



# Equity Strategic Plan

2024-2027



# Land Acknowledgment

We respectfully acknowledge that the County of Dufferin resides within the lands of the Tionontati (Petun), Attawandaron (Neutral), Haudenosaunee (Six Nations), and Anishinaabe Peoples. We also acknowledge that various municipalities within the County of Dufferin reside within the treaty lands named under the Haldimand Deed of 1784 and two of the Williams Treaties of 1818: Treaty 18: the Nottawasaga Purchase, and Treaty 19: The Ajetance Treaty.

These territories upon which we live and learn, are steeped in rich Indigenous history and traditions. It is with this statement that we declare to honour and respect the past and present connection of Indigenous Peoples with their land, its waterways, and resources.

The Equity Audit Findings Report indicates that 3% of respondents are Indigenous, a disproportionately low representation of Indigenous Peoples within the County's workforce. As we transform and move forward as an organization, it is necessary that we consider the unique and differing experiences of Indigenous Peoples when designing workplace policies, procedures, practices, and processes.

As a first step, the County is committed to applying the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action, the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Calls for Justice, and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) as a foundation to inform how we will execute the tactics set out in this plan. We are steadfast in our shared commitment and responsibility to Reconciliation, and the decolonization and indigenization of our workplace as we implement the 2024- 2027 Equity Strategic Plan.



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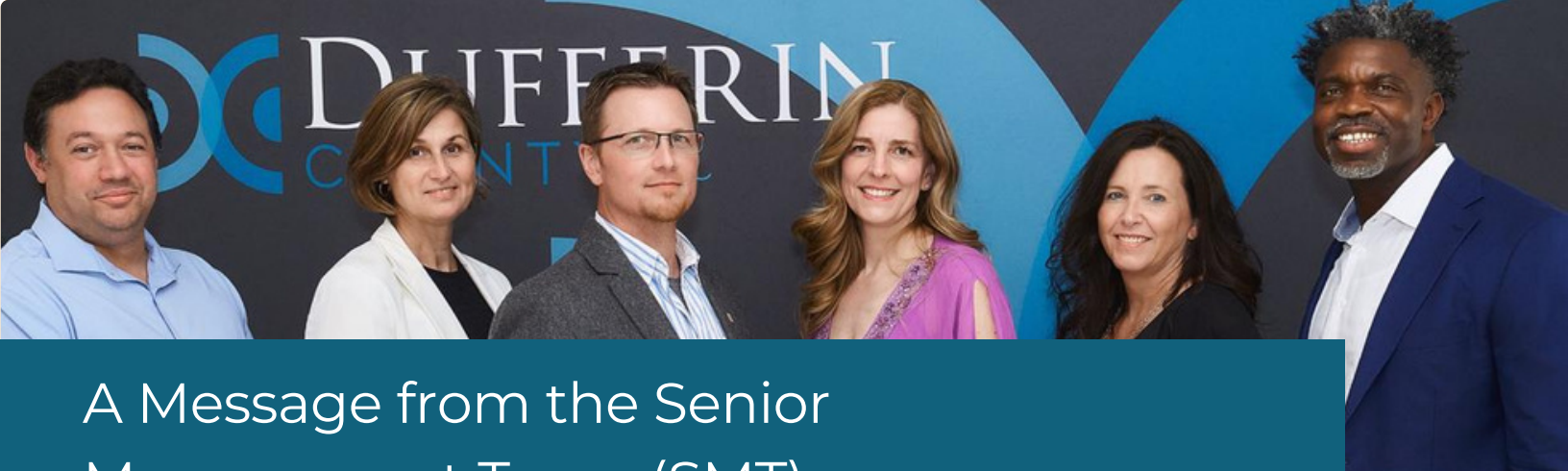
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## A Message from the Senior Management Team (SMT)

The County of Dufferin is proud to present its first-ever Equity Strategic Plan, a four-year plan that focuses on developing responsive solutions to current systemic challenges, workplace experiences, and emerging opportunities identified by an Equity Audit completed at the County in November 2022.

The County of Dufferin is privileged to have a diverse staff of all ages, races, genders, sexualities, abilities, faiths, and backgrounds. This diversity has given us access to a wealth of experiences and perspectives that have allowed us to serve the Dufferin community for decades. In honour of that truth, the County is proud to be embarking on a journey to become a more equity-informed organization where every employee, especially those from communities that have experienced marginalization, are given the opportunities, resources, and support that they deserve.

The development of the Equity Strategic Plan was a collective effort, developed in partnership with an internal equity, diversity, and inclusion Strategic Plan Working Team. We thank everyone who took part in this intensive exercise for their insights, creativity, and partnership. Your work has helped ensure that the goals, solutions, and tactics identified in the Plan are focused and meaningful and that the Plan represents a variety of unique experiences and backgrounds.

Under the Equity Strategic Plan, the County's vision is to be an anti-colonial, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive workplace where employees feel a sense of dignity, wellness, and belonging. Our approach to achieving this vision will focus on a shared commitment and responsibility to dismantle all forms of systemic oppression derived from white supremacy, including – but not limited to – anti-Black and anti-Indigenous racism, sexism, ableism, transphobia, and homophobia that operates on the personal, interpersonal and institutional levels.





