Executive Summary:

A number of recent events in the United States and around the world have shed light on problems of systemic racism within communities. A virtual town hall held in Kingston about a month ago further highlighted the experiences of racism and discrimination of members of our community. Furthermore, recent incidents at various local businesses and social media comments have also revealed that racism and discrimination is a current problem within the City of Kingston.

The City along with a number of community partners have worked on initiatives, such as the Workforce and In-Migration Strategy, in the last few years to create a more welcoming environment for the City’s residents; but it is obvious that more effort and work is required to deal with the current climate within the community.

City staff are sensitive to these community challenges and have been discussing different approaches to support and make improvements within the corporation and the community. This report recommends a number of internal and external initiatives to support change and improve equity, diversity and inclusion within the corporation and the community.
Recommendation:

**That** Council endorse both the proposed internal/corporate initiatives, and participation and support to external/community initiatives, to improve equity, diversity and reduce discrimination within the corporation and the community of the City of Kingston as described in Report Number 20-163.

**That** City Council support the establishment of a City of Kingston Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee and that staff report back to Council with proposed terms of reference, mandate and proposed membership for such a committee; and

**That** City Council endorse the City’s participation in an Anti-Racism Community Working Group which will work on the establishment of mechanisms to research, identify and understand the scope of systemic racism and other forms of discrimination within the community and to improve outcomes for health, education, economies and criminal justice reform for racialized communities.
Consultation with the following Members of the Corporate Management Team:

Paige Agnew, Commissioner, Community Services

Peter Huigenbos, Commissioner, Business, Environment & Projects

Brad Joyce, Commissioner, Corporate Services

Jim Keech, President & CEO, Utilities Kingston

Desirée Kennedy, Chief Financial Officer & City Treasurer

Sheila Kidd, Commissioner, Transportation & Public Works
Options/Discussion:

This section of the report provides some information on internal and external initiatives that have been implemented in the past to try to address a lack of diversity and issues of discrimination within the corporation and the community.

City of Kingston – Internal Initiatives

In 2017, City Council passed a motion requesting that City staff review City of Kingston policies that may deal with or address racism/anti-racism, including:

- Respect in the Workplace Policy,
- Workplace Violence and Harassment Policy,
- Code of Conduct Policy,
- Workplace Violence & Harassment Prevention Program

City staff submitted Report Number 18-008 which provided information on established policies and guidelines to promote and ensure a healthy and inclusive environment that is free of violence, harassment, and discrimination. The report noted that the City ensures that employees, customers, vendors, service providers and members of the public are aware that discrimination and discrimination-based harassment are unacceptable practices and incompatible with the standards of the City, the Ontario Human Rights Code and Occupational Health and Safety Act.

At the time of submitting Report Number 18-008, all City employees had received training in the above policies as well as education on the Workplace Violence and Harassment Prevention program, Human Rights and Diversity. City staff also committed to providing a refresher training every 2-3 years or when policies are amended.

The Human Resources & Organization Development department has been delivering concerted training to staff in departments and divisions where there is a great deal of interaction with customers and members of the public, and will continue to undertake more of these sessions.

In addition to the above, the City’s recruitment policy promotes equal employment opportunities to build a more diverse workforce. All new employees receive initial training as part of the organization’s onboarding program and their orientation to the City.

In 2018, the City of Kingston conducted an employee survey which included diversity and inclusion. The results indicated that 65% of the respondents felt accepted, comfortable, and safe within their organization, that the workforce reflects the diversity of the community, and overall considered it to be a respectful workplace.

Although the overall results were positive, there were areas that required additional improvements, and as such, an internal inclusion staff working group was created. The goal of this group was to make recommendations to promote opportunities to attract a more diverse
employee population, embrace new ideas and to demonstrate an overall willingness to continuously promote diversity, respect and inclusion in the workplace.

City of Kingston – External Initiatives

Kingston Immigration Partnership (KIP)

The City is a long-standing member of the local immigration partnership which strives to strengthen Kingston’s capacity to welcome immigrants and improve integration outcomes. Currently the work is focused in three areas: Prosperity (employment/education); Welcoming and Connected Communities (racism & discrimination); and Health/Wellbeing (health and community supports).

Change the Conversation – #Sayhello

In 2018, The City of Kingston, in partnership with the Kingston Immigration Partnership, Kingston Community Health Centres, Kingston Economic Development Corporation, KEYS Job Centre and the Réseau de soutien à l’immigration de l’Est de l’Ontario sought to develop and implement a campaign to invite Kingstonians to learn and reflect on what they can do to make our city a place where everyone feels welcomed, respected, accepted and valued. A survey was carried out in the community as a baseline measure of racism in the community and the results of that survey are attached in Report Number 18-105. The goal of the Change the Conversation project is to build awareness of the diverse cultural values, beliefs and perceptions across our community, to build a culture of inclusion and to build cross-cultural understanding and support for diversity. After the first public awareness campaign with funding from the provincial government, Report Number 19-075 went to Council summarizing the activities that were carried out. This was deemed as only the start of the conversation and the efforts to combat racism and discrimination. Recently, this group was successful in receiving a small grant through the Community Foundation to continue the work and a second set of videos was completed focused on success stories of immigrants in the Kingston region.

Newcomer Services Group

City staff participate in a multi-sector group of front-line agency representatives focused on addressing the needs and concerns of immigrants and refugees in Kingston. The group started with the influx of Syrian refugees, but continues to meet regularly to identify service needs among the population and find solutions. The goal of this group is to ensure successful settlement in the Kingston community through collaboration.

