



# **DIVERSITY** VAUGHAN'S GREATEST ASSET



A Diversity Strategy for the City of Vaughan  
May, 2010

# A DIVERSITY STRATEGY FOR THE CITY OF VAUGHAN

## Introduction

The strategic plan for the City of Vaughan, Vaughan Vision 20/20, has identified as a strategic initiative that the City “approve and implement a strategy to engage and support our diverse communities”. This initiative has a completion date of fourth quarter 2010. The City of Vaughan has also identified as a strategic priority the “preservation of our heritage and support of diversity, arts and culture”. The development of a strategy that focuses on Vaughan’s ethnic or culturally diverse community recognizes Vaughan’s diversity as of great importance to Vaughan’s future development and growth.

The Strategy is a by-product of a review of current and best-practices, and meetings throughout 2009 and second quarter of 2010 with a number of stakeholders including the Community Equity & Diversity Committee.

## Vision for the Diversity Strategy

The “Diversity Strategy” aims to identify some key action items that will help develop the following vision for Vaughan:

*To foster a community and corporation that protects human rights, promotes equality, inclusiveness and encourages creative cultural expression.*

The goals and strategic actions identified in this strategy will form an initial framework for the City of Vaughan to help develop this vision.

## What is Diversity?

Diversity is a term used to encompass all the various differences among people - including race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, ancestry, colour, and ethnic origin.

\* *Canadian Race Relations Foundation.*

It is important to understand what is meant by “diversity” and “diversity issues” as the terms may mean different things to different people. Using the definition of “diversity” above, as a framework, “diversity” issues may include the following:

- Issues relating to the protection of human rights as identified under the Ontario Human Rights Code and Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.
- Issues relating to cultural and social freedoms.
- Issues relating to inclusivity, equality and the elimination of discrimination.

The *Ontario Human Rights Code* (OHRC) recognizes as public policy, the dignity and worth of every person and to provide for equal rights and opportunities without discrimination that is contrary to law. It aims to create a climate of understanding and mutual respect for dignity and worth of each person so that each person feels part of the community and able to contribute fully to the development and well-being of the community and the Province.

Under the OHRC, every person has the right to equal treatment with respect to services, goods facilities, occupancy and accommodation without discrimination because of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, age marital status, family status and disability. Furthermore, every person who is an employee, has a right to freedom from harassment in the workplace by, the employer or agent or the employer or by another employe because of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin,

citizenship, creed, age, record of offences, marital status, family status or disability.

The *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* stipulates: "Every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination and, in particular, without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability" (Section 15.1).

## Diversity in Vaughan

Vaughan is a diverse city as demonstrated by the various ethnic and religious groups, immigrants and languages spoken amongst its residents. Approximately 45% of Vaughan's population are immigrants. Since 2001 Vaughan's immigrant population growth has increased by 41%. Italians are the largest ethnic group making up 39% of its population. Other significant groups include Jewish at 13%, South Asian 8.5%, Russian at 6% and Chinese at 4.2% of the population. The 2006 Census identifies 27% of the City of Vaughan's population as part of a visible minority with an increase of 83% since 2001. The top four non-English or French languages spoken are: Chinese Languages, Italian, Russian and Persian (Farsi). (*Data collected through the 2001 and 2006 Canada Census*)

## Accessibility Issues and the Diversity Strategy

It should be noted that this strategy does not deal directly with issues relating to people with disabilities. The City of Vaughan has approved the *City of Vaughan Accessibility Plan* (Revised 2009) that adheres to compliance of accessibility standards required under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA). The City has established a Vaughan Accessibility Advisory Committee with a mandate to advise Council on accessibility issues and an internal technical advisory committee that is focused on developing and implementing

policies and standards relating to the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*. Accessibility issues are, therefore, being addressed through the above-noted advisory committees.

## The City of Vaughan's Role as It Relates to Diversity

The City of Vaughan has an important role in advancing awareness of and advocating for "diversity" issues. Municipalities are primarily governed by other levels of government as it relates to their responsibilities, funding and legislative powers. As a result, the City's role can be defined within the following parameters:

1. Act as facilitator, advocating and promoting diversity issues in the community.
2. As a Corporation, ensuring policies and procedures promote inclusivity and the protection of human rights.
3. As a service provider, developing programs and services that meet the needs of its diverse community.

## Existing Policies and Practices

A scan of the City of Vaughan's current practices identifies a number of initiatives and programs that deal with diversity issues. The following are good practices and initiatives that should be noted:

- As a corporation, the City of Vaughan has implemented a series of human rights and respectful workplace policies for its employees that enforce an anti-racism and anti-discrimination workplace and a dispute resolution mechanism for its employees. All employees received training as it relates to these policies.