# Introduction to the Equity Strategic Plan

**The County of Dufferin has undergone a strategy development and assessment process to collaboratively develop an Equity Strategic Plan.**

The Equity Strategic Plan consists of **four Areas of Focus to be completed across a four-year timeline**. Each goal has corresponding strategies that will be used to highlight how the County will work to achieve them and tactical actions that will be taken to reach the County’s desired outcomes. With a focus on evaluating internal policies, operations, and management practices, the County will ensure it meets the needs of current and future employees from various lived experiences and backgrounds, together. The County also commits to being transparent about this process, both within the organization and publicly, as we work to achieve our goals under the Equity Strategic Plan.

We know that our diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts will continuously impact every area of the organization and how we successfully deliver services for our community. That’s why all staff at every level of the County will be expected to adhere to and uphold equitable practices and policies as we work to redefine the organization as one where all staff look forward to coming to work and feel supported as valued members of the County team.

Every member of staff at the County is committed and accountable for cultivating a sense of purpose, opportunity, success, appreciation, and well-being as we work to build a more equitable organization. Together with County Council and key stakeholders, we will foster a culture where all staff – regardless of their race, age, (dis)ability, gender, sexuality, faith, background, or circumstances – feel safe, valued, heard, supported, and included, and as a team, will make the County of Dufferin a better place where everyone can thrive.

The County of Dufferin recently released its 2023-2026 Corporate Strategic Plan which includes a focus on establishing an equity-informed lens to its impact and outcomes. The resulting Equity Strategic Plan embodies the County of Dufferin’s values of collaboration, accountability, innovation, compassion, and courage. It aims to respond to the collective call from staff community stakeholders, and residents for equity to be a priority. These dual strategies work together to allow the organization to act upon instances of interpersonal and systemic inequities, and this will be demonstrated in our approach to the measurement and evaluation of the Equity Strategic Plan.

# Methodology & Process

The Equity Strategic Plan was developed collaboratively over four co-design sessions. Participatory co-design is a methodology that ensures that there are diverse perspectives supporting the development of our outcomes and that the solutions might be easily integrated into the fabric of team culture and the broader organizational priorities.

Feminuity's process is focused on **developing a shared mission** rooted in the team's lived experiences and organizational knowledge. Sustainable implementation and change management are discussed as part of the design from the start.

The Equity Strategic Plan Working Team started work in March 2023. The team hailed from across the organization, from different levels of leadership, and across all departments. The team shared vulnerably, bravely embraced learning opportunities, and challenged each other. The resulting strategy is a product of that work.

# 01



# 02



## ALIGNMENT & DIRECTION

Creating a shared language for DEI, and developing a vision for change.



## DEFINING PRIORITIES

Unpacking the findings report, and aligning on a set of strategic focus areas.

# 03



# 04



## IDEATION

Developing a wide set of interventions, changes and new programming to support DEI focus areas.



## MANAGING CHANGE

Prioritizing each goal and initiative, and outlining an implementation approach.



## Findings Report Summary

The Equity Assessment was conducted in November 2022. Below is a short summary of the findings, which are further outlined for each Priority Area.

Team members at the County of Dufferin appreciate that the County is beginning its Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) journey and that the organization has begun to make progress on it.

However, at this early stage, there are also frustrations with the way things have been in the past. Specifically, team members recognize that there are legacies of inaction, which has left them uncertain about the County's true commitment to DEI. Further, people shared that before the County hires more people, the organization needs to focus on retention and making improvements for the current staff.

Black people, racialized women, LGBTQ+ people, people with accessibility needs, caregivers, and people working at Dufferin Oaks have particularly low scores compared to their peers, suggesting that these groups need the most support at the County.

An Equity Audit will be conducted every 4 years to support the evaluation of the Equity strategy and its iteration based on the experience of County team members.



# Our commitment & vision for the future

## Our Vision

The County of Dufferin will be an anti-colonial, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive workplace where employees feel a sense of dignity, wellness, and belonging.

We will build safer environments where team members can share who they are and how they need to be supported. We will ensure that each team member at the County of Dufferin can articulate their role in building a diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplace and community.

We will recognize that our ability to challenge current systems requires us to challenge our biases, privileges, and discomfort. We will learn from each other, create solutions through partnership, and create teams that reflect our region's growing diversity.



## Our Values

Collaboration · Accountability · Innovation ·  
Compassion · Courage





# Equity Statement

Our Equity approach focuses on a shared commitment and responsibility to dismantle all forms of systemic oppression derived from white supremacy, including but not limited to anti-Black and anti-Indigenous racism, sexism, ableism, transphobia, and homophobia that operates on the personal, interpersonal, and institutional levels.

To do so, we evaluate our internal policies, operations, and management practices to ensure they meet the needs of current and future employees from various lived experiences and backgrounds.

We will create and engage in skills-based training that builds our ability to drive and sustain inclusive behavioural change. The entire team at the County of Dufferin is committed and accountable for cultivating a sense of purpose, opportunity, success, appreciation, and well-being in their teams.

