigrants and Refugees
  - Addressing myths about immigrants and refugees
  - Benefits of a multicultural and diverse workplaces
  - Cultural competence and diversity
- Mental Health
  - Mental health first aid
  - Combatting stigmas and bias towards mental illness and addiction
  - Homelessness

- Age
  - Generational diversity
  - Digital divide

**The outcomes of this plan will be measured using the following:**

- Use surveys to get feedback regarding DEI.
- Obtain statistics and demographic information as it relates to DEI.
- Review statistics/demographic info to identify areas for improvement regarding: recruitment, selection, retention, employee satisfaction, community outreach etc.
- Review HR policies and procedures to ensure industry best practices.
- Get feedback on questions related to diverse, inclusive, and equitable workplaces from exit interviews, stay interviews, and employee engagement questionnaires.
- Examine workplace accommodations to ensure accessibility and inclusivity, consider a Universal Design approach.
- Partner with Council to join the following:
  - Canadian Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination (CCMARD -United Nations).
  - Canadian Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities (UNESCO -United Nations)
  - City for All Women Initiative (CAWI).
- Create an annual report to demonstrate progress towards DEI goals laid out in the plan.
- Form DEI related committees at the County level and encourage LMP participation.

**Overview of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion**

**Why DEI Matters**

Diversity, equity and inclusion in municipalities is imperative. Systemic discrimination remains an ongoing challenge, and when left unaddressed, these issues can grow and become difficult to mitigate. The community is growing, which can lead to an increase in inequities regarding resources, access and power. These barriers impact marginalized communities’ access to healthcare, employment, housing, and County goods, services, and facilities. These inequities negatively impact both the community and the workplace.

Elgin County and its Local Municipal Partners are responsible for the wellbeing and quality of life of its residents. Addressing these inequities can help ensure the inclusion of all residents. DEI creates a more sustainable community where people from all walks of life have the right to, and can participate fully in social, economic, political, and cultural life.

The demographic and economic changes require focused efforts to advance DEI practices and policies to address unfair treatment and forms of systemic discrimination that still take place. This Plan is a systemic response to these imbalances in accessibility, economic status, religious beliefs, ability, gender and gender identity,



geographic location, sexual orientation, race, Indigenous ancestry, age and other similar markers of identity.

The Plan aims to incorporate best practices recognized and identified in various Municipalities plans, practices, charters and reports on DEI, and unite the different initiatives the County is currently undertaking to affirm and advance its commitment and focus on DEI.

### **DEI Statistics in Canada**

In accordance with the Diversity for Social Impact:

- In 2018, 23.6% of the population are foreign-born.
- A majority of immigrants are from Asia.
- Over 6 million people identify as a member of a visible minority group.
- 61.4% of women and 70.1% of men participated in the labour force in 2019.
- In 2016, less than 1/5 of all leadership roles were held by women.
- In 2017, it was reported that 11% of women and 5% of men have a mental health related disability.
- In 2017, for First Nations people living off reserves 51% of women and 40% of men reported unemployment due to not having enough education.

### **DEI Statistics in Ontario**

According to Ontario Public Service Inclusion & Diversity Blueprint:

- Ontario is home to the largest population of Indigenous people in the country.
- 48% of Ontario's population will be racialized by 2036.
- 1 in 7 Ontarians has a disability.
- By 2020, Millennials will make up half of the global workforce.
- The majority of visible minority members live in Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver
- N 2017, 40% of racialized people in Ontario reported experiencing discrimination due to race in the last 5 years.

### **Demographic Profile of Elgin County**

According to the Census Profile 2021 for Elgin County:

- 20% of the population is age 65 and over.
- 9.6% of residents live in low-income status.
- Over 2000 residents identify as Indigenous.
- Over 4200 residents are visibly minorities including South Asian, Chinese, Black, Filipino, Arab, Latin American, Southeast Asian, West Asian, Korean, Japanese, and multiple.
- Over half the population is religious.

The County is a growing and changing community. The population of the surrounding local Municipalities is increasing and becoming more diverse due to everchanging immigration, migration, urbanization, and aging society. For further information on the demographic profile of the County, visit Census Profile 2021 –Elgin County. Due to the

changing demographics, the County is dedicated to focusing its efforts towards advancing inclusive practices and policies.

### **Applying DEI at Work**

DEI can be applied to various areas of the workplace, and can enhance existing practices related to, but not limited to, the following:

- Communications
- Engaging Community
- Gathering Information/Research
- Leading and Supervising
- Monitoring and Evaluation
- Planning: Services, Programs, Events
- Policy and Procedure Development
- Recruitment, Hiring, Selection and Retention
- Strategic Planning
- Training
- Customer Service

### **Benefits of DEI in the Workplace**

According to the OSP Inclusion & Diversity Blueprint, DEI can lead to:

1. **Diverse Talent:** ensuring that the workplace is reflective of the population and better represents the public we serve.
2. **Inclusive Leaders:** allows for better collaboration between the County, its LMPs, internal and external stakeholders and the community.
3. **Diversity of Thought & Experience:** ensures workplace embraces DEI perspectives.
4. **Greater Collaboration:** allows for better creativity and innovation in the organization.
5. **Responsive Public Service:** ensures policies, programs and services are equitable and inclusive.
6. **Increased Innovation:** improves the creativity and diverse thought and decision making.
7. **Better Employee Satisfaction:** ensures employees feel included and are represented throughout the organization.
8. **Team Performance:** enhances team engagement and collaboration
9. **Reduces Bias:** ensures that all employees are treated with respects, and are free from discrimination.