- The City's Human Resources staff is trained to ensure the rights of employees are protected and there are equitable practices when applying and interviewing for jobs at the City.
- The Human Resources Department in an effort to reach out to the community, posts City job opportunities in City facilities for the public. Although the staff turnover rate is very low at the City, overtime, the make-up of Vaughan's employees will change as opportunities are available for qualified individuals.
- The City participates in York Region's Character Community event which promotes fairness and respect in its community. This week is celebrated with speakers and workshops for staff and the community.
- The City of Vaughan celebrates "Peace Tree" Day inspired by the film by Miltra Sen that promotes peace and diversity in every faith and culture.
- The City has recognized the significance of diversity by incorporating it as part of its strategic vision.
- It partners with the Welcome Centre and COSTI; both are organizations that support and provide services to new immigrants. These organizations also participate in a mentorship program for new citizens looking for job/employment coaching and guidance.
- The City offers its residents a language line service at City facilities and City Hall that can assist in translating information/questions for residents in over 150 languages.
- In March 2009, a Graffiti By-law was passed that prohibits graffiti in the municipality. Along with this by-law, the Safe City committee developed an extensive communications campaign identifying the fact that obscene and racist graffiti

directed or denigrating to a person or community, is considered a hate crime and should be reported to the police.

- The City established the Equity and Diversity Committee who makes recommendations to Council on issues related to acts or the prevention of racism, discrimination and protection of human rights.
- In 2007, Vaughan through the recommendation of the Equity and Diversity Committee was one of the first municipalities to adopt the Canadian Coalition of Municipalities against Racism and Discrimination's call to become part of a national coalition supporting common commitments towards eliminating racism and discrimination in cities in Canada.
- Since 2004, the Equity and Diversity Committee sponsored workshops attended by members of Vaughan's ethno-cultural community to discuss equity and diversity matters.
- In 2009, the City held its first multi-cultural festival celebrating Vaughan's diversity.

A strategy related to diversity, therefore, should focus on augmenting and continuing current practices and addressing some of the key gaps within the municipality.

## Region of York

Vaughan, as part of a two-tiered municipal system, relies on the Region of York for many of its community and social services. York Region receives tax funding to support these programs and services. The Region funds and partners with many new immigrant and social services programs.

In January 2005, the HSPC hosted an Inclusivity Summit, which attracted the participation of 180 representatives from various human service agencies, governments, public service bodies and

ethno-cultural organizations. Based on the discussions at the summit, the HSPC adopted and launched the Inclusivity Action Plan on May 18, 2005.

Six working groups developed programs in the following areas:

- Welcome Centres for new immigrants
- English language development opportunities
- Identifying and raising awareness of ethno-cultural inclusivity practices
- Learning opportunities for children to promote inclusive and respectful character traits at an early age
- Volunteer opportunities for immigrants and the development of their leadership skills
- Tools to help organizations become more inclusive, including a Charter of inclusivity and a Circle of Champions, implemented in 2008-2009
- Planned activities of the first phase which were not implemented will remain priorities along with new emphasis on:
  - \* Promoting the faster economic integration of immigrants.
  - \* Working more closely with the private sector to engage companies in raising awareness of the benefits of ethno-cultural inclusivity.

Regional Council endorsed in 2008, a sustained focus on ethno-cultural inclusivity and the continuation of the Inclusivity Action Plan (IAP), a collaborative community-based initiative of the Human Services Planning Coalition (HSPC) that involved 88 individuals representing 47 organizations.

## Where Gaps Exist

In conducting a review of current City of Vaughan practices relating to “diversity” matters for this report, it was identified that a number of initiatives and services are already in place as it

relates to diversity issues however, some key gaps exist. Some of these areas of improvement include:

1. Communicate to its citizens and employees, Vaughan’s commitment to diversity issues and inclusivity in its practices.
2. Develop programs and services that promotes a community that is inclusive, and celebrates cultural differences.

The recommended action items for each of the three goals of the strategy reflect this approach.

## Role of the Community Equity and Diversity Committee

The development of this strategy has been in consultation with the Vaughan Community Equity and Diversity Committee that have played a pivotal role in the realization of this strategy. The committee had provided feedback and input on various action items at various points in the development of this strategy.

## Goals and Actions

The Diversity Strategy has a number of action items that are centred around three goals:

1. To communicate and promote the City of Vaughan's commitment to a unified community that recognizes and is responsive to cultural differences, promotes and protects human rights, and celebrates diversity.
2. To continue to foster a corporate culture that protects employee's human rights, promotes inclusivity and provides opportunities in its employment practices.

