

Charter FINAL
Equity and Inclusion North Bay
(EINB)

Working together for a Fully Inclusive Community

A Guide to Social Sustainability in North Bay

Background and Terms of Reference
August 29, 2020

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FOREWORD

This document was produced with the generous assistance of Reconciliation North Bay.

Equity and Inclusion North Bay recognizes that our community sits on the traditional territory of the Anishinabek peoples, and that Indigenous residents make substantial contributions to the quality of life in North Bay.

EQUITY AND INCLUSION NORTH BAY(EINB)

1.0 Overview

1.1 Strength in Diversity

Equity and Inclusion North Bay is a community-wide, collaborative initiative of North Bay's business, education, social services, academic, health care, government services, justice, arts, and faith sectors. Its purpose is to promote an increased, community-wide understanding of the real issues faced by many people in North Bay, as they relate to social, economic, and cultural discrimination.

The future social and economic fabric of North Bay will be strengthened by working together to prevent and remove racism-induced barriers to education, employment, housing, and individuals' health and well-being.

1.2 Inclusion

In accordance with the principles of the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, The Canadian Human Rights Act, The Ontario Human Rights Code, The Canadian Citizenship Act, and The Canadian Multiculturalism Act -- members and supporters of Equity and Inclusion North Bay firmly believe that every individual in our community has the right to equal opportunity for social, economic, political, and cultural inclusion.

People will lead productive, healthy, and fulfilling lives; and contribute meaningfully to the economy and future of North Bay once housing, employment, educational, and cultural discrimination is eliminated. Every adult and child in North Bay deserves equal access to all opportunities that this region has to offer. This is the mark of a welcoming and inclusive community.

1.2.1 Achieving Inclusion

Achieving full inclusion will be a journey that will take strong political will and a multigenerational and multi-institutional commitment. Locally, an important first step on this journey took place with the launch of **Equity and Inclusion North Bay** in September 2020. On that date, a group of citizens banded together and shared a vision to advocate for a much better future for minorities, immigrants, and Indigenous peoples. A supportive meeting was held with Mayor MacDonald on July 28, 2020 to present this community-based initiative. At this meeting the Mayor

pledged his support to this group, and for North Bay becoming a member of the Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities

2.0 History

Equity and Inclusion North Bay was created with the demonstrated support of a diversity of individuals and organizations in our community in September 2020.

Many citizens have witnessed and been subjected to acts of overt and systemic discrimination and racism while living in North Bay.

Approximately one quarter of the City of North Bay's population is comprised of urban Indigenous residents and immigrants, some 12,000 in total.

The history of racism experienced in Northern Ontario cities was documented in a 2004 study funded by Heritage Canada. Published in the North Bay Nugget in June, 2004, a news article about the *Debwewin* report revealed:

**' Almost 60 per cent of survey participants say they observed discrimination based on race against someone in North Bay in the past year.*

** Respondents mentioned bullying and teasing in schools, and rudeness by store clerks, and suggested that teachers, the media, police, merchants -- everyone has a responsibility to recognize that racism exists in North Bay, even though it may be subtle.*

** "North Bay people believe that because they are not burning crosses or beating up people or using violence, they are not racist," wrote an Indigenous woman, one of many who mentioned being made to feel uncomfortable when claiming sales tax exemption in local stores. "North Bay's racism is subtle...but very powerful."*

** What should really concern us all is that one in five respondents said racism is a personal, not a community problem.*

**"It will not come as a surprise to the area's Aboriginal residents that Natives account for 40 per cent of survey responses, and that their experience with racism is the most significant, involving incidents in hospitals, schools, stores, and in dealing with police officers and social workers."¹*

In recent months, violent deaths of members of Black communities at the hands of police officers -- including the brutal killing of Mr. George Floyd by Minneapolis police -- has ignited calls to action in Canada and the United States and sparked worldwide movement for grassroots activism to fight discrimination in all its forms.

In North Bay, on June 6, over 2,000 community members participated in a peaceful march in support of Black Lives Matter following the death of George Floyd. Many said they had

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experienced first-hand the challenges of being a black or brown-skinned person in this city. One black community member had this to say:

“I didn’t have friends up until Grade 5. I would just walk around the schoolyard over and over and over again because people wouldn’t play with me. There were people who were friendly to me, but their friends didn’t want to play with me. So that made me withdraw from people from then on. I never liked school, I never liked how teachers singled me out in class. This happened to my brother too.”

Racism and discrimination of all kinds exists everywhere. Many Canadians have claimed their country is “better than the United States” because they haven’t heard the stories that are now starting to be told in communities like North Bay.