DEI Plans and policies are proven to increase efficiency in customer satisfaction, and contribute to the following improvements for Municipalities:

- Increases social capital, engagement, collaboration, and feeling of belonging.
- Better physical, psychological and social health and safety.
- Decreases healthcare and social services costs.

- Increases economic prosperity and productivity.
- Increases growth and tax revenue.
- Creates a better understanding and empathy for decisions made by the Municipality.

### **CSA Psychological Health and Safety Standard Commitment**

The County of Elgin and its Local Municipal Partners are committed to ensuring a psychologically healthy and safe workplace. Under the CSA Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace Standard, there is a section pertaining to diversity that indicates the connection between psychological health and safety and diversity in the workplace. It states the following:

#### **Section 4.3.6 Diversity**

Organizations comprise diverse populations and groups.

- The organization shall consider the unique needs of these diverse populations and solicit input when these needs are relevant to complying with the requirements of this Standard.
- The organization shall consider workplace factors that can impact the ability of these workers to stay at work or return to work.
- While psychological health and safety in the workplace is a shared responsibility among stakeholders, the organization should support individual workers to seek assistance internally or externally when needed.
- The organization shall take steps to link workers in need to internal resources and should also take steps to link workers to community or other resources.

#### **Challenges and Directives**

While the County and its LMPs are committed to achieving greater diversity, equity and inclusion, it is important to recognize the challenges with its implementation:

- Financial and resource limitations.
- Competing priorities for staff.
- Uncertain about what best practices or approaches to apply.
- Disbelief inequities exist (ex: “there is no gender pay gap”).
- Limited political support.
- Lack of knowledge regarding the intersectional lens.
- Department DEI initiatives happening in isolation without corporate-wide framework.
- Need for greater demographic data or feedback on DEI.
- Absence of DEI related performance measures.
- Some DEI issues are not given as much attention as others.

#### **These challenges can be addressed by:**

- Realizing that DEI change is fluid, constant and there is no one size fits all approach.

- Change can be achieved through many avenues and is not limited.
- Tensions are not always negative, it is important to address implicit biases to improve awareness and understanding which can result in some discomfort.
- Asking questions is important to determine who is included, what causes exclusion, and how can the organization be more inclusive.
- Issues may be complex and should involve various stakeholders and the community.
- Engagement with community organizations is critical to advancing DEI goals.

The County encourages people to be allies and commit to using info learned to take a stand and advocate for all marginalized groups. Being an ally is not a one-time thing, it is a lifelong learning process of asking questions and turning insights into action.

### **DEI Training**

The County will provide training to:

- All people who are an employee of, or a volunteer with the organization;
- All people who participate in developing the organizations policies; and
- All other people who provide goods, services or facilities on behalf of the organization.

### **General DEI Training**

- An overview of the *Ontario Human Rights Code*
- An overview of the protected grounds in Canada
- Identify common barriers to DEI and how to mitigate them
- Discuss important definitions and their implications in the workplace
- Address intersectionality and privilege as it relates to the workforce
- Discuss the importance of DEI Fundamentals

The training will be appropriate to the duties of the employees, volunteers, Council members, and Committee members. It will be provided on an ongoing basis, and updated as needed. A list of free online training resources will be provided in a DEI Guide on various DEI related topics.

## County of Elgin (EC)

### Elgin County DEI Progress (General)

- Partners with Homewood Health which includes mental health and DEI related resources and supports.
- Participated in Orange Shirt Day to support reconciliation efforts and demonstrating support for Indigenous communities.
- Participated in Pink Shirt Day to support anti-bullying initiatives throughout Canada.
- Provides comprehensive benefit package to employees.
- Engages the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee on many aspects of accessibility planning and consultation processes.
- Provided ongoing training on the AODA and Ontario Human Rights Code.
- Creation of the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan with LMPs spanning 2021-2026.
- Community and Cultural Services hosted facilities tour and collections review of museum and archives with Chippewas of the Thames First Nation and Oneida Nation of the Thames to review Indigenous collections and discussed ways to work more closely together on future cultural programming.
- Community and Cultural Services have actively been working with Oneida Language and Cultural Centre since 2019 on the following:
  - On-site curatorial support to better display their artifacts to the community.
  - Providing free collection management software to the Centre.
    - They now input their artifacts into the “Museums of Elgin County Database” which we host.
  - Installing (late fall 2023) a 16’ x 8’ mural on the exterior of the Heritage Centre depicting Oneida’s settlement story which went proceeded through Elgin County in 1840.
  - Library staff are working with Oneida’s educational resource centre to promote usage of our system by Oneida residents.
    - Rack cards were mailed to residents in 2022 promoting the Shedden branch.
    - The Digital Services Librarian visits Oneida bi-monthly to distribute cards and promote programs.
- Elgin County Library hosted 2 drag queen story times (Belmont 2019 and Dutton 2022) and work regularly with Rainbow Optimists Club on inclusionary programming.
- Elgin County Library completed the M.I. Understanding Project.
- Elgin County Library participates in the Indigenous Reads program annually.
- Elgin County Library has implemented Library policies that address DEI issues: Collection Development Policy (approved September 2022), Collection Acknowledgement Statement (June 2023, Membership & Circulation Policy, Program Policy (expected approval September 2023).
- Elgin County Library provides opportunities for cardholders to have their voices heard and participate in collection purchasing and that decision making as well

as offer objections to these decisions (e.g. Suggest to Purchase form, Request for Reconsideration form).

