

# Toward Equity and Diversity:

## A Strategy for Belonging in the Municipality of the County of Kings

Implementation Plan 2025-2029



MUNICIPALITY *of the*  
COUNTY *of* KINGS

<b>Demonstrating Leadership and Enhancing Representation (Internal Action)</b>					
<b>Action</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2026</b>	<b>2027</b>	<b>2028</b>	<b>2029</b>
Commit to high-level pillars and policy direction of this plan within all land use, economic development, and human resource policies. Review of this plan within all planning activities and reviews as critical background document. Utilize the Strategy lenses for all Municipal decision-making and policy development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Conduct survey of Municipal departments to assess policies to align with the Strategy.</li> <li>- Create and adopt Land Acknowledgement Policy.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Incorporate Strategy framework as part of the template for the 'request for decision' to council.</li> <li>- Amend and/or repeal relevant Municipal policies and by-laws.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Amend and/or repeal relevant Municipal policies and by-laws.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Amend and/or repeal relevant Municipal policies and by-laws.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Generate high level Strategy evaluation and report.</li> <li>- Host community information meeting to update community about the outcomes of the Strategy Action Plan.</li> <li>- Gather feedback from community for consideration for future Action Plan.</li> </ul>
Develop councillor orientation package.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Create Strategy orientation package for new Council, inclusive of Strategy, and alignment framework.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Host Strategy awareness refresher workshop for Municipal Council.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Generate best practices report from 2024 Municipal Council workshop.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Host Strategy evaluation workshop with Municipal Council.</li> </ul>
Recruit & Appoint Indigenous Persons to Diversity Committee.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Review and update Diversity Kings County Committee Terms of Reference.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Collaborate with First Nations communities to establish "Indigenous talent pool" for Diversity Kings County committee and other opportunities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Establish and/or renew formal partnership with Band Councils.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Create survey to evaluate committee member experience.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Consider implementing committee member experience survey.</li> </ul>
Develop diverse liaison positions within staff to help navigate and communicate with communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Package all Municipal programs and grants for community distribution.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increase collaboration and visibility of Municipal programs and funding opportunities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Establish measurement framework to assess reach, impact of Municipal services and programs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increase communication outputs and channels to intensify reach.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Generate report on community use of Municipal grants and services.</li> </ul>

<b>Demonstrating Leadership and Enhancing Representation (Internal Action) Cont'd</b>					
<b>Action</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2026</b>	<b>2027</b>	<b>2028</b>	<b>2029</b>
Development of an equitable and representative human resource and employment strategy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Conduct survey to evaluate Municipal hiring practices.</li> <li>- Develop recruitment and retention guide for a more equitable and inclusive hiring process.</li> <li>- Collect employee feedback anonymously (unless otherwise indicated) to improve HR systems, nurture belonging and inclusive culture.</li> <li>- Identify diversity benchmarks for staffing complement at the Municipality.</li> <li>- Establish framework and timeline to meet diversity benchmarks.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Introduce directors and managers to unconscious bias and inclusive leadership learning opportunities to prepare them to assist HR with execution of equitable and inclusive hiring process.</li> <li>- Create inclusive communication template for recruitment (screen-reader, gender neutral, non-binary, and diverse job boards).</li> <li>- Formally establish an inclusive orientation package.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Generate report from exit interviews, study systemic barriers that have been identified as retention challenges that could affect retention and inclusive culture.</li> <li>- Establish standardized inclusive framework and diverse hiring panel representative of three diverse communities for job interviews.</li> <li>- Create employee toolkit for inclusive workplace culture.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Amend and rename diversity management policy to human equity hiring policy.</li> <li>- Create Inclusive Workplace Policy.</li> <li>- Establish employee resource group to create informal social space to share workplace best practices and gather feedback for improvement to nurture and sustain inclusion.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Generate high level HR diversity and inclusion report.</li> <li>- Publish Community Development impact report on Municipal website.</li> </ul>
Complete a review of all Municipal committees to increase diverse representation and to promote equitable decision-making.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Update committees' Terms of Reference.</li> <li>- Cooperate with community and civil society organizations to recruit diverse applicants.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Update committees' Terms of Reference.</li> <li>- Recruit diverse applicants for Municipal committees.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cooperate with community to host select committee meetings in community.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Create member experience assessment framework to identify barriers, challenges, and ways to improve committees' operations and member experience.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Implement member experience assessment framework.</li> </ul>