3. To create opportunities for creative cultural expression, and dialogue.

The following table identifies the individual actions that will advance each goal. Every effort will be made to use existing resources or develop partnerships etc. where available to implement each action item; however, some items will require funds/resources to implement. These funds will be requested as part of the yearly budget process, for approval. It should be noted, therefore, the approval of this strategy does not automatically approve the funds identified in this strategy.

SUMMARY OF GOALS & ACTIONS		Responsibility	Financial Implications		
GOALS AND ACTIONS		Lead Department	Operating Yes/No	Capital Yes/No	Estimated Costs in thousands
<p><b>GOAL 1</b> To communicate and promote the City of Vaughan's commitment to a unified community that recognizes and is responsive to cultural differences, promotes and protects human rights, and celebrates diversity.</p>		<p>Priority High (1-3 Years) Low (3-5 years) &amp; Ongoing</p>			
<p><b>ACTION ITEMS</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Host an annual round table meeting that focuses on emerging diversity issues and concerns and brings together the various cultural groups within the community.</li> <li>2. Invite cultural groups to partner with Council to proclaim days of recognition for significant holidays and events and encourage community displays and celebrations of cultural diversity associated with such events.</li> </ol>		<p>Recreation and Culture Department High Priority</p>	Y	N	\$1-2
		<p>Recreation and Culture Department High Priority</p>	N	N	

SUMMARY OF GOALS & ACTIONS		Responsibility	Financial Implications		
	GOALS AND ACTIONS	Lead Department  Priority High (1-3 Years) Low (3-5 years) & Ongoing	Operating Yes/No	Capital Yes/No	Estimated Costs in thousands
	<p>3. Develop a communication plan that includes signage, flyers, posters that welcomes people at key customer service areas and at City facilities, to help identify service counters and the language line services at these locations.</p> <p>4. Establish in cooperation with schools, and other agencies/groups, a program and teaching materials on diversity and human rights.</p> <p>5. Through the Vaughan Business Enterprise Centre, partner with lead government agencies that will deliver workshops and initiatives to the community and businesses with a focus on the promotion of equity in the labour market, inclusiveness in the private workplace and issues relating to access to jobs and trades for foreign trained professionals.</p> <p>6. Explore through the Economic Development Department, economic opportunities Vaughan's diversity can bring to the City through its connections to other parts of the world.</p> <p>7. Ensure that all City policies, procedures and practices promote inclusivity and do not support groups/organizations that promote discriminatory practices based on race, origin, colour, religion, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, family status and disability.</p> <p>8. Partner with key organizations/agencies and expert consultants on a per project basis in implementing action items identified in the Diversity Strategy.</p>	<p>Recreation and Culture Department High Priority</p> <p>Recreation &amp; Culture Department Low Priority</p> <p>Vaughan Business Enterprise Centre High Priority</p> <p>Economic Development Department High-Priority</p> <p>Corporate-wide Ongoing</p> <p>Recreation and Culture Department High Priority</p>	<p>N</p> <p>Y</p> <p>Y</p> <p>N</p> <p>N</p> <p>Y</p>	<p>N</p> <p>N</p> <p>N</p> <p>N</p> <p>N</p> <p>Y</p>	<p>\$5-10</p> <p>\$5</p> <p>\$5</p> <p></p> <p></p> <p>\$50</p>

SUMMARY OF GOALS & ACTIONS		Responsibility	Financial Implications		
GOALS AND ACTIONS		Lead Department  Priority High (1-3 Years) Low (3-5 years) & Ongoing	Operating Yes/No	Capital Yes/No	Estimated Costs in thousands
<b>GOAL 2</b> To continue to foster a corporate culture that protects employee's human rights, promotes inclusivity and provides opportunities in its employment practices.					
<b>ACTION ITEMS</b>					
1. Establish a City protocol and procedures for responding to acts of racism, hate crimes and incidents, including bringing such incidents to the attention of the appropriate authorities.		Recreation and Culture Department High Priority	N	N	
2. Establish a communication campaign that focuses on information to the public on diversity and inclusivity and on related Provincial and Federal agencies and services.		Recreation and Culture Department High Priority	Y	N	
3. Establish an ongoing process to identify culturally diverse groups, and establish a method of connecting and establishing dialogue with these groups as it relates to issues, needs and concerns within the context of equity, inclusiveness and diversity.		Recreation and Culture Department High Priority	N	N	\$5
4. Develop with expert consultant "diversity" orientation training for staff.		Human Resources Department High Priority	Y	N	\$50
5. Continue to communicate Vaughan's commitment to hire employees from diverse backgrounds based on qualifications and skills without prejudice or discrimination and establish ongoing methods of conveying job opportunities to the public.		Human Resources Department High Priority	N	N	