- Elgin County Library has amended an approach to holiday stickering of the Library collection through a DEI lens (Collection Development Team project).
- Elgin County Library has analyzed who our Library cardholders are, as well as County residents, and assessing the composition of our collections using a DEI lens and diversity audit for community fit.
- Elgin County Library has selected new purchases and discarding Library collections using DEI information and resources and the Collection Development Policy which includes a DEI lens.
- Community and Cultural Services provided training in 2023 on inclusive labelling and displays of library materials.
- Elgin County Homes & Senior Services have achieved the following progress:
  - Collection and utilization of resident demographic data to plan services and activities:
    - Faith and spiritual program need based on resident demographics
    - Language, culture and ancestral history.
    - Recognition of persons with disabilities and ensuring access to accessible programming.
    - Recreation program development, implementation and review are based on each and collective resident-assessed interests, abilities, past participation, cultural heritage and perceived or actual barriers to promoting inclusion and participation.
    - Information, programming and resources specific to low-German-speaking residents based on the area demographic and assessed need.
  - Elgin Homes Grant projects and projects gather demographic data based on participation and report to the Government of Canada, including mentoring others, age, gender identity, and project benefits and outcomes (2019 - 2022).
  - Leadership Team members actively promote equity, diversity and inclusion:
    - MPT (8 hours volunteer) and 4 Recreationists participated in the Taking it to the Streets Reimagining Dementia "A Creative Coalition for Justice" Art Show and Film Screening. These Hands Project was a featured Art Exhibit. The focus was to create a more just, caring and inclusive society for everyone impacted by dementia—consultation with the Homes Resident and Family Council and resident participants (September 2023).
    - Seniors in Sync Grant project, utilizing technology to recognize individuals' ancestral roots and celebrate diversity in Elgin County through recorded interviews and collaboration with the Elgin County Archives, volunteers and staff (2021).
    - Finding our Heartbeat Drumming Project, utilizing and consulting with Tribal Spirit Music Drums, Studio Arts Music School to create a

virtual drumming program for the residents. It was hands-on and celebrated the diversity and history of drums and their importance worldwide; the project continues in the Homes (2022 - 2023). Staff offered, and MPT and project lead participated in the Indigenous Canada Course provided by the University of Alberta.

- These Hands, a Published Book and Photographic Art Project, celebrates the accomplishments and lifelong contributions of seniors living in our communities. Fifty-seven residents and community members participated in creating the Book and Photographic Art.
- These Hands Art Show with Audio, Elgin-St. Thomas Public Art Gallery (April 2022).
- Recorded in an Audio format (2022) and is currently being created in an accessible e-book format (Cooperative Education Student 2023).
- MPT and Recreationist presented "These Hands" at the City of London Dearness Home to assist and promote similar projects in the long-term care sector.
- MPT and Recreationist attended and presented at the Therapeutic Recreation Ontario Conference (2023). Which provides education and guest speakers related to inclusion, diversity, and the role recreation professionals play in ensuring each individual can reach their highest potential.
- MPT attended and presented at the Recreation Professionals of Ontario Conference "Robotic Technology." Participated in the Inclusive Environments for LGBTQ2, provided by the Egale Human Rights Trust and the Indigenous Cultural Competency Training Cycle 1-4 (2019).
- MPT attended the Aging and Spirituality Conference 2021 (Virtual attendance).
- Terrace Lodge accommodated a Recreation staff with a physical disability utilizing a ride/walker to continue her role in the Home.
- Elgin Homes ensures inclusive volunteer services recruitment, onboarding, training and positions which support and recognize diversity.
- MPTs and Recreationists offer support to individuals with language, culture or persons with disabilities to ensure they have access to resources such as:
  - Local affiliated churches, spiritual resources, and organizations.
  - Adaptive resources and equipment to promote independence through leisure.
  - Access to or collaboration with local agencies that provide support, such as the CNIB, Alzheimer Society, Community Living, Canadian Multifaith Federation, Music Care

Conference, Room 220, and Mennonite Community Services.

- Recreation teams at Bobier Villa and Elgin Manor implemented a collaborative project with Dietary services called “Countries of Discovery”. For each month starting in April of 2023, each home had chosen a country to explore where related programs/activities and residents’ meal (lunch service) were focused during the month (i.e. April = Greece, May = Mexico, October = Germany, etc.) Input from residents, families and staff were strongly promoted to enhance cultural feedback, inclusion and participation. This project continues for the remainder of 2023 and is projected to continue in 2024.

### **EC Human Resources DEI Goals**

The work done to ensure diversity, equity and inclusion is addressed across the County includes, but is not limited to:

- Working with other County departments to support various organizations that emphasize DEI in their mission and values.
- Sign the declaration or join different groups focused on DEI (Canadian Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities, Canadian Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination, City for All Women Initiative etc.).
- Facilitate networking and collaboration with the community to learn from and share ideas and get input from experts on DEI, and uphold an environment where employees feel comfortable expressing their authentic selves at work.
- Establishing a DEI Plan and related procedures and guides.
- Creating a monthly DEI Calendar highlighting important dates (updated annually).
- Include DEI content on HR page on the Intranet (ongoing).
- Compose a list of funding available to Municipalities to support DEI projects (ongoing).
- Supporting projects and initiatives undertaken in the County and local Municipalities that focus on diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility.
- Conduct mandatory DEI training for all staff at the County and Council members.
- Encourage staff to take Indigenous Awareness training via the Four Seasons of Reconciliation Professional Development Course or Indigenous Awareness by MOOC.
- Develop anti-discrimination and diversity education campaigns that elevates the voices and perspectives of diverse groups and celebrates diversity (2SLGBTQI+, Racialized Canadians, Indigenous, persons with disabilities, women, etc.)
- Review the anti-harassment and discrimination policies on an ongoing basis, and ensure the process results in appropriate action being taken to address incidents.
- Ensure there is a clear confidential process for reporting harassment or discrimination in the workplace or in the policies, procedures, goods, services, and facilities.
- Review and implement inclusive practices in place to accommodate diverse needs (disability, religious observances, parental/caregiver obligations, and etc.)