<b>Demonstrating Leadership and Enhancing Representation (Internal Action) Cont'd</b>					
<b>Action</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2026</b>	<b>2027</b>	<b>2028</b>	<b>2029</b>
Establish budget for professional development around equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI).	- Build awareness of Municipal staff and Council about budget for professional development around EDI and encourage enrollment.	- Develop and offer asynchronous Strategy for Belonging awareness & implementation webinars for Municipal Council and Staff.  - Conduct inclusive communication workshop (s) for all staff and Council.	- Offer formal EDI training for at least 1-2 staff from each department annually.  - Develop digital series regarding applicable laws and policies (example: human rights legislation and Charter of Rights and Freedom).	- Conduct survey among Municipal staff to measure effectiveness of EDI training in delivery of Municipal services and programs.	- Update training packages and offerings to meet the changing needs of community.
Develop a mentorship and capacity development program for Indigenous, African Nova Scotian, Black and 2SLGBTQIA+ youth.	- Cooperate with Indigenous, African Nova Scotian, Black and 2SLGBTQIA+ communities, and civil society organizations to establish culturally competent mentorship program.	- Cooperate with Indigenous, African Nova Scotian, Black and 2SLGBTQIA+ communities to recruit youth for mentorship program.	- Create evaluation framework for mentorship program.	- Collaborate with Indigenous, African Nova Scotian, Black and 2SLGBTQIA+ communities to amend mentorship program based on findings from evaluation framework, current mentorship best practices and identified needs of respective communities.	- Generate mentorship program report.
Create staff exchanges with local band councils and dedicate support on a project-by-project basis for collaboration.	- Hold partnership meetings with First Nations communities to build trust, understanding, and strengthen relationship for more cohesive project partnerships and general collaborative work.	- Cooperate with First Nations communities to update Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) among Municipality and Band Councils to regularly attend Band Council and Municipal meetings.	- Identify funding to support collaborative projects with First Nations communities.	- Continue collaborative projects with First Nations communities.	- Generate high level report on collaborative projects, and recommendations for improvement for future projects.

Economic Empowerment					
Action	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
In collaboration with stakeholder organizations, develop a social entrepreneurship hub or innovation incubator opportunities for diverse business owners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continue to cooperate with Diversity Kings County Committee, Valley Regional Enterprise Network and Annapolis Valley Chamber of Commerce to generate inventory of diverse businesses.</li> <li>- Continue to spotlight diverse businesses at community festivals, other events, and Diversity Kings County Committee meetings to increase recognition and community support for diverse businesses.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Establish quarterly inclusive business incubator program within the Innovation Hub to highlight diverse businesses and products.</li> <li>- Co-host business focused workshops with stakeholder organizations to build capacity of diverse business owners within the Kings Region.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Review/amend procurement policy to make it more equitably responsive to all communities.</li> <li>- Host inclusive business mentorship program.</li> <li>- Work with Annapolis Valley Chamber of Commerce and Valley REN to co-create diverse business registry to strengthen connection, relationship, and revenue generation for diverse businesses.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Conduct survey among entrepreneur hub/innovation incubator participants to assess effectiveness, and barriers for diverse business operators within Kings Region.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Generate report on entrepreneur hub/innovation incubator program.</li> </ul>
Review procurement and consider the establishment of a social procurement policy that prioritizes diverse owned businesses. Establish evaluation criteria and definitions according to industry standards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Examine statutory authority.</li> <li>- Review and establish Social Procurement Policy.</li> <li>- Establish baseline.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Maintain baseline.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continue to maintain baseline.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Review baseline and amend, as necessary.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Implement amended baseline and policy.</li> </ul>
Add equity, diversity, and inclusion component to tender or RFP process through development of evaluation criteria where permissible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Review options for impactful implementation in tandem with Social Procurement Policy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Promote Indigenous, African Nova Scotian, Black, 2SLGBTQIA+ businesses through wayfinding and tourism promotion materials.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Support registration for diverse business owners within third-party organizations as diverse-owned vendors through providing grants for fees for one year.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Explore opportunities for municipal partners to incorporate social procurement into their operations and procurement process.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Evaluate inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility (IDEA) component to RFP and other equity programming and make adjustment as needed.</li> </ul>

