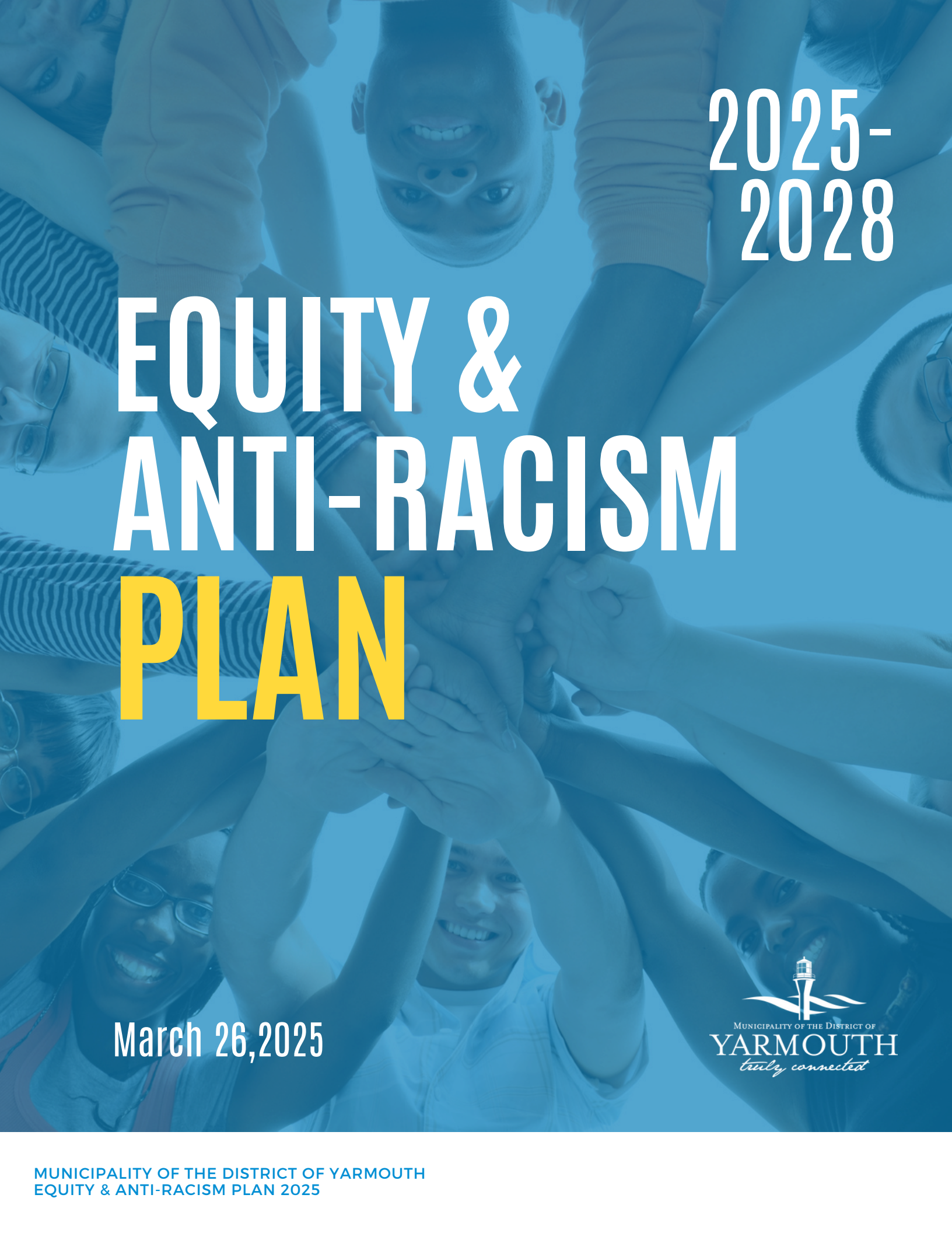


It was moved by Jim Baxter and seconded by Wanda Doucette to recommend that Municipal Council approve the draft 2025-2028 Equity and Anti-Racism Plan.