- Implement the CSA Psychological Health and Safety Standard and implement initiatives focused on workplace wellness and mental health.
- Ensure people with disabilities continue to be consulted, including through the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee, regarding decisions that can impact accessibility or create/eliminate barriers.
- Include diverse perspectives in decision making processes that impact the County, the organization, and community.
- Create a handbook (or guide) on DEI including definitions, FAQs, and tips.
- Include DEI components into the employee performance and evaluation process, and ensure that people of diverse backgrounds have equal opportunities for advancement/promotion across the organization.
- Develop a benchmark to measure progress and conduct regular staff DEI surveys.
- Work alongside the Union to identify gaps in DEI awareness and provide training.
- Review recruitment, selection and retention process to ensure best practices are used during the hiring process and consideration is given to DEI.
  - Create standardized job templates that are accessible.
  - Encourage applicants of all backgrounds to apply.
- Apply a DEI lens to all policies, processes, procedures, etc.
- Encourage open conversations around DEI and areas needing improvement.

### **EC Legislative Services (Admin) Goals**

- Provide opportunities for community members to be heard and participate in decision-making processes.
  - This will be accomplished by issuing public surveys (i.e. budget survey) when public input is required, and also by utilizing the Engage Elgin website that allows community members to provide feedback and get information about ongoing County projects.
- Celebration of holidays and important calendar dates for community organizations.
  - With Council's approval, Admin will continue to arrange and hold flag raisings in support of various community organizations (i.e. Elgin County Pride, Childhood Cancer Awareness, Elder Abuse, etc.).
  - Make every attempt to acknowledge significant holidays and cultural milestones through our weekly CAO updates, on the Intranet, and on our Facebook page.
- Representative marketing on municipal platforms.
  - Continue to and make a more conscious effort to include representation of ethnicities, LGBTQ2+ communities in our social media advertising i.e. job postings showing equal representation of men and women and diverse ethnic backgrounds for all county positions.
- Gathering demographic information of surveys of staff and the public.
  - Include questions at the beginning of our surveys asking for information on an individual's background, if they choose to indicate it.

## **EC Community & Cultural Services (Libraries / Archives / Museum) Goals**

- Elgin County Library
  - Continue to recognize and embrace the principles of Truth and Reconciliation with Ontario's diverse Indigenous population.
  - Continue to engage in meaningful dialogue with Indigenous people and First Nation bands and is committed to drawing on resource and strategies developed by the Canadian and International library community.
  - Continue to commit to policies and actions that addresses the value of Indigenous collection materials and enables Indigenous authors and content creators to be included and highlighted.
  - Elgin County Library will continue to offer commit to the provisions of library services for Indigenous people and include plans or policies to partner with Indigenous people and their communities.
  - Accessing and using other DEI toolkits created by community partners for our own programming and outreach work (e.g. STELIP's Planning Events That Are Culturally Inclusive Guidebook).
  - Provide free or low-cost programs for County residents.
  - Continue to provide inclusive programs that meet the needs of everyone, e.g. First Nations Communities Read, Drag Queen Storytime, M.I. Understanding.
  - Ensure program accommodation for sensory or other needs.
  - Ensure the Library has diverse partners and is at community tables to support diverse groups, e.g. Oneida Friendship Resource Centre partnership.
  - Continue to support National Day for Truth and Reconciliation with programs.
  - Continue to review and eliminate outdated subject terms in cataloguing of Library materials through a DEI lens.
  - Continue to evaluate how customers access our systems (and Library services).
  - Provide DEI support to existing Library teams and Committees (Collection Development Team, Collection Reference and Processing Team, Supervisors' Meetings, eResources Team).
  - Provide ongoing regular training and resources for all Library staff with regards to DEI at annual staff development day.
- Elgin County Museum and Elgin County Archives
  - Continue to be committed to the implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation of Canada: Calls to Action as it pertains to museums and archives.
  - Continue to commit to policies and actions that addresses the value of Indigenous collections and the importance of historical research for purposes that may include Truth and Reconciliation, healing, self-awareness, land acknowledgement and treaty rights.
  - Continue to make existing Indigenous and non-Indigenous collections fully available for research and understanding with appropriate descriptive

language that considers Indigenous traditions and methods of communication.

- Continue to commit to repatriating existing Indigenous collections wherever feasible.
- Continue to commit to the provision of museum and archives services for Indigenous people that include plans or policies to partner with Indigenous people and their communities.

### **EC Engineering / Facilities / Planning Goals**

- Ensuring spaces with County owned facilities are sensory-friendly.
- Involve DEI representatives in project planning.
- Continue to design public spaces in accordance with the Building Code and AODA requirements.
- Support and contribute to an inclusive community.
- Create an inclusive and equitable work environment.
- Offer flexible work arrangements to meet the individualized needs of each employee.