The reality is that racism is alive and kicking in our community. One reason racism is systemic is that, historically, decision-making bodies are not diverse and do not fully understand and feel the impact of their policies on racialized and Indigenous people.

Initiatives like Equity and Inclusion North Bay have been created for the purpose of telling those stories and challenging civic leaders to create community environments where all residents are respected, regardless of cultural or socio-economic circumstance.

2.1 Bridging the Divide: Ending Racism and Discrimination

Progress in ending racial discrimination has been very slow. Canada's Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) was launched in 1991 in the wake of the so-called 'Oka Crisis', a 78-day standoff in the summer of 1990 during which 4,000 Canadian soldiers and Quebec police officers surrounded 63 Mohawk men, women, and children. The confrontation erupted when the town of Oka announced plans to expand a municipal golf course onto a burial site used by the Mohawks of Kanesatake, who had tried unsuccessfully for 270 years to have their land claim addressed by the governments of France, Britain, Canada, and Quebec.

After five years, the 4,000-page RCAP report produced 440 recommendations designed to redress historic wrongs against Indigenous Peoples, and build more respectful and successful relationships in the future.

Twenty-five years later, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) released a 2,000-page report with similar intentions and 94 'Calls to Action'. The TRC was established by Canada as part of the Indian Residential School Settlement, the outcome of the largest class action lawsuit in Canadian history

While governments at all levels across Canada have made verbal commitments in support of laws that would implement the recommendations of these national inquiries, observers have

accused Canadians and their political leaders of being long on promises, and short on substantial action.

3.0 Terms of Reference

3.1 Vision

By 2030, North Bay will be a community where everyone actively shares responsibility for removing barriers to equity and inclusion for all; where every individual has the opportunity to equally contribute to, and benefit from, the economic, political, social, and cultural life of our community.

3.2 Mission

To remove systemic barriers to inclusion in all sectors of our society and to take meaningful action towards eliminating racism and discrimination, by learning together to build a respectful, inclusive and safe North Bay community.

3.3 Values

- Acceptance
- Bravery
- Commitment
- Equity
- Honesty
- Respect
- Sharing
- Learning together

3.4 Goals:

Goals are expected to change over time. Some of Equity and Inclusion North Bay's goals are:

- Champion the recognition and respect of all residents of the City of North Bay, regardless of their creed, culture, chosen lifestyle, or socio-economic circumstance;
- Develop cross-cultural learning opportunities;
- Improve public awareness of systemic racism;
- Promote and uphold the principles of the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, The Canadian Human Rights Act, The Ontario Human Rights Code, The Canadian Citizenship Act, and The Canadian Multiculturalism Act;
- Create and promote programs and projects designed to ensure that all North Bay residents have equal opportunity for social, economic, political, and cultural inclusion in our city
- Collaborate with the municipal government and other local agencies on initiatives that ensure all North Bay residents have access to the same quality of life.
- Celebrate best practices of diversity, equity, and inclusion occurring in North Bay.
- Promote the social, economic, cultural, and environmental benefits of having a strong and vibrant multicultural community in North Bay.
- Engage and influence North Bay institutions, businesses, and citizens with the goal of facilitating social inclusion of North Bay's multicultural people.
- Promote multicultural people's access to North Bay's social, educational, business, political and cultural opportunities.
- Promote constructive and measurable actions that improve relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people of the region.
- Celebrate "reconciliation related" success stories in regards to North Bay's quality of life.

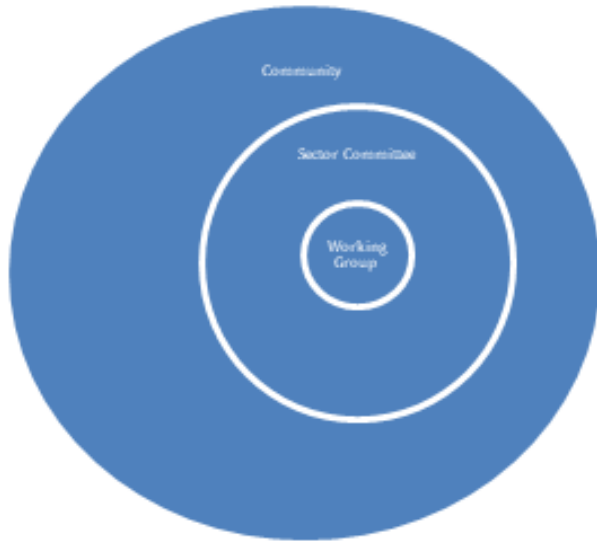
- Promote an appreciation of minority peoples' culture, language, practices, and traditions as part of the broader North Bay cultural mosaic.
- Celebrate inclusion -related successes in our community
- Advocate for full social and economic inclusion of all people
- Partner to contribute to diversity-related research in our community

3.5 Current Equity and Inclusion North Bay Membership

3.5.1 Working Group : Leo DeLoyde, Dielle Raymond, Vijanti Ramlogan, Gemma Victor, and Vindra Sahadeo. This group is responsible for planning/chairing/recording meetings, and proposing agendas.

