



Administration and Operations Committee Report

To: The Chair and Members of the Administration and Operations Committee
From: Brian Grice, Accessibility and Inclusion Coordinator
Date: July 16, 2024
Report #: RPT-0363-24
Subject: Request to Join the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities
Purpose: For Approval

Recommendation

That RPT-0363-24 be received as information.

That the County of Brant join the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities.

And that Mayor Bailey sign the Declaration to Join the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities, on behalf of the County of Brant.

Executive Summary

Joining the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities (the Coalition) presents a strategic opportunity to enhance inclusion and equity, addressing both current challenges and future growth. By joining the Coalition, the County will gain access to tailored strategies and resources specifically designed to combat racism and foster inclusion in communities like ours. This membership will support the County's efforts in building sustainable communities through economic, environmental, social, and cultural initiatives.

Strategic Plan Priority

Strategic Priority 5 - Healthy, Safe, and Engaged Citizens

Impacts and Mitigation

Social Impacts

Social and cultural benefits involve strengthening community cohesion, promoting diverse artistic expressions, and enhancing public safety and trust. Moreover, joining the Coalition will provide us with valuable guidance on structuring, planning, and implementing our inclusion efforts, as well as recognizing and addressing various forms of discrimination.

Environmental Impacts

Not applicable.

Economic Impacts

Economic benefits include attracting and retaining diverse businesses and talent and increasing our marketability as a great place to live, work and play.

Report

Background

The County of Brant is dedicated to fostering a community that values diversity, equity, and inclusion. These sentiments have recently been emphasized through various initiatives to promote social cohesion and equitable treatment for all residents, including:

- the County signing its first ever Inclusion Charter during National AccessAbility Week
- a very responsive public engagement period to inform the County's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan
- the creation of a comprehensive Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Strategy and Implementation Plan, in collaboration with CultureAlly, an organization that supports the development of inclusive policies and practices.

These efforts have reinforced the importance of recognizing and addressing issues related to racism, discrimination, exclusion, and intolerance. In line with these efforts, joining the Coalition presents an opportunity to enhance our initiatives further. Established to unite municipalities committed to combating discrimination and fostering inclusive communities, the Coalition provides a robust platform for collaboration and knowledge sharing. With 118 member cities across Canada, including Brantford, Hamilton and Woodstock, the Coalition offers a wealth of resources and shared experiences that can benefit our ongoing Diversity, Equity and Inclusion efforts.

Analysis

Joining the Coalition provides for a comprehensive framework to address and overcome challenges related to racism, discrimination, exclusion, and intolerance. With a network of 118 member cities across Canada, the Coalition facilitates the sharing and exchanging of valuable experiences and best practices, all of which can be leveraged to enhance our current initiatives, such as the ongoing development of our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Strategy and Implementation Plan with CultureAlly. This collaboration will facilitate the exchange of innovative ideas and proven strategies, enabling us to build partnerships, maximize existing resources, and engage in effective public education. Moreover, the Coalition's support in establishing policies and promoting human rights aligns with our goal of fostering a more inclusive and equitable community. By aligning our efforts with these objectives, we can better address local challenges and ensure a sustainable and inclusive future for all residents. This initiative not only demonstrates our commitment to diversity and inclusion but also positions the County of Brant as a proactive leader in promoting social justice and equity.

Summary and Recommendations

The Coalition is a powerful network that brings together municipalities committed to improving their policies against racism, discrimination, exclusion, and intolerance. The Coalition provides a robust framework for addressing common challenges, such as limited resources and resistance to anti-discrimination efforts, through building partnerships, leveraging existing assets, and engaging in public education. Joining the Coalition will enhance the County's

current diversity, equity and inclusion efforts and further solidify our commitment to creating an inclusive and equitable community for all residents.

Accordingly, staff recommend that the County of Brant join the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities.

Attachments

- 1. Declaration to Join the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities

Reviewed By

- 1. M. Connor, General Manager of Strategic Initiatives
- 2. L. Jackson, Director of Community Partnerships

Copied To

- 1. SMT

By-law and/or Agreement

By-law Required	No
Agreement(s) or other documents to be signed by Mayor and /or Clerk	Yes