### **EC Economic Development / Tourism Goals**

- Inclusive Representation in Tourism Marketing
  - Ensure that all marketing materials, such as videos and photography, accurately represent the diverse demographics of Elgin County, promoting an inclusive and welcoming image to potential visitors.
- Comprehensive Diversity and Inclusion Training
  - Actively participate in ongoing diversity and inclusion training for all department staff, fostering an environment that values and celebrates differences while promoting cultural awareness and sensitivity.
- Enhanced Diversity in Summer Tourism Assistants Recruitment
  - Develop and implement a recruitment process for hiring summer tourism assistants that focuses on increasing representation from diverse backgrounds, fostering a more inclusive and diverse team.
- Engagement through Community Partnerships
  - Strengthen partnerships with community organizations, ensuring all voices are heard in decision-making processes.
- Equitable and Inclusive Service Monitoring
  - Regularly assess and monitor the accessibility, inclusivity, and equitable provision of services, including grant programs and business surveys, to guarantee that they are accessible to all members of the community.
- Diverse and Inclusive Event Planning
  - Incorporate diversity and inclusion principles into event planning, ensuring that all gatherings and consultations are accessible to diverse groups, and actively encourage their participation in regional events and discussions.
- Promotion of Elgin's Diverse Workforce and Community

- Raise awareness about the diverse composition of Elgin County's workforce and community, offering resources to local employers to encourage inclusivity and diversity within their workforce.
- Inclusive Support for Businesses
  - Provide comprehensive support to both existing and new businesses, offering informational resources that guide them in delivering inclusive services that cater to the diverse needs of local residents.
- Empowering Underrepresented Business Owners
  - Actively attract and support businesses owned by underrepresented groups, including new immigrants, through tailored assistance and resources, fostering an environment that promotes their success and growth.
- Amplifying Indigenous History and Practices
  - Increase awareness and knowledge of Indigenous history and cultural practices through educational initiatives. Incorporate land acknowledgments in corporate communications and events, and provide accessible resources for community members to deepen their understanding.
- Elevated Cultural Feedback Mechanisms
  - Enhance feedback collection methods, such as social media and surveys, to gather insights about cultural offerings, enabling continuous improvement and ensuring that cultural programming resonates with the diverse community.
- Provision of Up-to-Date Demographic Data
  - Provide relevant departments and the business community with current data on resident demographics, community changes, and other trends that impact the inclusive delivery of services. This information will facilitate informed decision-making and strategic planning that addresses the evolving needs of the diverse population.

### **EC Finance / Purchasing**

- Continue to ensure that documents are made available in accessible format and/or with communication supports upon request.
- Coordinate with other departments to identify a designated space that can be utilized for meetings that require confidentiality, that ensures full accessibility for people with disabilities.
- Engage in ongoing training on accessibility, diversity, equity and inclusion related topics (implicit biases, accessible customer service, anti-discrimination, etc.).
- Support and contribute to an inclusive community.
- Create an inclusive and equitable work environment.
- Offer flexible work arrangements to meet the individualized needs of each employee.
- Review the process for accessing personal financial information and ensure that employees with disabilities are accommodated upon request.

## **EC Homes & Seniors Services**

- Demonstrate a shared responsibility and commitment to welcoming and affirming communities for all members of the diverse populations who live, work and visit the County of Elgin's Long-Term Care Homes.
- Support the development and implementation of a Long-Term Care Home-specific DEI assessment, which can be utilized at the County of Elgin 3 Long-Term Care Homes, to support equitable and respectful care and services within the Homes. Focus to include areas such as:
  - Mission, Vision and Values that commit us to practice diversity, equity and inclusion,
  - Policy and procedures that promote diversity, equity and inclusion,
  - Including diversity, equity and inclusion as a standing agenda item on committees such as Joint Health and Safety, resident council, family council, etc.,
  - Practices to incorporate DEI into Long-Term Care Homes services and activities,
  - Staff, resident, family and volunteer engagement, and
  - Education and training.
- Participate in the review of Corporate policies and procedures regarding the process for submitting and responding to complaints about harassment and discrimination to ensure it reflects DEI best practices.
- Through the Long-Term Care Home review/assessment process, identify areas for improvement and highlight areas of strength.
- Ensure the application of a DEI lens with regards to the Quality Improvement initiatives at the Homes to support work related to the DEI assessment outcomes.
- Develop a Home specific DEI policy to support residents within the three Long-Term Care Homes that incorporates opportunities for residents to engage in personal reflection and bring awareness to unconscious biases; and recognition that the resident is the expert in their own life, etc.
- Provide training on an ongoing basis to staff on topics related to DEI (implicit bias, anti-discrimination, DEI fundamentals, psychological safety etc.).
- Update new hire (employees and volunteers) orientation programs to include diversity, equity and inclusion.
- Create awareness and taking an inclusive approach to incorporate cultural considerations (based on resident demographics) to plan services and activities such as meal planning and programming processes.
- Continue to include information and resources on DEI related dates and celebrations in communications.
- Continue to ensure staff awareness and encourage the use of Employee Assistance Plan and Homewood Health resources.
- Seek out meaningful partnerships with community-based organizations and community groups to advance equity, diversity and inclusion within the Homes and enhance life for residents from various communities.

## **EC POA / Legal**

- Ensure that all personnel practices align with the County DEI Plan.
  - Review DEI Plan *at least* annually and review internal legal department practices to ensure alignment.
  - Promote engagement with the DEI Plan internally with the department *at least* semi-annually.
- With regard to professional regulatory continuing professional development for licensees of the Law Society of Ontario (“LSO”), exceed the minimum EDI requirement for CPD credits in each annual cycle.
- Support legal industry DEI groups through the LSO and bar associations.
- Ensure that prosecutions have regard to the Gladue Principles where indigenous defendants are involved.
- Provide corporate support advice on policy compliance regarding DEI principles to ensure all departmental practices align with the County DEI Plan.
- In conjunction with the Human Resources department training, deliver annual training through the Management Team on legal obligations regarding human rights and responsibilities regarding forms of discrimination that may occur in the workplace.
- When conducting legal reviews of corporate documents and processes, ensure that all corporate practices within the document align with the County DEI Plan and make recommendations for changes when deficiencies or non-alignment are noted.
- Over a five-year window, review all corporate practices to ensure that internal policies, protocols and procedures align with the County DEI Plan.