3.5.2 Transitional Equity and Inclusion North Bay Committee: Leo DeLoyde , Dielle Raymond, Vijanti Ramlogan, Gemma Victor. New members will be included in December 2020.

3.5.3 Equity and Inclusion North Bay - Structure



3.5.3.1 (Future) Equity and Inclusion North Bay Working Group

Comprised of 5 to 7 representative individuals (preferably with lived experience with inequality). A Chair will be appointed on a rotating basis, approximately every two years.

Duties

- Oversee Equity and Inclusion North Bay strategy development and implementation, advocacy, research, best practices adoption, operations, and result measurement.
- Media liaison, social media outreach, and communications.
- Provide hands-on administrative, communications, and event support
- Budget oversight, grant applications, and fundraising

Meetings will be held monthly

3.5.3.2(Future) Equity and Inclusion North Bay Committee (“The Sector Committee)

The Sector Committee is comprised of approximately 10 to 12 community leaders who are responsible for involving their organizations in the inclusion process, and promoting inclusion to similar organizations and businesses. Representatives will be drawn from a wide cross-section of the various sectors of the North Bay community, including institutions, health-care, the justice system, government, education, employment, social services, Indigenous people, a representative for Immigrants, and the local business community. A Chair of the Sector Committee will be appointed by the group and shall be an ex-officio member of the Working Group. The remaining members will be referred to as ‘Associates.’

The approach of drawing from a wide range of community sectors is designed to incorporate leaders from as many aspects of the community in which inequality can manifest as possible. Indigenous people have been included in this sectors model due to the following factors:

- a) The Sector Committee will meet on the traditional territory of Anishinabek peoples
- b) They are the most populous racialized group in the area.
- c) They have well-established, and significant, governance and social service structures.

Duties:

- Promoting inclusion values and policies in their home organization and other organizations in their network
- Sharing inclusion success stories

- Providing in-kind donations of staff time, meeting spaces, and other resources where possible
- Attending community events and fundraisers
- Seeking exposure to the stories of those who have experienced inequality, and incorporating the advice and wisdom of those with ‘boots on the ground.’

Meetings will be held quarterly.

3.6 Equity and Inclusion North Bay Committee Member Obligations

1. Members will support, contribute to, and promote the evolving Vision, Mission, and Goals of Equity and Inclusion North Bay.
2. Members are expected to participate fully in Equity and Inclusion North Bay meetings and cultivate a collegial relationship with the North Bay community to promote inclusion
3. Regular meeting attendance is expected.
4. Members may be asked to assist with special projects.
5. Members must declare any conflicts of interest and refrain from participating in any related discussions.

4.0 Budget and Supporting Resources

Equity and Inclusion North Bay will secure the necessary financial, staff, communications, and administrative support resources.

5.0 The Sector Committee - Role of Chair:

The Chair will have the following responsibilities:

1. Conduct a scan of the literature to identify Diversity and Inclusion best practices supported by research (see <https://en.ccunesco.ca/networks/coalition-of-inclusive-municipalities>)
2. Create opportunities for issues groups to provide feedback to Associates about organizational climate and culture (i.e. climate assessments, anonymous satisfaction surveys, focus group sessions, etc.)
3. Create opportunities for Associates and the public to have meaningful engagement with community leadership to promote cultural inclusivity and discuss all issues relating to equity in the city.
4. Provide feedback and insight to the Sector Committee, as a whole, on issues of culture, climate, equity, inclusion, and diversity in the workplace; including recommendations and support regarding short-and long-term strategies to meet the committee's current and future work/volunteer force needs (i.e. unbiased recruitment, hiring and retention practices)

5. Formulate recommendations for the development or modification of policies and practices that negatively impact diversity, inclusivity, and equity efforts
6. Create learning opportunities in which Associates, or people who interact with the Committee, may deepen and develop personal understanding of inclusion and equity at an organizational level
7. Identify opportunities for the Associates to engage with its broader communities to promote equity, social justice, and inclusion (i.e. community volunteer activities, corporate social responsibility initiatives, etc.)
8. Serve as a Diversity and Inclusion communications vehicle to Associates by helping to develop appropriate and effective communications strategies
9. Conduct a self-assessment of Committee effectiveness during the current year that describes accomplishments relative to developed goals and chartered responsibilities, challenges and barriers encountered during the period, and recommendations for solutions. Report to the public through press releases, etc.
10. Share success stories with group and media

5.1 The Sector Committee - Role of Associate Members

This more hands-on membership group is part of the broader community network and participates in Sector Committee meetings and events.