SUMMARY OF GOALS & ACTIONS		Responsibility	Financial Implications		
GOALS AND ACTIONS		Lead Department  Priority High (1-3 Years) Low (3-5 years) & Ongoing	Operating Yes/No	Capital Yes/No	Estimated Costs in thousands
<p>6. Continue to offer and expand as required, the language line services at City facilities that provides free translation services to citizens.</p> <p>7. Partner with school boards, service providers (e.g. COSTI, Welcome Centre), York Region Police and others to deal with needs of diverse citizens and groups.</p> <p>8. Continue to promote and enforce Vaughan's human resources policies regarding respectful workplace policy that deal with human rights, protection against discrimination within the workplace and has a mechanism in place to deal with disputes and register complaints.</p> <p>9. Continue to support and participate in Vaughan's corporate employee/new citizen's mentorship program in partnership with key organizations.</p>		<p>Corporate Ongoing</p> <p>Recreation and Culture Department Ongoing</p> <p>Human Resources Department High Priority</p> <p>Human Resources Department Ongoing</p>	<p>Y</p> <p>N</p> <p>N</p> <p>N</p>	<p>N</p> <p>N</p> <p>N</p> <p>N</p>	<p>Per use basis</p>
<p><b>GOAL 3</b> To create opportunities for creative cultural expression and dialogue.</p>					
<p><b>ACTION ITEMS</b></p> <p>1. Integrate activities showcasing the cultures and traditions of diverse groups and include cultural activities in events and celebrations by the city or in partnership with groups and associations, in key community and corporate events and celebrations.</p> <p>2. Develop programs that facilitate cultural expression and invite groups and citizens to participate in these programs to foster community pride and participation.</p>		<p>Recreation and Culture Department High Priority</p> <p>Recreation and Culture Department High Priority</p>	<p>N</p> <p>N</p>	<p>N</p> <p>N</p>	

## Goal 1

To communicate and promote the City of Vaughan's commitment to a unified community that recognizes and is responsive to cultural differences, promotes and protects human rights and celebrates diversity.

## Action Items

1. Host an annual round table meeting that focuses on emerging diversity issues and concerns and brings together the various cultural groups within the community.

*Note:*

*The purpose of hosting this round table is to share information on issues within the community and also to identify key action item to resolve these issues. Key community stakeholders may form, if required, an "issues task force" to deal with emerging problems and concerns.*

2. Invite cultural groups to partner with Council to proclaim days of recognition for significant holidays and events and encourage community displays and celebrations of cultural diversity associated with such events.

*Note:*

*The new civic centre, civic square and our community centres are excellent public venues for partnering and celebrating with our ethno-cultural groups.*

3. Develop a communication plan that includes signage, flyers, posters that welcomes people at key customer service areas and at City facilities, to help identify service counters and the language line services at these locations.

*Note:*

*Communication was a key factor that many people felt was important in a diversity strategy in helping citizens feel welcome and connected to their community.*

4. Establish in cooperation with schools, and other agencies/groups, a program and teaching materials on diversity and human rights.

*Note:*

*The School Boards and York Region Police already have a number of existing initiatives that the City can partner with. This program can be piloted for children and schools and can then be extended to the general public.*

5. Through the Vaughan Business Enterprise Centre, partner with lead government agencies that will deliver workshops and initiatives to the community and businesses with a focus on the promotion of equity in the labour market, inclusiveness in the private workplace and issues relating to access to jobs and trades for foreign trained professionals.

*Note:*

*The Vaughan Business Enterprise will explore the partnering with various governments funded agencies that can assist in delivering workshops to businesses and also to citizens that relate to equity in the labour market and the foreign trained professionals as contributors in the labour market.*

6. Explore through the Economic Development Department, economic opportunities Vaughan's diversity can bring to the City through its connections to other parts of the world.

*Note:*

*Recent connections have been made in other City's linking their diverse population and economic activity and development within their City. Vancouver is a City that has identified this link and local economic prosperity.*

7. Ensure that City policies, procedures and practices promote inclusivity and do not support groups/organizations that promote discriminatory practices based on race, origin, colour, religion, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, family status and disability.