## Our Guiding Principles

The implementation of our Equity Strategic Plan is as important as the design of the strategy itself. Below is a set of principles that will be adhered to in the design of solutions and execution of our tactics. They are set to ensure that collaborators feel supported and empowered in the implementation process.

- 1 Manage Your Biases:** We hold various biases, and it's up to us to manage them.
- 2 Be Courageous:** Have the hard conversations and be OK with not having all the answers right away.
- 3 Get Uncomfortable:** Discomfort can be productive for learning and developing relationships.
- 4 Practice Compassion:** Give others room to make mistakes and learn just like you did.
- 5 Be Present:** Every member has valuable contributions, but some are more shy than others.
- 6 Avoid Generalization:** Universalizing our experiences may accidentally exclude and erase the experiences of others.



# Shared Language for DEI

**Below is a customized set of definitions developed by the Equity Strategy Working Group.**

**These definitions showcase how Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion are upheld at the County of Dufferin. They can be used in team onboarding, internal and external communications, and as a regular reminder of how the County's Equity Strategic Plan comes to life.**

**Equity:** Equity ensures that everyone is supported in personal and professional development based on their unique needs due to existing barriers and advantages. Equity must be in the design of everything we do at the County of Dufferin. Equity requires that we have difficult conversations, challenge the status quo, and ask our team members what they need to succeed or feel supported.

**Diversity:** Diversity is “difference” within our teams, departments, and across the County of Dufferin. It is relational, not fixed, and many forms of diversity exist. A person is not “diverse,” but they may bring a diverse range of experiences. The County of Dufferin represents a diverse community with residents across different cultures, identities and beliefs. We will create an organization that reflects the diversity of the County across all levels and within leadership.

**Inclusion:** Inclusion is the intentional act of creating environments in which people feel like they can bring their authentic selves to work. It means everyone feels valued, respected, and appreciated for their unique identities, even when they are different from others. At the County of Dufferin, we are building a sense of community at our workplace, one that is flexible and supportive. We each take individual responsibility for creating a culture our colleagues feel comfortable. Inclusion requires a process, and we are committed to carefully building the right programs and structures.





# Areas of Focus

The County of Dufferin's Equity Strategic Plan contains 4 areas of focus that will be completed across a four-year timeline. The goals were established using the findings of the Equity Audit Findings, and the guidance of the Equity Strategic Plan Working Group. Each goal is connected to a set of key findings from the assessment and will act as a starting point for the County's measurement framework.

The measurement framework will include a set of long-term outcomes based on the Findings and short-term Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that help ascertain the effectiveness of each tactic. A fulsome Equity Audit will be completed every 4 Years, with short-term indicators integrated into our annual team member engagement survey.

1	Increased feelings of <b>trust, belonging, and wellness</b> at the County of Dufferin, specifically among Black people, racialized women, LGBTQ+ people, caregivers, Dufferin Oaks team members, and those with accessibility needs.
2	Stronger succession and recruitment pipelines to ensure groups experiencing marginalization have <b>equitable access to career growth and management positions.</b>
3	<b>Greater levels of accountability and transparency</b> for resolving and responding to instances of harassment and discrimination.
4	Empower <b>individual accountability for EDI change</b> through learning and community dialogue.

## Structure of Equity Strategic Plan

The County of Dufferin's Equity Strategic Plan is a working document, and will evolve throughout its implementation as the standards for equity and inclusion evolve, and as the community and team members at the County share their feedback on the strategy's impact.

The strategy and tactics are outlined using the following format:

### Areas of Focus

A focus identified through the Equity Assessment and clarified by the Equity Staff Advisory team.

### Goal

Within each Area of Focus, there are a set of goals that will be reached over four years.

### Tactics

The action taken to reach the desired outcomes of each goal. Tactics will evolve as we measure the change and impact.



Each of the tactics have been organized across three phases, representing a **4-year timeline**

#### **Phase 1: Foundational work and the quick wins**

Year 1 & 2, starting September 2023

#### **Phase 2: Strategic and long-term projects**

Year 3, starting September 2025

#### **Phase 3: Adaptive tactics based on learnings in Phase 1 & 2**

Year 4, starting in September 2026





# 1

## Area of Focus

**Increased feelings of trust, belonging, and wellness at the County of Dufferin, specifically for Black people, racialized women, LGBTQ+ people, caregivers, Dufferin Oaks, and those with accessibility needs**

### Goals

#### 1.1

Review all HR policies and programs to ensure they meet the needs of communities experiencing marginalization in the County

#### 1.2

Create safer community spaces and supports that enable everyone to share opinions and concerns

#### 1.3

Create clear guidelines and expectations for management relating to inclusive leadership, recognition, and psychological safety

#### 1.4

Establish a wellness-focused organizational culture that prioritizes individuals' physical, emotional, and mental well-being