Economic Empowerment Cont'd					
Action	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
Support the Provincial government, Mi'kmaq, African Nova Scotian, Black and 2SLGBTQIA+ communities as they develop an affordable housing response for the Kings Region by exploring opportunities for funding and land donations. <i>The Municipality will have a support role, as housing is Provincial authority.</i>	Pending outcome of ongoing housing studies, specific supports/actions will be developed.				

Truth, Awareness and Advocacy					
Action	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
Partner with Indigenous communities, Treaty Education, and other departments of government to provide and promote publicly available allyship education resources, training, and awareness that includes treaty education. Consider developing online seminar series or discussion platform.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Utilize Action Plan as a platform for broader community discussions and deeper engagement at the individual and public level through meetings and education sessions.</li> <li>- Identify Municipal assets for a renaming project.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Collaborate with diverse communities to advocate and support re-naming, replacing, or providing additional interpretation around assets and places managed by other levels of government or privately, that reflect racist and oppressive history (e.g., removal of offensive, violent and toxic namesakes such as Cornwallis and Belcher Street).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Prioritize expressing Mi'kmaq and African Nova Scotian names and words on new Municipal developments.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Review naming of Municipal assets such as street signs, water bodies, and other places to authentically reflect multiculturalism of the County.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Implement Municipal assets renaming project.</li> </ul>
Develop a Communication Strategy for creating accountability, which includes adding a page to the Municipal website; developing a platform for sharing/communicating or joining the conversation; and celebrating successes through mailing lists and social media updates.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develop Friendship Accord and regular times for conversation with the Towns, County of Kings, Glooscap and Annapolis Valley First Nations to find ongoing opportunities for collaboration.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Deepen communication pathways and strategy with Office of African Nova Scotian Affairs and the Mi'kmaq, and other distinct communities through designated 'district' style meetings and more regular two-way communication and promotion of events, employment opportunities, and news through existing channels.</li> <li>- Develop and propose a Policy including meaningful mechanisms by which the Municipality can make actionable land and territorial acknowledgements addressing we are in Mi'kma'ki.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Support early education about the history of the region through interpretation/storyboards/pamphlets located at playground sites through the County.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Commit to a consultation Terms of Reference with Mi'kmaq communities that includes considerations for Traditional Knowledge and to support two-eyed seeing (Etuaptmumk in Mi'kmaq) and traditional ways of knowing within Municipal work.</li> </ul>	

<b>Cultural Celebration and Reflection of Diversity</b>					
<b>Action</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2026</b>	<b>2027</b>	<b>2028</b>	<b>2029</b>
Always gather around food for diversity meetings, engagement sessions, or events and utilize diverse food suppliers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Consider reducing barriers to access for new food businesses such as food trucks to promote a multi-cultural food landscape within the Municipality.</li> <li>- Continue to utilize diverse food suppliers for Municipal events.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Consider dedicating space for a food truck program in new areas that do not have food services.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Encourage diverse food suppliers at recreation sites to promote diverse cultures.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develop Municipal social media assets about diverse cultures and food within Municipality.</li> </ul>	
Create an Elder-in-Residence program for use in Municipal programs, opening ceremonies, and to participate and provide guidance to Municipal operations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Review town crier program.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Partner with local schools and Indigenous communities to co-create Elder-in-Residence program to impart Indigenous ways of doing and advance the truth and reconciliation process.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Implement Elder-in-Residence program.</li> <li>- Incorporate Elder-in-Residence program into Municipal Mi'kmaq History Month calendar events.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Incorporate Elder-in-Residence program as part of Mi'kmaq History Month radio/public education campaign.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Work with Indigenous community to review and amend Elder-in-Residence program.</li> </ul>
Promote universal access to culture through an accessible event framework that includes guidelines on described events and interpreters.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continue to proclaim special days/periods of observance in Municipality.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continue to have visual support for communities such as rainbow flags and decals on municipal vehicles and education, or awareness campaign tailored to that action.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Encourage the formation of a Kings Region newcomers' network to support newcomers, leverage differences for social and economic growth of Kings Region.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Establish guideline for a diversity grant program specific to events.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Implement diversity grant for NGOs/community projects that are advancing diversity and inclusion within the Kings Region.</li> </ul>



