



Report to County Council

From: Sarah Savoie, Accessibility Coordinator

Date: November 28, 2023

Subject: Elgin County and LMPs Joint Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plan 2024-2026

Recommendations:

THAT the report titled *Elgin County and LMPs Joint Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan 2024-2026*, dated November 28, 2023, from Accessibility Coordinator Sarah Savoie, be received, filed and approved.

Introduction:

The purpose of this report is to provide Elgin County Council with an opportunity to review, provide input on, and approve the Joint Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Plan. The Joint DEI Plan is a collaborative effort between the County of Elgin and its Local Municipal Partners. The Joint DEI Plan outlines the DEI progress made and the DEI goals that will be implemented from 2024-2026, across Elgin County.

The Joint DEI Plan was created to reflect best practices and is comparable to work that has been/is being completed by other Municipalities in Ontario. Note: there is no specific legislation that requires Municipalities to have a DEI Plan, however, the Joint DEI Plan does consider, and account for, legislative requirements under the [*Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, S.O. 2005, c. 11*](#) (AODA) and the [*Ontario Human Rights Code, R.S.O. 1990, c. H. 19*](#) (the Code).

Discussion:

The Joint DEI Plan includes the following sections:

- Decolonization and Reconciliation
 - Provides information stating the County and its LMPs will continue to collaborate with Indigenous communities and partners to advance mutual DEI goals
 - States the County's commitment to supporting the Calls to Action
 - Notes the County has implemented a Land Acknowledgement Statement
- Purpose
 - Outlines the reason for creating a Joint DEI Plan, and how the County and its LMPs are dedicated to responding to and eliminating patterns of systemic discrimination and to ensure the needs of all residents are met
 - Provides 5 overarching objectives the Joint DEI Plan strives to achieve

- Statement of Commitment
 - Demonstrates the County and its LMPs commitment to creating a workplace environment and community that is diverse, equitable and inclusive for all
 - Includes the main aims the Joint DEI Plan will achieve and how the plan acts as a framework for ensuring policies, practices and procedures are non-discriminatory, fair, and just
- Scope
 - Includes the way the plan is applied and who it is applied to
- Legislative Authority
 - Includes all legislation (with links) that may have requirements that can impact the Joint DEI Plan
 - Acknowledges the Joint DEI Plan will adhere to all relevant legislation as well as international and Indigenous related guidelines/treaties/acts
- Plan Coordination
 - Provide information on how the plan was created, who was involved, and the approval process
 - Includes participating municipalities information
- Implementation
 - Outlines the way the County and its LMPs will implement the plan
- Evaluation, Reporting and Outcomes
 - Describes how the Joint DEI Plan will be communicated, the right to freedom from discrimination, the protected grounds, DEI progress reports, and DEI topics
 - Includes information on the outcomes and how it will be measured
- Overview of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
 - Why DEI Matters -explains the current climate for municipalities, ongoing challenges, and why it is important to address DEI
 - DEI Statistics in Canada
 - DEI Statistics in Ontario
 - Demographic Profile of Elgin County
 - Applying DEI at Work -what areas of the workplace it can be applied to
 - Benefits of DEI in the Workplace
 - CSA Psychological Health and Safety Standard Commitment
- Challenges and Directives
 - Discussed potential challenges that may impact the implementation of the Joint DEI Plan
 - How challenges can be addressed
- DEI Training
 - How and when training will be provided and who must take the training
- Sections on the Progress and Goals for 2024-2026, for all of the following:
 - Elgin County (general) Progress
 - EC HR Goals
 - EC Legislative Services Goals

- EC Community & Cultural Services Goals
- EC Engineering / Facilities / Planning Goals
- EC Economic Development / Tourism Goals
- EC Finance / Purchasing
- EC Homes & Seniors Services
- EC POA / Legal
- Municipality of Bayham
- Municipality of Central Elgin
- Municipality of Dutton Dunwich
- Municipality of West Elgin
- Town of Aylmer
- Township of Malahide
- Township of Southwold
- Communication and Contact Information
 - Information provided on feedback process, compliance, LMP websites, and contact information
 - Includes statement that “this document is available in accessible format and/or with communication supports, upon request”

Financial Implications:

Staff time allocated to the creation and implementation of the Joint DEI Plan goals.

Alignment with Strategic Priorities:

Serving Elgin	Growing Elgin	Investing in Elgin
☒ Ensuring alignment of current programs and services with community need. ☒ Exploring different ways of addressing community need. ☒ Engaging with our community and other stakeholders.	☐ Planning for and facilitating commercial, industrial, residential, and agricultural growth. ☒ Fostering a healthy environment. ☒ Enhancing quality of place.	☒ Ensuring we have the necessary tools, resources, and infrastructure to deliver programs and services now and in the future. ☒ Delivering mandated programs and services efficiently and effectively.

Additional Comments: None.



Local Municipal Partner Impact:

Local Municipal Partners were responsible for providing a list of progress and goals to incorporate in the Joint DEI Plan. Local Municipal Partners will oversee the implementation of the goals set in the Joint DEI Plan between 2024-2026. Collaboration between the County of Elgin and its Local Municipal Partners may take place regarding specific DEI and accessibility related goals (where applicable).

Communication Requirements:

The Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee has reviewed and approved the Joint DEI Plan. The Joint DEI Plan will then require approval from County Council, before being sent to Local Municipal Partner Councils for approval. The Joint DEI Plan is expected to be posted on the County website and Local Municipal Partners' websites.

On an annual basis, the County and its Local Municipal Partners may publish a progress report to demonstrate the work that has been done under the Joint DEI Plan.

Conclusion:

The information contained in this report is intended to provide a high-level overview of the Joint DEI Plan, its purpose, and the goals that the County of Elgin and its Local Municipal Partners have set out to achieve between 2024-2026.

All of which is Respectfully Submitted

Approved for Submission

Sarah Savoie,
Accessibility Coordinator

Don Shropshire,
Chief Administrative Officer

Amy Thomson,
Director of Human Resources