#### 1.5

Create a focused Equity plan for Dufferin Oaks

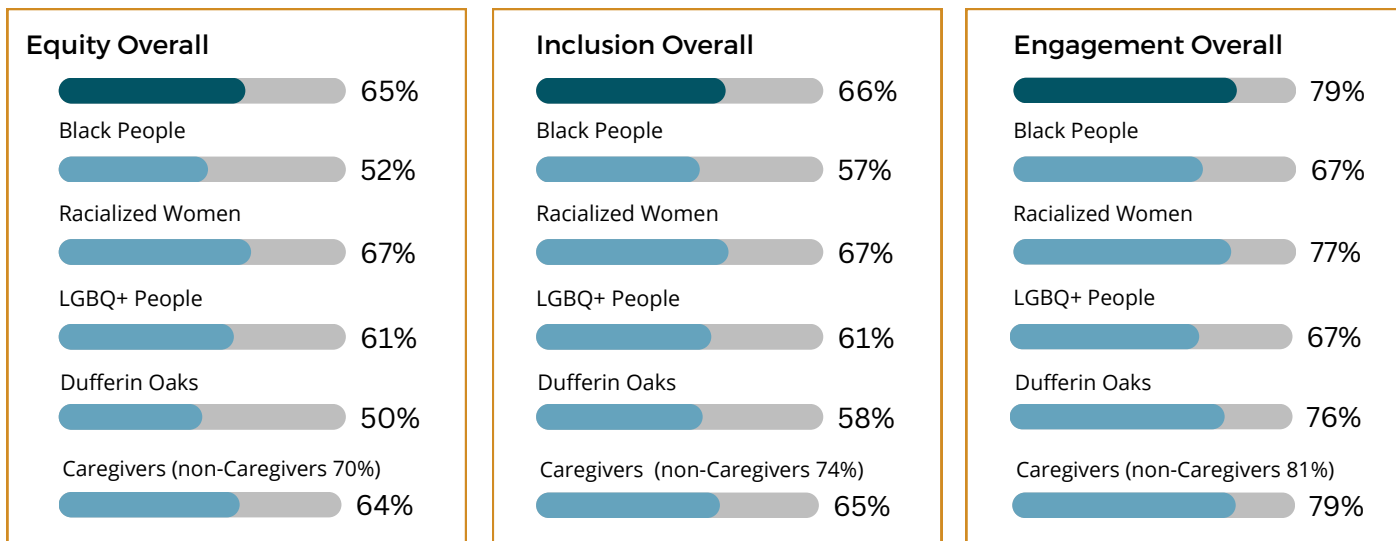
#### 1.6

Create anti-racism plans based off of Equity Audit Findings report

## Area of Focus #1

# Supporting Insights

The Equity Audit Findings revealed the specific groups that require meaningful support across the dimensions of Equity, Inclusion and Engagement.



# 52%

of LGBQ+ team members do not share their sexuality at work, largely due to fear.

People working at Dufferin Oaks have considerably lower scores on nearly every item and index compared to other departments.

Team members working at Dufferin Oaks feel the County of Dufferin needs to do more to ensure fair and equitable work environments. Leaders at Dufferin Oaks feel they need more support navigating nuanced conversations.



Black people at the County of Dufferin are less positive about DEI efforts overall.

They are experiencing **less equity**, specifically regarding advancement opportunities, and support for their career growth, and **0% feel that they are evaluated fairly**. Of all groups, they are the most likely to have experienced harassment and discrimination.



# Area of Focus #1

## Full Strategic Roadmap

Increased feelings of trust, belonging, and wellness at the County of Dufferin, specifically for Black people, racialized women, LGBTQ+ people, caregivers, Dufferin Oaks, and those with accessibility needs

\*Tactics that have been moved into planning & implementation for 2024

	Phase 1 Starting September 2023	Phase 2 Starting September 2025	Phase 3 Starting September 2026
<p>1.1</p> <p>Complete a review of HR policies and support programs to ensure they meet the needs of communities experiencing marginalization in the County</p>	<p>Review existing County of Dufferin policies, documents, and collective agreements with an anti-racist lens. Ensure accessibility, clarity and inclusive language is represented throughout.</p> <p>Complete an assessment of both Collective Agreements in partnership with union representatives (CUPE and ONA) to assess the opportunities for more flexible work schedules, representational diversity, and an equity-focused approach to seniority-based selection criteria.</p> <p>Connect and partner with both union representatives to understand their Equity strategy and where the County of Dufferin might be supportive (ie. representation of Black, Indigenous and racialized peoples in the bargaining process and committee).</p>		<p>Engage with accessibility &amp; disability specialists to identify key areas of opportunity for more inclusive work practices.</p>
<p>1.2</p> <p>Create safer community spaces and supports that enable everyone to share opinions and concerns</p>	<p>*Design an Employee Resource Group (ERG) strategy that clearly outlines the process for bringing an ERG to life at the County of Dufferin and how to access resources and leadership support.</p> <p>Support ERGs in collaborating and sourcing support from the Senior Management Team.</p>	<p>Create an anonymous reporting system separate from the Harassment and Discrimination process that allows employees to share feedback or file a complaint.</p>	<p>Create informal community learning opportunities focused on improving workplace experience, culture, and collaboration.</p> <p>Ensure part-time, weekend, and union team members can access this opportunity.</p>
<p>1.3</p> <p>Create clear guidelines and expectations for management relating to inclusive leadership, recognition, and psychological safety</p>	<p>Ensure that senior leadership team, supervisory roles, and hiring managers receive tailored training on the value and practice of inclusive leadership, inclusive feedback, and supporting team members in times of social and political crisis.</p>	<p>Establish a set of formal and informal recognition tools that can be leveraged by hiring managers and senior leadership.</p>	<p>Develop an Inclusive Leadership Index and metrics that outlines the leadership behaviours required for management positions at the County.</p>