Motion carried unanimously.



2025-
2028

EQUITY & ANTI-RACISM PLAN

March 26, 2025



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SUMMARY

The Municipality of Yarmouth is committed to treating all individuals with respect, fairness and dignity,

and to addressing barriers within the organization. This plan outlines our commitment and goals for 2025-2028.

PURPOSE

This plan includes concrete actions to eliminate biases, promote diversity,

and ensure MODY policies, practices, and interactions are aligned with its commitments and with provincial guidelines through the Office of Equity and Anti-Racism.

It is understood that this work is ongoing and will require sustained commitment. Through intentional actions, ongoing education, and a commitment to accountability, MODY will ensure policies, practices, and behaviors reflect these values.

BACKGROUND

In 2022, the Province of Nova Scotia passed the Dismantling Racism and Hate Act.

The Legislation outlines the provincial government's approach to addressing systemic hate, inequity, and racism.

Recognizing the important role municipalities play in addressing racism, hate and inequity, the Equity and Anti-Racism Strategy identified municipalities as the first public sector bodies required to develop equity and anti-racism plans. It requires municipalities to undergo a process to identify actions that will promote equity and anti-racism by considering the needs of underrepresented and underserved communities.

COMMITMENT

MODY is committed to fostering an environment where all individuals are treated with respect, fairness, and dignity.

The MODY acknowledges the systemic barriers that have historically marginalized certain communities and is committed to addressing these inequities within the organization.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION ADVISORY COMMITTEE (DEIAC)

The DEIAC was created to advise and assist Municipal Council in promoting and celebrating our diverse community.

This aim shall be achieved, in accordance with the Council-approved Terms of Reference, through the review of municipal policies, programs and services resulting in recommendations which will encourage full participation by diverse communities in MODY.

The committee is made up of council members, citizen representative, and staff.

Current voting members:

1. Warden John Cunningham
2. Councillor Jim Baxter
3. Citizen Representative Agamani Chakrabarty
4. Citizen Representative Jude Fulton
5. Citizen Representative Wanda Doucette

ENGAGEMENT

This plan was developed in collaboration with the Municipality's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Advisory Committee, with feedback from councillors and staff. It is based on consultations with various communities, including (but not limited to):

1. 2SLGBTQIA+
2. African-Nova Scotians
3. Indigenous Peoples (Wasoqopa'q First Nation)
4. Women
5. Newcomers
6. Youth

MODY thanks the individuals who met with the team in the development of this plan, for their openness, honesty, and willingness to work with MODY on this journey. MODY will engage with diverse voices and perspectives to continuously learn and strengthen efforts.

ACCOUNTABILITY

MODY will regularly assess progress, hold everyone in the organization accountable to the goals, and ensure transparency in actions and results.

DEFINITIONS

Anti-racism - The work of actively opposing racism by advocating for changes in political, economic, and social life. This is achieved through the identification and elimination of racism by changing oppressive systems, structures, policies, practices, and attitudes so that historic, current, and future harm can be eliminated and so that power is redistributed and shared equitably.

Barrier – Formal or informal policies or practices that disproportionately restrict or exclude individuals based on factors unrelated to the nature of work, merit, or safety.

Diversity – A broad range of attributes, both seen and unseen. Elements of diversity include, but are not limited to, race or ethnicity, religion, language, gender, sexual orientation, economic status, age, and abilities. A diverse workplace is one that reflects our communities.

Equality - One of the central principles of democracy and is based on the belief that all people should have the same opportunities to be successful and have a productive, enjoyable life. The idea of equality is key to the notion that everyone will be able to achieve based on their efforts and contributions to society instead of their status or position.

DEFINITIONS continued...

Equity – Fair treatment of all people that considers individual, specific needs, barriers, and accommodations to ensure that all involved have equal opportunity to participate fully in society. Equity acknowledges that there are historically underrepresented / underserved / excluded populations and that fairness within these unbalanced conditions is needed.