*Note:*

*It is important to ensure that the City continually reflect to ensure its policies, procedures and practices that reflect inclusivity and not support groups and organizations that may be discriminatory in their practices. An example of policies includes the City Community Service Organization (CSO) policy.*

8. Partner with key organizations/agencies and expert consultants on a per project basis in implementing action items identified in the Diversity Strategy.

*Note:*

*Some action items will require expert diversity consultants to help develop them and these experts can be hired on a per project basis. Also, there may be opportunities to develop partnerships with various agencies to off-set some costs related to the implementation of initiatives.*

## Goal 2

**To continue to foster a corporate culture that protects employee's human rights, promotes inclusivity and provides opportunities in its employment practices.**

## Action Items

1. Establish a City protocol and procedures for responding to acts of racism, hate crimes and incidents, including bringing such incidents to the attention of the appropriate authorities.

*Note:*

*Recently the Community Equity and Diversity Committee established such a protocol. The protocol should be monitored to determine its effectiveness and amended as required.*

2. Establish a communication campaign that focuses on information to the public on diversity and inclusivity and on related Provincial and Federal agencies and services.

*Note:*

*This communication campaign should extend to the City's website and at City facilities. Also in recognition of Vaughan's membership with the Canadian Coalition of Municipalities against Racism and Discrimination, a plan should also include the communication of the Coalition's key messages.*

3. Establish an ongoing process to identify culturally diverse groups, and establish a method of connecting and establishing an ongoing dialogue with these groups as it relates to issues, needs and concerns within the context of equity, inclusiveness and diversity.

*Note:*

*It will be important for the City to know what groups are in the community whether established or emerging. A newsletters or e-communiqués should be considered to provide information on the City or other relevant information.*

4. Develop with expert consultant "diversity" orientation training for staff.

*Note:*

*It is important to develop a program that meets the needs of staff and the community. Experts in this field can assist in defining a program that will meet these requirements.*

5. Continue to communicate Vaughan's commitment to hire employees from diverse backgrounds based on qualifications and skills without prejudice or discrimination and establish ongoing methods of conveying job opportunities to the public.

*Note:*

*A statement such as " The City of Vaughan is committed to diversity and inclusivity in employment and welcomes applications from qualified individuals of diverse background " has been added to all job postings to reiterate Vaughan's excellent employment practices.*

6. Continue to offer and expand as required, the language line services at City facilities that provides free translation services to citizens.

*Note:*

*This is an important tool to ensure citizens that do not speak English are provided with customer service when dealing with the City.*

7. Partner with school boards, service providers (e.g. COSTI, Welcome Centre,), York Region Police and others to deal with needs of diverse citizens and groups.

*Note:*

*It will be important to expand and continue these partnerships to bring programs and information to the community.*

8. Continue to promote and enforce Vaughan's human resources policies regarding respectful workplace policy

that deal with human rights, protection against discrimination within the workplace and has a mechanism in place to deal with disputes and register complaints.

*Note:*

*As a leading corporation, Vaughan's human resources policies exemplify excellent employment practices. These are practices that ensure a corporate culture that protects rights and protects acts of discrimination.*

9. Continue to support and participate in Vaughan's corporate employee/new citizen's mentorship program in partnership with key organizations.

*Note:*

*The City of Vaughan employees can mentor and assist others in good work practices and knowledge of skill requirements to help new immigrants enter the workforce.*

### Goal 3

**To create opportunities for creative cultural expression and dialogue.**

### Action Items

1. Integrate activities showcasing the cultures and traditions of diverse groups and include cultural activities in events and celebrations by the city or in partnership with groups and associations, in key community and corporate events and celebrations.

*Note:*

*Where appropriate, arts and cultural activities are an excellent opportunities to celebrate our diversity and knowledge of each other.*

2. Develop programs that facilitate cultural expression and invite groups and citizens to participate in these programs to foster community pride and participation.

*Note:*

*Community engagement through cultural expression is important in developing a community that embraces and welcomes differences.*

## Implementation

The implementation of this Strategy will be completed incrementally in accordance with the priority each initiative has been assigned. The following are key steps that will be followed:

- Identified lead department will establish a timeline for each assigned initiative.
- If financial resources are required to implement the request, it will be brought forward in the Operating or Capital Budget process.
- An assessment will be completed by the Recreation and Culture Department in Year 3 and Year 5 of the approval of the Strategy to summarize the progress of each action item.