# Area of Focus #1

## Full Strategic Roadmap

Increased feelings of trust, belonging, and wellness at the County of Dufferin, specifically for Black people, racialized women, LGBTQ+ people, caregivers, Dufferin Oaks, and those with accessibility needs

\*Tactics that have been moved into planning & implementation for 2024

	Phase 1 Starting September 2023	Phase 2 Starting September 2025	Phase 3 Starting September 2026
<p>1.4</p> <p>Establish a wellness-focused organizational culture that prioritizes individuals' physical, emotional, and mental well-being</p>	<p>*Establish a team-building budget for each department, and create an annual plan for supporting team member wellness, collaboration, and appreciation.</p> <p>*Complete a review of the team member benefits package, and update to incorporate inclusive benefits that prioritize wellness, gender-affirming care, and flexibility for caregivers.</p>	<p>Implement policies and provide flexible work arrangements supporting work-life integration, diverse family structures, and diverse needs of the workforce.</p>	<p>Offer programs that support mental health and wellness, such as counselling services, mindfulness training, and stress management workshops.</p> <p>Create tailored programs and supports for employees who experience the unique stressors of systemic racism and microaggressions.</p>
<p>1.5</p> <p>Create a focused Equity plan for Dufferin Oaks</p>	<p>*Create a set of strategies and interventions that are responsive to the Equity Audit Findings and Town Hall ideation meetings.</p> <p>*Source and hire an onsite Equity Advisor to support the finalization and implementation of Dufferin Oaks equity initiatives.</p>	<p>Update to reflect tactics for Dufferin Oaks Equity Plan</p> <p>Update to reflect tactics for Dufferin Oaks Equity Plan</p>	
<p>1.6</p> <p>Create anti-racism plans based off of Equity Audit Findings report</p>	<p>*Source and execute an anti-racism in the Workplace training that is regularly available to new and current team members.</p>	<p>Create an anti-Black racism plan in response to Equity Audit Findings.</p>	<p>Update to reflect tactics for Anti-Racism focused tactics</p>





# 2

## Area of Focus

Stronger succession and recruitment pipelines to ensure groups experiencing marginalization have equitable access to career growth and management positions

### Goals

#### 2.1

Establish a clear and defined recruitment and hiring framework that ensures diversity, equity, and inclusion are central considerations throughout the process

#### 2.2

Cultivate a recruitment pipeline that reflects the diversity in the County

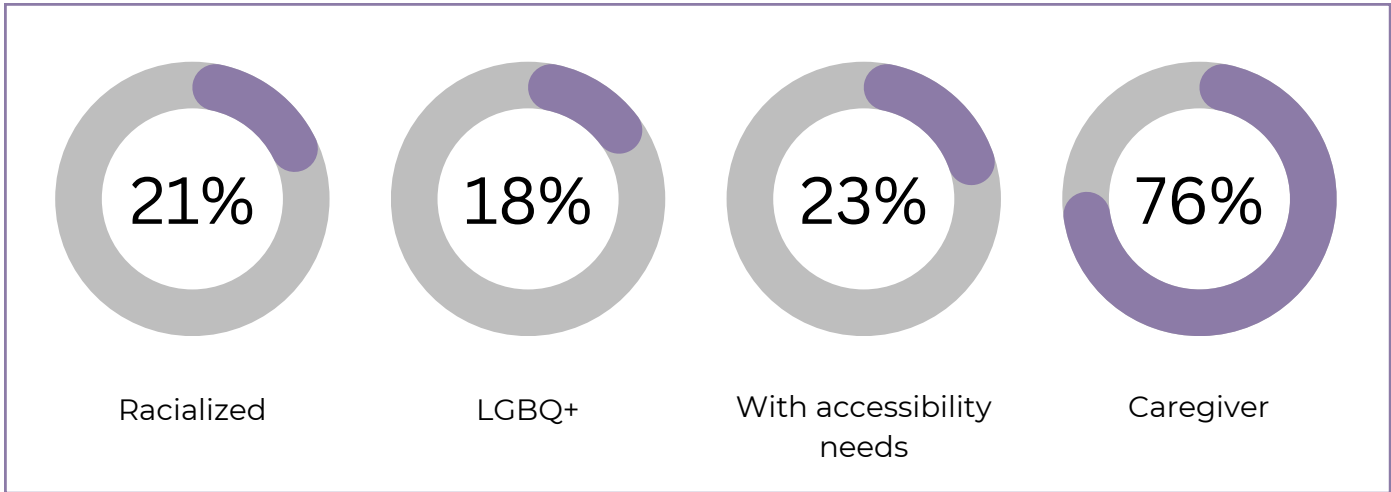
#### 2.3

Establish EDI as a priority within the design of the performance management appraisal system and growth conversations at the County