Hate - Provocation, hostility or intolerance by means of threats, harassment, abuse, incitement or intimidation motivated by the actual or perceived race, religion, national origin, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, gender expression, disability or sexual orientation of any person.

Inclusion - The act of creating a culture and environment where any individual or group can feel welcomed, respected, supported, and valued to fully participate. An inclusive environment embraces differences while seeing them as strengths and offers respect for all people.

Racism - Discrimination or antagonism by, or the prejudice of, an individual, community or institution against a person or people based on the person's or people's membership or perceived membership in a racial or ethnic group, and having the power to carry out that discrimination, antagonism or prejudice through institutional policies and practices that shape cultural beliefs and values of a society.

Action Items

Area of Focus	Commitment
<p>Vision</p>	<p>Following each municipal election, Council will publicly reaffirm its commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). The aim is to ensure that every member of Council, along with dedicated citizen representatives and staff, clearly understand their crucial roles in turning this vision into reality. Council invites all community members to join this ongoing effort, providing feedback and participating in initiatives to help shape a truly inclusive community.</p>
<p>Inclusive Policies</p>	<p>Review municipal policies and by-laws with the focus on promoting equity through the lens of systemic oppression and with the use of inclusive language.</p> <p>Review of Flag Policy and Road Naming Policy</p> <p>Develop Human Resources policy on accommodating holidays in diverse cultures/communities</p>
<p>Decision Making</p>	<p>Council decisions uphold MODY’s DEI mission, vision and values. Staff’s research and briefing notes uphold the DEI mission and assess the impact of advice and/or decision on DEI mission and goals.</p>

Action Items

Area of Focus	Commitment
Hiring Practices	Develop inclusive hiring practices which emphasize DEI. Job postings will include provisions for voluntary demographic information. Job notices will be sent to organizations that represent underserved and underrepresented communities.
Data Collection, Analysis and Reporting	Conduct Council/Citizen Rep/Staff survey to determine diversity baseline
Training, Development and DEI Curriculum	<p>Initiate and provide mandatory training for all staff and council to better serve clients from underserved and underrepresented communities. Refresher training every 2 years to sustain a culture of continuous learning.</p> <p>The annual Council Professional development plan and each staff members' training plan shall include training on topics including (but not limited to) implicit bias, inclusive leadership, systemic inequalities and effective allyship.</p>

Area of Focus	Commitment
Communications	Establish clear communication channels tailored to the needs of the different communities to ensure effective outreach and engagement.
Consultations and Community Engagement	<p>Plan respectful and culturally appropriate consultations with key stakeholders, community leaders, municipal staff and residents to gather diverse perspectives and drive effective community-driven solutions.</p> <p>Regularly promote and advertise interactions (through community events and other means) between community members and councillors, staff and DEIAC to enhance understanding, familiarity, build trust and developing long-term sustainable relationships.</p>
Youth Engagement Initiatives	<p>Support ways to cultivate civic responsibility and empower youth to take an active role in local governance, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · structured internship programs with hands-on experience · educational visits by students to the municipal facilities · youth advisory councils or mentorship programs · invite local student councils to attend or hold meetings at Municipal Building

Area of Focus	Commitment
Educational Opportunities	<p>Educate various communities on the roles of the Municipality, Council, staff and DEIAC.</p> <p>Post names of DEIAC committee members on website.</p>
Accessibility & Inclusion Coordinator role	Do more community outreach and develop more sustainable relationships with underserved and underrepresented communities.
Transportation	Advocate for improved local transportation options that are accessible and inclusive, particularly focusing on underserved and underrepresented communities within the Municipality and extending to major urban centres.
Evaluation	<p>Monitor the progress of initiatives, making this information readily accessible to the public.</p> <p>Establish mechanisms to regularly update the community on these developments and have provision for their feedback.</p>
Next Steps	Develop workplan and timelines