Workplace Inclusion Charter

In 2019, the City worked with community partners through the Inclusive Workplaces Working Group, under the umbrella of the Workforce In-Migration Strategy, to develop the Workplace Inclusion Charter. The Charter was introduced to the community at a launch event in October 2019. From October 2019 to March 2020, thanks to a grant secured by the City’s partner KEYS Job Centre, the charter implementation was initiated with a focus on inclusion of immigrants in
local workplaces. As one of 20 employers who signed the Charter, the City is working toward ensuring that our workplace is a welcoming and inclusive environment for all employees. While the City has a number of existing policies to provide a safe work environment for all, it is hoped to build on best practices from other municipalities to show leadership in this work. The City, in collaboration with KEYS Job Centre and St Lawrence College, has secured a further $633,000 to expand the implementation of the Workplace Inclusion Charter to local workplaces, with an expanded focus on the inclusion of newcomers, racialized people, people with disabilities and Indigenous people. This new phase continues to be led by KEYS Job Centre, with active involvement of City staff and St Lawrence College, in addition to input and guidance from the Future Skills Centre and Diversity Institute at Ryerson University. A report about this initiative will be coming to Council in 2021.

Community Profiles

As part of a Community Data network across Canada, staff have access to a wide range of data that can be used to provide quantitative background information for discussions of wide range of issues. These are available on the City website.

City staff recognize that these internal and external initiatives implemented in past years have been valuable but have not successfully addressed some of the discrimination issues that continue to be present in the community.

Proposed Improved Internal Initiatives

This section of the report includes a number of both internal and external initiatives to continue to improve equity, diversity and inclusion in both the corporation and the community.

1. Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Committee

Municipalities commonly have an advisory committee that provides monitoring, advice and recommendations to Council and municipal staff on issues affecting diversity, inclusivity, equity and discrimination in the corporation and community. The committee provides a forum for consultation, feedback and discussion to help inform and guide current corporate policies and practices with an overall objective of identifying and supporting the implementation of measures and mechanisms to address systemic discrimination and foster greater inclusion of all residents and stakeholders, specifically those who are Indigenous, Black and/or racialized. Below is a list of communities and their committees that have been implemented in Ontario to promote more diverse and inclusive communities.
City staff are recommending that Council support the establishment of a City of Kingston Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee. The City Clerk’s Department will review the best practices of other municipalities and will work with KIP, City staff and other relevant stakeholders to draft a report to Council with proposed terms of reference, mandate and proposed membership for such a committee. This forthcoming report will also include a by-law to amend By-Law 2010-205, “A By-Law to Define the Mandate and Meeting Procedures for Committees Established by the Corporation of the City of Kingston”, to add this advisory committee.

2. Human Resources Policies & Corporate Training

Although significant work has been completed in the past couple of years to address discrimination and racism in the workplace, staff recognize that human resources policies and procedures can still be improved and that corporate training for staff and members of council is due for a refresher since the last corporate wide training was provided over two (2) years ago.

City staff are proposing to have further review of the City’s policies, including its hiring practices, through an equity, diversity and inclusion lens. This will require the retention of expertise in this field as the City does not currently have this skill set in house. This may be accomplished in

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Advisory Committee</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Burlington</td>
<td>Burlington Inclusivity Advisory Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clarington</td>
<td>Diversity Advisory Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hamilton</td>
<td>Committee Against Racism</td>
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<td>London</td>
<td>Diversity, Inclusion and Anti-Oppression Advisory Committee</td>
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<td>Markham</td>
<td>Race Relations Committee</td>
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<td>Mississauga</td>
<td>Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Committee</td>
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<td>Oshawa</td>
<td>Community Diversity Equity and Inclusion Committee</td>
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<td>St. Catharines</td>
<td>Anti-Racism Advisory Committee</td>
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<td>Thunder Bay</td>
<td>Anti-Racism &amp; Respect Advisory Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Whitby</td>
<td>Whitby Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windsor</td>
<td>Diversity Committee</td>
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partnership with KEYS Job Centre through the Workplace Inclusion Charter, or the City may need to retain external consultancy.

**External Initiatives**

1. **Anti-Racism Community Working Group**

In recent discussions with KIP, it was identified that there is a need to establish an Anti-Racism Community Working Group with representation from various sectors to take a holistic approach to tackling systemic and institutional racism in Kingston, which would lead to improved outcomes for health, education, economies and criminal justice reform for racialized communities. KIP will be leading this Working Group and the City will be a participant.

2. **Research & Data collection**

It is proposed that the Anti-Racism Working Group develop a mechanism and timeline for conducting research and implementing tools to collect race-disaggregated data to understand the scope of racism and discrimination in the community. This research is essential to developing effective interventions that address real issues. Disaggregated data will help the city to understand the different experiences of different groups within the community. This is essential for developing an understanding of systemic discrimination which, for example, results in the disproportionate levels of poverty within racialized communities. The City would be a partner in this work.

**Existing Policy/By-Law:**

None

**Notice Provisions:**

None

**Accessibility Considerations:**

None

**Financial Considerations:**

Costs related to the review of internal policies and corporate training will be covered within the existing operational budget.

**Contacts:**

Lanie Hurdle, Chief Administrative Officer 613-546-4291 extension 1231
Other City of Kingston Staff Consulted:

Applicable City Departments

External Consultation

Kingston Community Health Centres
Kingston Immigration Partnership
KEYS Job Centre

Exhibits Attached:

Not applicable