## Area of Focus #2

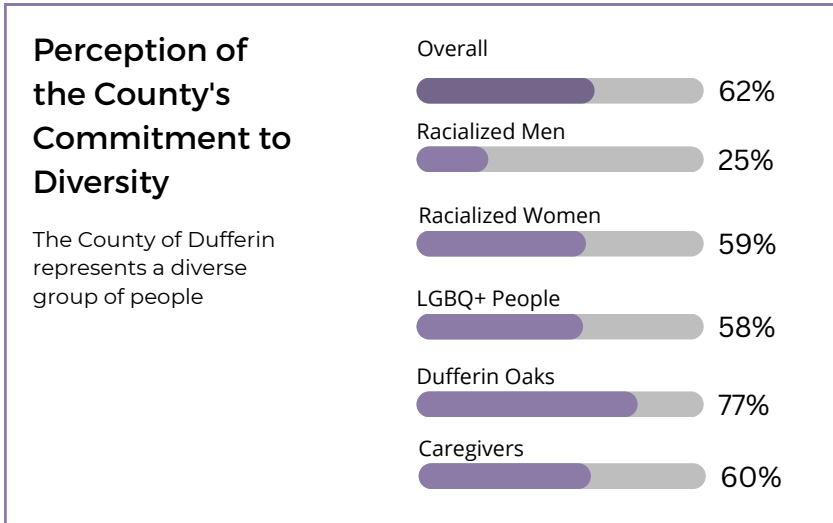
# Supporting Insights

County of Dufferin respondents were typically white (77%), heterosexual (82%), and without accessibility needs (77%). The majority of respondents are caregivers (76%), meaning that they have others depending on them for care.



**10%** of racialized women hold reporting manager positions. The lack of racialized women in reporting manager roles is something to examine critically.

The primary qualitative theme amongst team members was for the County to **prioritize retention**. This is especially true for those from groups experiencing underrepresentation and marginalization at the County, such as LGBTQ+ people, people with accessibility needs, caregivers, and Black people.



The groups that are both underrepresented and experiencing marginalization at the County, have a lower perception of the County's commitment to building a diverse organization and teams.

# Area of Focus #2

## Full Strategic Roadmap

Stronger succession and recruitment pipelines to ensure groups experiencing marginalization have equitable access to career growth and management positions

\*Tactics that have been moved into planning & implementation for 2024

	Phase 1 Starting September 2023	Phase 2 Starting September 2025	Phase 3 Starting September 2026
<p>2.1</p> <p>Establish a clear and defined recruitment and hiring framework that ensures diversity, equity, and inclusion are central considerations throughout the process</p>	<p>*Review the current application process and job postings for the County. Prioritize using inclusive language, accommodation requests, pronoun sharing, and detailed outlines of inclusive benefits</p> <p>Establish standard interview guides and evaluation criteria for each department in the County.</p> <p>Complete the roll-out, communications, and associated training needed for the Recruitment Equity Tool. Create an assessment that measures its use and efficacy.</p>	<p>Track applicant recruitment through Applicant Tracking System (ATS) or Human Resources Information System (HRIS), implementing a voluntary self-identification process.</p> <p>Use this to determine where underrepresented people are facing barriers in the process.</p>	<p>Create a process for building hiring panels that are representative of a diverse workforce.</p> <p>Acknowledge representational gaps in management positions, and establish equitable hiring targets that reflect the County's commitment to diversity and inclusion.</p>
<p>2.2</p> <p>Cultivate a recruitment pipeline that reflects the diversity in the County</p>	<p>*Create a network of job boards, non-profit partners, and recruiting firms that serve communities experiencing marginalization.</p> <p>Expand recruitment and job posting efforts based on the current gaps in the County, specifically transgender people, gender non-binary people, people with cognitive accessibility needs, and people with physical accessibility needs and racialized people (Indigenous Peoples, Black people, and Asian people.)</p> <p>Create an community outreach and partnership strategy focused on developing relationships with local Indigenous nations, and organizations to support recruitment and equity efforts.</p>	<p>Create college, university, non-profit partnerships focusing on attracting candidates from communities experiencing marginalization and underrepresentation in the County.</p> <p>Update with tactics emerging from partnership strategy</p>	



# Area of Focus #2

## Full Strategic Roadmap

Stronger succession and recruitment pipelines to ensure groups experiencing marginalization have equitable access to career growth and management positions

\*Tactics that have been moved into planning & implementation for 2024

	<b>Phase 1</b> Starting September 2023	<b>Phase 2</b> Starting September 2025	<b>Phase 3</b> Starting September 2026
<p>2.3</p> <p>Establish Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) as a priority within the design of the performance management and appraisal system at the County</p>	<p>Work on this goal will begin in Phase 2</p>	<p>Conduct comprehensive stay/exit interviews with departing employees to gain insights into their experiences and reasons for leaving the organization.</p> <p>Examine the process for the termination for lack of clarity and the potential for discrimination.</p> <p>Create a process for guiding succession discussions to ensure accountability for organizational inclusion and representational diversity.</p> <p>Create a clear and accessible communications plan that provides all employees with an understanding of the County's open roles and the succession process.</p>	<p>Create targeted professional development opportunities and leadership training programs, ensuring equitable access for underrepresented and marginalized groups.</p> <p>Establish an optional multi-rater feedback process, such as 360 feedback, to provide more comprehensive feedback to employees and allow them to seek out information on their strengths and improvement areas.</p> <p>Institute a <u>modified "Rooney Rule"</u> for all new open management roles, requiring that the search process is not completed until at least four members of groups experiencing marginalization and underrepresentation advance to the final stages of the selection process.</p>