## **Municipality of Bayham**

### **Bayham DEI Progress**

- Review policies to ensure best practices for workplace discrimination and harassment.
- Provides clear, confidential processes for reporting any violations of harassment and discrimination.
- Strive for a diverse, talented workforce that is reflective of our community
- Offer an Employee Assistance Program.
- Supports individuals who experience discrimination.
- Offer flexible work arrangements to meet individualized needs of each employee.
- Provides a welcoming culture to enable employees who come from all backgrounds to feel comfortable being their authentic selves at work, fostering an open, safe and inclusive environment for everyone.
- Implemented the following DEI related policies:
  - Personnel Policy
  - Code of Conduct for Members of Council
  - Council/Staff Relations
  - Non-Union Work From Home
  - Accessibility Policies

- Council Pregnancy & Parental Leave
- Construct accessible recreation facilities such as the Port Burwell Gazebo and Vienna Pavilion.
- Provide use of speaking mechanisms to Council on agendas through formal delegation or the use of open forum.

### **Bayham DEI Goals**

- Provide inclusive voting methods for the 2026 Election.
- Incorporate DEI training for new Council in 2026.
- Encouraging diverse perspectives in consultation processes.
- Review selection and recruitment process.
- Develop policies while applying a DEI lens and aligning it with corporate strategic priorities.
- Engage with Elgin County regarding general benefits provision to ensure changing workplace demographics and needs are met.
- Roll out mandatory diversity and inclusion training to all staff, beginning at the management level.
- Create more opportunities to engage youth and seniors.
- Continue to improve access to information and services for all residents.

## **Municipality of Central Elgin**

### **Central Elgin DEI Progress**

- Offers flexible work arrangements to meet the individualized needs of each employee.
- Actions focused on truth and reconciliation through staff education, awareness and reflection to honour the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, including education sessions on Indigenous history, truth and reconciliation, resources and training materials.
- Ensures that all Council materials receive an accessibility review via Adobe Pro before publishing Agendas in addition to accessibility features included with the iCompass platform.
- Continues to ensure closed captioning for all live-streamed meetings.
- Continues to leverage partnerships and community tables.
- Provides opportunities for community members to be heard and participate in decision-making processes.

### **Central Elgin DEI Goals**

- Increase the diversity of job applicants and new staff hired.
- Provide staff with the knowledge, skills and resources to reduce racism and discrimination, and improve inclusion and diversity.
- Develop a Communications Plan that includes specifications for accessibility requirements.
- Offer car-side Commissioner of Oaths for individuals who aren't able to easily access the municipal office.

- Conduct representative marketing on municipal platforms (Training portals, Website, Social Media).
- Provide opportunities for community members to be heard and participate in decision-making processes.
- Review & adapt the recruitment, hiring, and promotion policies, processes, and practices to ensure barriers to employment are understood & addressed.
- Provide training on how to have 'courageous conversations' to address bias and support DEI.
- Understand who we are and how workplace policies and practices impact us through developing and implementing actions to address gaps.
- Develop and implement process for evaluating organization satisfaction with DEI.
- Encourage opportunities for cross-training and job shadowing across the organization with increased use of courtesy postings.
- Identify and address systemic barriers within the Corporation.

### **Municipality of Dutton Dunwich**

#### **Dutton Dunwich DEI Progress**

- Developed and implemented a DEI Plan and Policy in 2022 to provide a framework to staff that supports existing and future policies and procedures.
  - The plan and framework were provided to all staff to raise education and awareness and equip staff with the knowledge, skills, and resources to reduce racism and discrimination, and improve DEI.
- Strive for a diverse, talented workforce that is reflective of our community.
- Provides a welcoming culture to enable employees who come from all backgrounds to feel comfortable being their authentic selves at work, fostering an open, safe and inclusive environment for everyone.
- Provides clear, confidential processes for reporting any violations of harassment and discrimination.
- Has identified and addressed systemic barriers within the Municipality.
- Works with diverse communities to ensure our programs and services meet the needs of everyone.
- Issues and complaints are addressed in accordance with the procedures outlined in the Harassment and Discrimination Prevention Policy.
- Supports individuals who experience discrimination.
- Implemented various AODA policies to destigmatize and treat others with dignity
- Increased the diversity of job applicants and new staff.
- Reviewed recruitment practices to remove barriers impacting the employment of a diverse workforce.
- Improved collaboration with diverse community members and organizations to actively celebrate National Truth and Recognition day with our local Indigenous communities, schools, and other community members.
- Continue to engage our diverse communities in a meaningful way.
- Developed policies while applying a DEI lens and aligning it with corporate strategic priorities.
- Implemented the following DEI related policies:



- Violence in the Workplace Policy (WE 01-2014)
- Workplace Harassment and Discrimination Policy (WE 02-2014)
- Commitment to a Civil Workplace Environment and Workplace Interactions Policy (WE 03-2014)
- Accommodations in the Workplace Policy (WE 04-2014)
- Emergency Workplace Response for Employees with Disabilities Policy (WE 05-2014)
- Code of Conduct for Employees Policy (WE 12-2014)
- Code of Conduct for Members of Council and Local Boards Policy (WE 17-2114)
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder – Anti Stigma Policy (WE 24-2017)
- Council Member/Staff Relationship Policy (WE 25-2020)
- Return to Work – Accommodating Employees with PTSD Procedure (HS&W 75-2017)
- Accessibility Training Procedure (A 09-2017)
- Requests for Accessible Formats and Communication Procedure (A 10-2017)
- Service Animals in the Workplace Procedure (A 11-2017)
- Support Persons Procedure (A 12-2017)
- Waiver or Reduction of Rental Fees for Municipally Owned Facilities Policy (A 23-2019)
- Patron Conduct Policy (AP 02-2015)
- Hiring Policy (RR 04-2014)
- General Grants Policy - Culture and Heritage (F&A 11-2016)