## Appendix A

<b>Diversity Framework-National/International</b>	
<b>Canadian and Provincial Legal Framework Related to Human Rights &amp; Racism</b>	<p>The <i>Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms</i> stipulates: "Every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination and, in particular, without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability" (section 15.1).</p> <p>The <i>Citizenship Act</i> provides that all Canadians, whether by birth or by choice, enjoy equal status, are entitled to the same rights, powers and privileges and are subject to the same obligations, duties, and liabilities.</p> <p>The Canadian <i>Multiculturalism Act</i> provides that the "Government of Canada recognizes the diversity of Canadians as regards race, national or ethnic origin, colour and religion as a fundamental characteristic of Canadian society and is committed to a policy of multiculturalism designed to preserve and enhance the multicultural heritage of Canadians while working to achieve the equality of all Canadians in the economic, social, cultural and political life of Canada," (Preamble), affirms that multiculturalism "reflects the cultural and racial diversity of Canadian society and acknowledges the freedom of all members of Canadian society to preserve, enhance and share their cultural heritage" (section 3(1)(a)) and that it represents "a fundamental characteristic of the Canadian heritage and identity and that it provides an invaluable resource in the shaping of Canada's future" (section 3(1)(b)).</p> <p>The recent Canada's <i>Action Plan Against Racism</i> encapsulates a six-point approach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Assist victims and groups vulnerable to racism and related forms of discrimination</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Develop forward-looking approaches to promote diversity and combat racism</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Strengthen the role of civil society</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Strengthen regional and international cooperation</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Educate children and youth on diversity and anti-racism</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Counter hate and bias</li></ul> <p>Under the plan, a number of departments (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Canadian Heritage, the National Secretariat on Homelessness, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and Infrastructure Canada) are working with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities to explore diversity and immigration needs in urban policy-making and cooperation with civil society through an initiative called "Our Diverse Cities."</p> <p>The <i>Urban Aboriginal Strategy</i>, introduced in 1998 under guidance of the of the Department of</p>

	<p>Indian Affairs and Northern Development, addresses, in partnership with stakeholders, the serious socio-economic needs of urban Aboriginal people and the need to improve policy development and program coordination at the federal and provincial level to reduce the level of disparity that urban Aboriginal people currently face, and to offer them better government programs that meet their local needs and priorities.</p> <p>The <b>Ontario Human Rights Code (OHRC)</b> establishes as public policy and recognizes the dignity and worth of every person and to provide for equal rights and opportunities without discrimination that is contrary to law and having as its aim the creation of a climate of understanding and mutual respect for dignity and worth of each person so that each person feels part of the community and able to contribute fully to the development and well-being of the community and the Province.</p> <p>Under the OHRC, every person has the right to equal treatment with respect to services, goods facilities, occupancy and accommodation without discrimination because of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, age marital status, family status and disability. Furthermore, every person who is an employee has a right to freedom from harassment in the workplace by the employer or agent or the employer or by another employee because of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, age, record of offences, marital status, family status or disability.</p>
<p><b>Signing of the Declaration of Canadian Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination</b></p>	<p>In January 2008, the City of Vaughan was one of twenty municipalities that adopted the Canadian Coalition of Municipalities against Racism and Discrimination’s call to become part of an international coalition supporting the Common Commitments listed in the section of this report that outlines this initiative.</p> <p><b>COMMON COMMITMENTS AGAINST RACISM AND DISCRIMINATION</b></p> <p>In undertaking these Commitments and in developing unique plans of action for addressing racism and discrimination, municipalities will be encouraged to take a participative approach that will engage Aboriginal people and initiate dialogue among communities</p> <p>COMMITMENT 1: Increase vigilance against systemic and individual racism and discrimination</p> <p>Example actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support or establish, in collaboration with community organizations, a monitoring and rapid response system to identify and respond to acts of racism, hate crimes and incidents, including bringing such incidents to the attention of the appropriate authorities.</li> <li>▪ Report regularly on the incidence of hate crimes.</li> <li>▪ Support or establish a mechanism for consultation with groups and individuals involved in the fight against racism and discrimination (e.g. NGOs, Aboriginal organizations, youth, artists,</li> </ul>