# 3

## Area of Focus

**Greater accountability and transparency for resolving and responding to harassment and discrimination**

### Goals

#### 3.1

Audit the effectiveness and clarity of the Respect in the Workplace policy at the County of Dufferin

#### 3.2

Create ongoing, action-oriented training that prevents harassment and discrimination



## Area of Focus #3

# Supporting Insights

Within the County, there are a high number of team members who have experienced harassment and discrimination

I have experienced harassment at the County of Dufferin

Overall 35%



Back People 78%



Racialized People 44%



Dufferin Oaks 39%



LGBQ+ People 50%



With Accessibility Needs 45%



I have experienced discrimination at the County of Dufferin

Overall 21%



Back People 56%



Racialized People 28%



Dufferin Oaks 24%



LGBQ+ People 27%



With Accessibility Needs 33%



Team members feel there have been inadequate responses regarding several workplace issues at the County of Dufferin. They feel leadership **needs greater accountability to be actively anti-racist internally and externally.**

**26% of people** fear retaliation for reporting harassment  
And **33%** fear retaliation for reporting discrimination.

# Area of Focus #3

## Full Strategic Roadmap

Greater accountability and transparency for resolving and responding to harassment and discrimination

\*Tactics that have been moved into planning & implementation for 2024

	Phase 1 Starting September 2023	Phase 2 Starting September 2025
<p><b>3.1</b></p> <p><b>Audit the effectiveness and clarity of the Respect in the Workplace policy at the County of Dufferin</b></p>	<p>*Review and update the language in the Respect in the Workplace policy to encourage users to start from a place of belief and incorporate language suggestions in the Supplemental Review.</p>	<p>Develop a whistleblower policy that protects employees who report misconduct and ensures accountability for all individuals involved.</p>
	<p>Develop a data management framework and policy that details the confidentiality and security of all information related to incidents of harassment and discrimination.</p> <p>Review and select a set of organizational mechanisms to protect against harmful biases within investigation processes, such as gathering a diverse committee of investigators, keeping more detailed records to uncover bias patterns and investigation outcomes, and considering third-party mediation.</p>	
<p><b>3.2</b></p> <p><b>Create ongoing, action-oriented training that prevents harassment and discrimination</b></p>	<p>*Create management training that focuses on creating psychologically safer spaces, ensuring that all people leaders, local executives, and senior leaders are equipped with the tools and resources to support team members and manage conflict.</p>	<p>Source resources and learning experiences that combat “commonplace” discrimination and harassment like jokes, innuendo, microaggressions, and bullying.</p>
	<p>*Ensure the Respect in the Workplace policy is a part of onboarding for all new team members.</p>	

A photograph of a classroom with rows of black chairs and white desks. A whiteboard is visible at the front of the room.

# 4

## Area of Focus

Empower individual accountability for EDI change through learning and community dialogue

### Goals

#### 4.1

Create a foundational understanding and awareness of EDI efforts and progress at the County of Dufferin

#### 4.2

Build capacity for understanding, supporting, and respecting difference at the County of Dufferin

#### 4.3

Create targeted EDI learning outcomes and competencies. for each business function at the County of Dufferin



## Area of Focus #4

# Supporting Insights

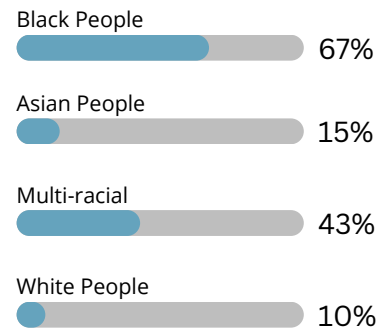
The Equity Audit Findings shared that some people within the County of Dufferin indicate feeling threatened by EDI efforts or misunderstanding their intention. The qualitative data reinforces the need for deeper dialogue, and pragmatic and integrated training at all levels.



### Racial Justice and the Impact on Mental Health

Black or multiracial team members feel the impact of racial injustices on their mental health more than their peers.

Racial Justice Issues are currently impacting my mental health.



Team members want to address **harmful language and behaviours** that contribute to racial exclusion and inequities that team members may not be aware of or may be contributing to uncritically.

A lack of **cultural competence and cultural humility**, as well as an awareness gap, underpinned many of the experiences of people at the County of Dufferin.

# 65%

Leadership understands that diversity is critical to our future success.

# 55%

Believe the County demonstrates a commitment to meeting the needs of team members with accessibility needs.

# 21%

I feel like the County of Dufferin is doing enough to discuss racial justice issues within the organization.