### **Dutton Dunwich DEI Goals**

- Set objectives for advancing DEI at all stages of the employment life cycle, including recruitment, hiring, retention and advancement throughout the Municipality reflecting the qualities and differences of the broader population it serves.
- Ensure budget planning, staffing and other resources necessary to meet our DEI goals are available.
- Provide for DEI education and training.
- Support and promote the breaking down of barriers, deconstructing biases, identifying systemic racism, and fostering and promoting an inclusive, respectful, and welcoming environment for all who interact with the Municipality.
- Continue to commit to the principles of DEI when doing business, delivering services, programs and providing opportunities.
- To provide opportunities for community members to be heard and participate in decision-making process.
- Developing a well-thought out and systematic education plan, including implementing ongoing (vs one-time) Unconscious Bias, Anti-Bias & Diversity Flexible work arrangements to meet the individualized needs of each employee.
- Celebration of holidays and important calendar dates for faith-based groups, human rights groups, and cultural groups.

- Continue to focus on truth and reconciliation through staff education, awareness and reflection to honour the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, including education sessions on Indigenous history, truth and reconciliation, resources and training materials.
- Seek out and celebrate DEI to mark Black History Month, International Women's Day, Asian Heritage Month, Jewish Heritage Month, National AccessAbility Week, National Indigenous History Month, Pride Month, Emancipation Day and Islamic Heritage Month.
- Providing free or low-cost recreation programs for residents with low incomes.
- Create more opportunities to engage youth and seniors.
- Ensuring spaces are sensory-friendly or offering times with reduced noise and stimulation.
- Understanding and affirming how we need to treat each other through anti-racism training for all staff and management.
- Continue to improve access to information and services for all residents.
- Understanding who we are and how workplace policies and practices impact us through developing and implementing actions to address gaps.
- Establishing anonymous and safe means for staff to share experiences, feedback, and complaints.
- Review Municipal forms for inclusive language and gender neutrality.
- Review the recruitment process.
- Creating programs that provide recognition of DEI activities that positively impact the Corporate culture and foster a welcoming environment for staff.
- Have a Cultural Celebrations Calendar of events.
- Promote staff awareness and participation in events and initiatives i.e., Black History Month.
- Actively attract ethnic businesses.
- Investigate a quiet room/space at a Municipal facility.
- Promote and provide training and/or educational sessions on DEI fundamentals, anti-Black racism/anti-racism.
- Continually reinforce and set expectations for a harassment free and respectful workplace.

### **Municipality of West Elgin**

#### **West Elgin DEI Progress**

- Participate in recognition days to commemorate and raise awareness of important dates relating to DEI (Orange Shirt Day, Pink Shirt Day etc.).
- Sharing of resources and posting information internally and externally related to DEI topics and important DEI related dates.
- Has a process in place for monitoring discrimination and harassment and responding allegations made by employees and/or members of the public.
- Provide equal opportunities as a municipal employer, service provider and contractor.
- Offer flexible work arrangements to meet individualized needs of each employee.
- Provide opportunities for community members to consult and participate in decision-making processes as it relates to DEI and accessibility.

- Ensuring materials and information are accessible and available in language(s) used by the intended audience.
- Celebration of holidays and important calendar dates for faith-based groups, human rights groups, and cultural groups.
- Offers an affordable and accessible transportation option to members of the community.
- Promotes the respect, knowledge, and appreciation of cultural diversity and inclusion of Indigenous and racialized communities in the cultural fabric of the municipality.
- Monitors services to ensure they are accessible, inclusive and equitably provided.

### **West Elgin DEI Goals**

- To provide staff with the knowledge, skills and resources to reduce racism and discrimination, and improve inclusion and diversity.
- To improve collaboration with diverse community members and organizations in West Elgin.
- Provide professional development opportunities and training on topics relating to DEI (unconscious bias, mental health and wellness, anti-discrimination etc.).
- Ensuring the Municipality incorporates a DEI lens when conducting performance evaluations for employees.
- Work alongside the Union to identify gaps in DEI awareness and provide training
- Develop and implement a process for evaluating the Municipality's satisfaction with DEI.
- Continue to identify, promote and reshare resources on topics relating to DEI.
- Develop leadership awareness of DEI and accountability ensuring leaders have an understanding, competence, and resources to discuss a variety of topics relating to DEI.
- Evaluate flexibility and accommodation practices ensuring they meet industry best practice, incorporate and consider DEI, and are barrier free.
- Provide opportunities to welcome newcomers to the municipality.

## **Town of Aylmer**

### **Aylmer DEI Progress**

- Review recruitment/ candidate pool generation existing and best practices to increase diversity of job applicants and new staff hired. The goal is to attract and leverage a diverse workforce.
- Provide opportunities for community members to be heard and participate in decision-making processes through public engagement aimed at engaging a diverse community. The goal is to improve collaboration with diverse community members and organizations in Aylmer.
- Establishment of a corporate communication policy (2021) to implement best practices, with the goal of engaging a diverse community.

- Encourage opportunities for cross-training and job shadowing across the organization.