	<p>police services, the judiciary, provincial and territorial human rights commissions etc.)</p> <p>COMMITMENT 2: Broaden accountability and monitor racism and discrimination in the municipality and monitor municipal actions taken to address racism and discrimination</p> <p>Example actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Set up formal means of collecting data and information on racism and discrimination in all fields of municipal endeavour, and share results in a manner that advances human rights.</li> <li>▪ Achievable objectives and apply indicators in order to incidents and trends in racism and discrimination (including profiling) and the impact of municipal policies and programs.</li> </ul> <p>COMMITMENT 3: Increase support for people who experience racism and discrimination</p> <p>Example actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Establish or enhance an existing complaints mechanism within municipal authority (ombudsperson, anti-discrimination unit, etc.) to deal with allegations of systemic and individual acts of racism and discrimination.</li> <li>▪ Provide support to local entities which provide legal and psychological support to those who experience racism and discrimination.</li> </ul> <p>COMMITMENT 4: Inform and involve all residents in anti-racism initiatives and decision-making</p> <p>Example actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Increase representatives of Aboriginal and racialized communities on municipal boards, commissions and committees.</li> <li>▪ Organize, on a regular basis, municipal forums against racism, in collaboration with existing organizations and mechanisms, in order to offer citizens an opportunity to discuss the problems of racism and discrimination in the municipality, including impact of local policies and programs.</li> <li>▪ Empower local NGOs and civil society to provide information and take action against racism and discrimination.</li> </ul> <p>COMMITMENT 5: Support measures to promote equity in the labour market</p> <p>Example actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Set up, in partnership with local chambers of commerce, a certification program for businesses, organizations and professional bodies to integrate mechanisms in their own organizations for combating racism and building inclusive and respectful workplaces.</li> </ul> <p>COMMITMENT 6: Provide equal opportunities as an employer, service provider and contractor</p> <p>Example actions:</p>
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- Ensure that equity and the elimination of racism and discrimination are examined and addressed at a systemic level in all aspects of the municipality's operations including corporate planning, policy and program development, procedures and practices, service delivery, contracting, as well as organizational culture.
- Perform regular diversity audits to inform the development of appropriate policies and practices in the areas of employment, services and contracts, and measure progress toward diversity outcomes.

COMMITMENT 7. Support measures to challenge racism and discrimination in housing and implement measures to promote diversity and equal opportunity

Example actions:

- Examine housing and urban planning practices, policies and plans and address systemic barriers that have an adverse and discriminatory effect on Aboriginal and racialized communities, including the further marginalization of those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.
- Work with tourist associations, bed and breakfast associations and hoteliers associations to draw up a Code of Practice for public and private bodies involved in renting and selling accommodation to combat discrimination in access to housing.
- Work with housing providers, landlords and service organizations to adopt equitable policies (including developing a code of conduct) with respect to qualifying applicants and selecting tenants for market rent units consistent with human rights principles.

COMMITMENT 8: Support measures to challenge racism and discrimination in the education sector, as well as in other forms of learning, and promote diversity and equal opportunity

Example actions:

- Create a program to recognize schools for their anti-racist and anti-discrimination initiatives.
- Encourage the development of teaching materials on human rights, respect for human dignity, peaceful coexistence and intercultural dialogue that can contribute to enhancement of the ability of pupils, teachers and trainers to operate in a pluralistic environment free from racism and discrimination encouraging a better knowledge of everybody's history.
- Sensitize and train elected officials and government employees on education that takes into account mutual respect, citizenship, human rights and the fight against racism.

COMMITMENT 9: Promote respect, understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity and the inclusion of Aboriginal and racialized communities into the cultural fabric of the municipality

Example actions:

- Provide equitable support to cultural projects programmes, events and infrastructure so that the diversity of the community can be expressed in a fair and representative way.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support initiatives that increase the expertise and capacity within multicultural, racial and ethno cultural organizations to effect change in their own organizations, other organizations and their communities that will enable their members to participate fully in society.</li> </ul> <p>COMMITMENT 10: Support policing services in their efforts to be exemplary institutions in the fight against racism and discrimination</p> <p>Example actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Consult with local communities to determine community concerns and to receive their input on measures that are required to respond to these concerns.</li> <li>▪ Establish or enhance, if already in existence, a comprehensive anti-racism and anti-discrimination vision statement, policy and training for policing organizations.</li> <li>▪ Implement programs to ensure appropriate representation of Aboriginal and racialized groups in recruitment and at all levels of policing organizations.</li> </ul> <p>SAMPLE DECLARATION TO JOIN THE CANADIAN COALITION OF MUNICIPALITIES AGAINST RACISM</p> <p>Given that:  The Canadian Commission for UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) is calling on municipalities to join a Canadian Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and be part of UNESCO's international coalition launched in 2004; and</p> <p>The Federation of Canadian Municipalities endorses the Call for a Canadian Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and encourages its members to join; and</p> <p>Whereas:  Municipal governments in Canada, along with other levels of government, have responsibilities under Canada's Charter of Rights and Freedoms as well as federal, provincial and territorial human rights codes, and therefore have an important role to play in combating racism and discrimination and fostering equality and respect for all citizens;</p> <p>Be it resolved that:</p> <p>4 The Municipality of agrees to join OR declares its interest in (intent to join as soon as possible)the Coalition of Canadian Municipalities Against Racism and in joining the Coalition agrees to adopt (OR re-affirm) the ten Common Commitments set out below as well as develop OR adapt its own unique Plan of Action against racism accordingly.</p> <p>5 These Common Commitments and the Municipality's unique Plan of Action will be an integral part of the Municipality's strategies and policies and will be evaluated accordingly.</p>
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	<p>6 In developing OR adapting and implementing its own unique Plan of Action towards progressive realization of the Common Commitments, the Municipality will cooperate with other organizations and jurisdictions including other levels of government, Aboriginal peoples, public and private sector institutions, and civil society organizations, who have responsibilities in the area of human rights including any specific jurisdiction in matters falling under these Common Commitments.</p> <p>7 The Municipality will set its priorities, actions and timelines and allocate resources according to its unique circumstances, and within its means and jurisdiction. The Municipality will exchange its expertise and share best practices with other municipalities involved in the Coalition, and will report publicly on an annual basis on actions undertaken towards progressive realization of these Common Commitments.(Date) (Place) (Signature)</p> <p>3 In undertaking these Commitments and in developing unique plans of action for addressing racism and discrimination, municipalities will be encouraged to take a participative approach that will engage Aboriginal people</p>
<p><b>2003 FEDERATION OF CANADIAN MUNICIPALITIES STATEMENT ON RACE RELATIONS</b></p>	<p>The Federation of Canadian Municipalities adopted in 2003 the following policy statement on race relations:</p> <p><b><i>STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES</i></b></p> <p>The Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) unequivocally rejects racism and discrimination. FCM is committed to the federal and provincial governments' multiculturalism policies and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. FCM will work with its membership to ensure full inclusion and participation of citizens from diverse communities in municipal government and in all aspects of community life. Municipal governments must make equity and equality the cornerstone of the way they work, do business and govern to enjoy the full benefits of future growth and productivity.</p>
<p><b>INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORK IN THE FIGHT AGAINST RACISM AND DISCRIMINATION</b></p>	<p>Among the goals stated in the Charter of the United Nations (1945), is to "achieve international cooperation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian character, and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion" (article 1.3);</p> <p>The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) stipulates that "all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights" (article) and that "everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status" (article 2);</p> <p>The United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1963) specifies that "discrimination between human beings on the ground of race, colour or ethnic origin is an offence</p>

	<p>to human dignity and shall be condemned as a denial of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, as a violation of the human rights and fundamental freedoms proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as an obstacle to friendly and peaceful relations among nations and as a fact capable of disturbing peace and security among peoples" (article 1);</p> <p>The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966) specifies that:        "Each State Party to the present Covenant undertakes to respect and to ensure to all individuals within its territory and subject to its jurisdiction the rights recognized in the present Covenant, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status" (article 2.1);</p> <p>"Any advocacy of national,, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence shall be prohibited by law" (article 20.2);        "All persons are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to the equal protection of the law. In this respect, the law shall prohibit any discrimination and guarantee to all persons equal and effective protection against discrimination on any ground such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status" (article 26);</p> <p>The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966) similarly contains provisions that prohibit any form of discrimination, notably discrimination related to race, colour or national/ethnic origin.</p> <p>The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1975) defines racial discrimination as "any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life" (article), affirms that, among other things, "any doctrine of superiority based on racial differentiation is scientifically false, morally condemnable, socially unjust and dangerous" and requires States to "pursue by all appropriate means and without delay a policy of eliminating racial discrimination in all its forms and promoting understanding among all races," and in particular to "engage in no act or practice of racial discrimination against persons, groups of persons or institutions and to ensure that all public authorities and public institutions, national and local, shall act in conformity with this obligation" and to "prohibit and bring to an end, by all appropriate means, including legislation as required by circumstances, racial discrimination by any persons, group or organization,</p> <p>The case law of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, in terms of both individual communications and final observations toward the periodic reports from States is consistent in its fight against discrimination.</p> <p>The <i>Declaration and the Programme of Action</i> released by the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, held in Durban in September 2001, appeals to the</p>
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	<p>responsibility of various levels of State governments (federal and local) to combat racism and state that "the fundamental role of civil society in the fight against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, in particular in assisting States to develop regulations and strategies, in taking measures and action against such forms of discrimination and through follow-up implementation" (par. 116 of the Declaration).</p> <p>The reports of the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, and the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights and fundamental liberties of Aboriginal peoples, which denounce and document numerous situations of racism and discrimination, are also relevant.</p>
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