1. Responsible for making recommendations on equity, diversity, and inclusion activities.
2. Responsible for promoting equity, diversity, and inclusion in the Associate member's own organization.
3. Responsible for undertaking research and sharing wise practices in equity, diversity, and inclusion.
4. Responsible for communicating equity, diversity, and inclusion efforts and successes.
5. If possible, providing more hands-on administrative, communications, and event support.

5.1.1 Associate Member Obligations

1. Associate members will support and promote the evolving Vision, Mission, and Objectives of Equity and Inclusion North Bay.
2. Associate members are expected to participate in **Sector Committee** meetings, and cultivate a collegial relationship with the North Bay community to promote equity, diversity, and inclusion.
3. Regular meeting attendance is expected.
4. Associate members may be asked to assist with special projects.
5. Associate members will be asked to declare any conflicts of interest and refrain from participating in any related discussions.

6.0 Record Keeping and Communications

Equity and Inclusion North Bay will create and maintain a website to share documents and resources, research, cultural learning opportunities and activities and successes.

Meeting minutes will be taken and shared with members.

7.0 Meetings

Meetings will be held at the call of the Chair(s).

Associate members may have more frequent meetings to share research and ideas and provide support to the Equity and Inclusion North Bay initiative.

References

UN Paper

Books

Articles

Sample policies for business

APPENDICES

APPENDIX1

Supporting ResourcesResources and Links

<https://nbifc.org/urban-aboriginal-strategy/reconciliation-north-bay/>

<http://www.debwewin.ca/articles.htm>

<https://en.ccunesco.ca/networks/coalition-of-inclusive-municipalities>

<https://www.nugget.ca/news/local-news/group-pushing-city-council-to-take-action-on-racism>

<https://www.nugget.ca/news/local-news/2000-march-against-racism>

<https://www.baytoday.ca/local-news/anti-racism-working-group-seeking-city-council-action-2545518>

APPENDIX 2

Testimonials

One woman told the crowd she has felt the backlash of racial discrimination and profiling her entire life while growing up in North Bay.

"Since a lot of the comments under the black lives matter posts make me uncomfortable and I don't want to put my family in harm's way. You can even mention that if you want. I feel like some people need to know that what they're saying is downright scary.

"My dad is Jamaican, and my mom is white. For years I have listened to people telling me that I am not one of them, that I am not a person of value and I can't belong in a group.

"One of my mom's earliest memories of me in school is me coming to her and saying 'I'm not like the other kids. I can't play with them. How do I make friends with them Mom?' And that has been my experience for a very, very long time.

"The first time I wanted to kill myself was when I was 8 years old. I remember it vividly.

"It was a combination of everything. It was the isolation that I felt from my peers. As an eight-year-old, it was mostly not fitting in. It was being the outcast that really forced me to just think that I don't really want to be here anymore."

The college student felt lost and alone throughout elementary school.

"I didn't have friends up until Grade 5. I would just walk around the schoolyard over and over and over again because people wouldn't play with me. There were people who were friendly to me, but their friends didn't want to play with me. So that made me withdraw from people from then on. I never liked school, I never liked how teachers singled me out in class. This happened to my brother too.

“When kids are little, they just speak what their parents say, it is not a belief yet. Suddenly when you turn 12, 13, 14, you know that when someone says the ‘N’ word to you, they mean it. They know the intent behind it. Even if they say it is in a song, even if they say it is just a joke, it is racially charged and it got worse.

“I started to develop a severe eating disorder because I would see these girls who are white and pretty and skinny and they would look at me and giggle in the change rooms when I was 12. I wanted to blend in. I wanted people to not notice me and I wanted to be one of ‘them’ quote unquote.

“I thought if I looked just like them, maybe they wouldn’t be mean to me. Maybe when I walked in the room the boys wouldn’t make a fake Jamaican accent. When I stood at my locker at 10 years old, I overheard a boy saying, ‘There are no girls in the class today except for (Me) and a girl responded ‘She doesn’t count. She looks different.’”