# Area of Focus #4

## Full Strategic Roadmap

Empower individual accountability for EDI change through learning and community dialogue

\*Tactics that have been moved into planning & implementation for 2024

	Phase 1 Starting September 2023	Phase 2 Starting September 2025	Phase 3 Starting September 2026
<p>4.1</p> <p>Create a foundational understanding and awareness of EDI efforts and progress at the County of Dufferin</p>	<p>*Integrate an update on EDI initiatives during Corporate Strategy town hall updates. Create opportunities for open discussion and awareness building.</p>	<p>Create and share an EDI scorecard that aligns the County on current progress, goals, and emerging initiatives.</p>	<p>Standardize critical aspects of onboarding to ensure that every employee receives consistent and comprehensive information on anti-racist, anti-colonial and anti-oppressive principles that govern County culture and workplace practices.</p>
<p>4.2</p> <p>Build capacity for understanding, supporting, and respecting difference at the County of Dufferin</p>	<p>*Incorporate foundational EDI curriculum in onboarding all new team members.</p>	<p>Create a calendar of holidays, celebrations and observances highlighting employee celebrations and important moments (like Mental Health). Create a process for content development, programming, and a policy refresh that aligns with relevant observances.</p>	<p>Source a series of learning opportunities focused on visible and non-visible disabilities and leading practices for inclusive and accessible meetings.</p>
<p>4.3</p> <p>Create targeted EDI learning outcomes and competencies for each business function at the County of Dufferin</p>	<p>*Work with department leadership to identify and prioritize learning opportunities for each department.</p> <p>Create measurable EDI competencies and skills to support the measurement of learning outcomes.</p>	<p>Create regular learning opportunities for all team members to discuss racial injustice, instances of exclusion, and discrimination County and beyond.</p>	<p>Incorporate EDI competencies into the job descriptions to ensure that all positions prioritize and promote EDI competencies throughout the employee lifecycle, starting at recruitment and selection</p>
		<p>Source and roll out a recruitment series focusing on upskilling the recruitment team, hiring managers, and senior leadership including equity competencies.</p>	



# RESOURCING

## 1. Budget & Staffing

The budget of the Equity Strategic Plan should reflect the priority tactics being implemented each year. The budget can be distributed based on the impacted department or consolidated into one shared budget. To support a sustained momentum, the People & Equity department has recommended additional members be hired to support implementation.

- **Manager of Equity** to oversee the implementation & Equity Strategy Implementation Advisory Committee
- **Human Rights Officer/Investigator** to lead the proactive and reactive work to address all of the details related to harassment and discrimination
- **Policy Analyst/Writer** to implement the Supplemental Report
- **2nd Equity Advisor** to support Dufferin Oaks, as it was highlighted in the Findings report as an area of concern and with over half of the County's staff

## 2. Equity Strategy Implementation Advisory Committee

The Equity Strategy Implementation Advisory Committee will act as stewards of the County of Dufferin's Equity Strategy. They will provide advice, direction, and support for the initiatives implemented throughout the four-year strategy. The initiative's owners and SMT will seek out the support of this group as initiatives are designed, executed, and shared. They would focus on:

- Sharing opportunities, learning experiences, and updates
- Acting as champions and mentors for their division/department
- Providing feedback on initiatives
- Participating in task completion for Equity initiatives
- Supporting the research and implementation of Equity initiatives





## Closing Remarks

We want to first thank all of the staff that contributed to the creation of the County of Dufferin's first-ever Equity Strategy, this was truly a collaborative process. This includes all of the courageous staff that participated in the Equity Audit, thank you. It was your feedback, insight, and sharing of your lived experiences that laid the foundation for the development of the Equity Strategy. **Thank you to the Equity Strategic Plan Working Team!** You spent countless hours preparing for meetings, a great deal of time in our planning meetings sharing your wisdom to help create this comprehensive plan. We also want to thank our Senior Leadership Team and County Council, Without your support, provision of resources, and strategic guidance, the development of Equity Strategy would not have been possible.

While we should be proud of our progress, we must confront harsh truths without sugar-coating. The County of Dufferin has systemic inequities that it must acknowledge and deal with head-on. We know from our Equity Audit Findings that not all staff are experiencing the organization the same way. We know that staff who identify as Black, racialized women, LGBTQ+, persons with disabilities, Dufferin Oaks, and caregivers are having some of the worst outcomes and experiences in our organization. Our Equity Audit Findings indicate that some staff interpret equity and anti-oppression efforts as being "anti-white" and that addressing researched and documented inequities in the organization is interpreted by some as taking away from others. We know from our data that issues relating to harassment, discrimination, psychological safety, racial justice, and inclusion are some of the pressing issues that staff at the County are calling on leadership to substantively address.

We face a significant challenge, but also a great opportunity to transform the County of Dufferin into an organization that strives for the best version of itself; one that lives up to its values and ideals, and aligns Equity with the ambitions of our Corporate Strategic Plan. Some staff will have bigger roles to play than others, but each role we have to play in becoming a more equitable organization is an important one! Our Equity Strategy is a data-informed, structured, and comprehensive approach to addressing systemic inequities that were identified through staff's lived experience and a review of County data and policy.

The Equity Strategy was also a collaborative effort that included the voices of all departments across the organization and centered the voices of those staff who are experiencing the worst outcomes. This strategy not only creates a pathway to address systemic inequities and discrimination, but this plan creates hope for all staff and stakeholders that the County of Dufferin is committed and resolute in meeting and surpassing its equity goals and is determined to be an equitable organization that is welcoming and safe for all.



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