### **Aylmer DEI Goals**

- Reviewing organizational capacity and need for specific positions or departments to support DEI work.
- Reviewing organizational complaint processes to ensure complaints stemming from one of more of the protected grounds of the Ontario Human Rights Code are addressed appropriately.
- Continued review and consideration of flexible work arrangements to meet the individualized needs of each employee.
- Continue working with community organizational stakeholders to ensure that diverse populations are able to effectively and efficiently engage with Town programs and services. Part of this includes engaging diverse communities in a meaningful way.
- Increase vigilance against systemic and individual discrimination. Support individuals who experience discrimination.
- Monitor services to ensure they are accessible, inclusive and equitably provided
- Create more opportunities to engage youth and seniors.
- Provide opportunities to welcome newcomers to the municipality.

## **Township of Malahide**

### **Malahide DEI Progress**

- What do we already do in recruitment process.
- What do we already do in training of all staff.
- Monitor discrimination in the municipality and act to address it.
- Support individuals who experience discrimination.
- Provide equal opportunities as a municipal employer, service provider and contractor.
- Support measures that promote equity in the labour market.
- Flexible work arrangements to meet the individualized needs of each employee.
- Continue to promote existing resources while creating additional corporate learning opportunities on diversity and inclusion topics that are available to all staff (e.g. mental health, unconscious bias, plain language, anti-oppression).

### **Malahide DEI Goals**

- Create a handbook (or guide) on DEI including definitions, FAQs, and tips.
- Include DEI components into the employee performance and evaluation process.
- Develop a benchmark to measure progress and conduct regular staff DEI surveys.
- Ensure there is a clear confidential process for reporting harassment or discrimination in the workplace or in the policies, procedures, goods, services, and facilities.
- Work alongside the Union to identify gaps in DEI awareness and provide training.

- Review recruitment, selection and retention process to ensure best practices are used during the hiring process and consideration is given to DEI.
- Facilitate networking and collaboration with the community to learn from and share ideas and get input from experts on DEI.
- Offer skill-building opportunities that will develop our workforce.
- Encourage opportunities for cross-training and job shadowing across the organization with increased use of courtesy postings.
- Facilitate networking and collaboration to learn from others with expertise in diversity and inclusion.
- Monitor services to ensure they are accessible, inclusive and equitably provided
- Review recruitment, selection and retention process to ensure best practices are used during the hiring process and consideration is given to DEI.

## **Township of Southwold**

### **DEI Progress**

- Provided staff with the knowledge, skills and resources to reduce racism and discrimination, and improve inclusion and diversity.
- Provide opportunities for community members to be heard and participate in decision-making processes.
- Offer flexible work arrangements to meet the individualized needs of each employee.
- Established anonymous and safe means for staff to share experiences, feedback, and complaints.
- Actions focused on truth and reconciliation through staff education, awareness and reflection to honour the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, including education sessions on Indigenous history, truth and reconciliation, resources and training materials.
- Provided clear, confidential processes for reporting any violations of harassment and discrimination policies.
- Encouraged opportunities for cross-training and job shadowing across the organization with increased use of courtesy postings.
- Implemented secondments and acting assignments as a tool for employee development and create supporting policies and procedures.
- Developed and implemented a diversity and inclusion lens to help staff identify barriers in Regional policies, programs and services.

### **DEI Goals**

- Developing a well-thought out and systematic education plan, including implementing ongoing (vs one-time) Unconscious Bias, Anti-Bias & Diversity Training – starting with leaders and champions.
- Developing supportive resources like a DEI Lens Toolkit to support staff across the municipality to integrate DEI into their work (see Ottawa's EI Lens Handbook, Appendix A), or a DEI Guide or DEI Policy to supplement the DEI Plan.
- Roll out mandatory diversity and inclusion training to all staff, beginning at the management level.

- Create a quick reference handbook on diversity and inclusion that includes definitions, FAQs and tips on the best way to address issues and inappropriate behavior.
- Create more opportunities for education and awareness on DEI topics for residents.

## **Communication and Contact Information**

### **Feedback**

The County and its Local Municipal Partners accept all feedback from members of the public relating to the provision of accessible goods, services or facilities as it pertains to diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility.

The County and its Local Municipal Partners will develop procedures that specify the actions that will be taken if a complaint is received about the manner it provides goods, services or facilities. Information regarding the feedback process will be posted on the County's website. Individuals can request this information by contacting the County.

### **Compliance**

The County is compliant with the various legislative requirements that oversee diversity, equity and inclusion throughout the Province of Ontario and Canada as a whole.

This plan will be available on Elgin County's website, located at [www.elgincounty.ca](http://www.elgincounty.ca). A hard copy can be obtained by contacting the County's Human Resources Department.

### **Local Municipal Partner Websites**

Municipality of Bayham: <https://www.bayham.on.ca/>

Municipality of Central Elgin: <https://www.centralelgin.org/en/index.aspx>

Municipality of Dutton Dunwich: <https://www.duttondunwich.on.ca/>

Municipality of West Elgin: <https://www.westelgin.net/en/index.aspx>

Town of Aylmer: <https://aylmer.ca/>

Township of Malahide: <https://www.malahide.ca/en/index.aspx>

Township of Southwold: <https://www.southwold.ca/en/index.aspx>

### **Contact Information**

The County encourages people to reach out if they have any questions, comments, or concerns regarding the County DEI Plan, or with accessing goods, services, and/or facilities.

**Address:** 450 Sunset Drive,  
St. Thomas, ON, N5R 5V1

**Email:** [hr@elgin.ca](mailto:hr@elgin.ca)

**Phone:** 519-631-1460 x 125

**Website:** [www.elgincounty.ca](http://www.elgincounty.ca)

**This document is available in accessible format and/or with communication supports, upon request.**