**Cultural Celebration and Reflection of Diversity Cont'd**

Action	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
<p>Develop a public art program in partnership with Towns, Indigenous, African Nova Scotian, Black and 2SLGBTQIA+ communities to express stories and places in the Municipality. Prioritize Mi'kmaw, African Nova Scotian, and diverse artists in the selection criteria.</p>	<p>- Poll community via social media/online survey about stories and places to be prioritized for public art program.</p>	<p>- Collaborate with Indigenous, African Nova Scotian, Black and 2SLGBTQIA+ communities to review selections for public art program; and identifying diverse artists.</p>	<p>- Consult with diverse artists to gather costing for public art program.</p>	<p>- Work with towns and villages to identify funding for public art program.</p>	<p>- Implement public art program in partnership with towns, villages, Indigenous, African Nova Scotian, Black and 2SLGBTQIA+ communities and local artists in recognition of diverse communities and material culture of the Kings Region.</p>
<p>Acquire representative photography of the region by diverse photographers for illustrating this plan, as well as other corporate communications.</p>	<p>- Co-create a Municipal Interpretation and Commemoration Framework with community.</p>	<p>- Work with tourism partners to recognize and celebrate diverse communities and various cultural heritage locations and sites in promotions and tourism mapping.</p> <p>- Host forums in recognition of diverse communities.</p>	<p>- Cooperate with Town and villages to install street banners with Strategy lenses and pillars on high traffic streets within Kings Region.</p> <p>- Continue to host forums in honour of diverse communities.</p>	<p>- Implement photography /commemoration framework to increase representation.</p> <p>- Continue to host forums in recognition of diverse communities.</p>	<p>- Review and amend photography /commemoration framework.</p>

<b>Creating Safe Spaces, Land &amp; Built Environments</b>					
<b>Action</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2026</b>	<b>2027</b>	<b>2028</b>	<b>2029</b>
Explore opportunities to create a walking 'buddy' system for Active Transportation routes in the county.	- Work with recreation team to develop walking 'buddy' system for Active Transportation routes.	- Develop funding criteria for Municipal contributions to facilities or projects that include requirements for gender inclusive washroom facilities.	- Implement walking 'buddy' system for Active Transportation routes.  - Collaborate with police service and enforcement providers to create more equitable and safe communities.	- Work with community groups and civil society organizations to promote walking 'buddy' system for Active Transportation routes.  - Review and adjust walking 'buddy' system for Active Transportation routes.	- Implement changes to walking 'buddy' system.
Develop a park, mural, or garden in a high traffic area as a memorial to Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and Two-spirit people (MMIWG2S).	- Re-introduce community to memorial project in honour of MMIWG2S, during National Day of Awareness for MMIWG2S and Mi'kmaq History Month events.	- Collaborate with Indigenous communities to identify preferred commemorative framework in honour of MMIWG2S.	- Identify and allocate grant funding to implement MMIWG2S' commemorative project.	- Implement MMIWG2S' commemorative project.	- Collaborate with Indigenous communities to host vigil to commemorate National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and Two-Spirit People.
Improve access to community spaces through a comprehensive review of facilities and booking system.	- Review of equitable fee structure, and reduction of economic barriers to public transit for events.	- Increase access to free Wi-Fi via "connect to innovate" Municipal project, to reduce inequities and access to Municipal services and programs.	- Work with IT department and recreation to establish booking portal for community spaces.	- Outline requirements for community engagement and archaeology in areas of significance.	- Support the development of a fully accessible playground within the Municipality. Co-design with community to determine a desired location and appropriate equipment.

**Creating Safe Spaces, Land & Built Environments Cont'd**

Action	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
Create opportunity to manage a vacant agricultural lands database and pair community members with lands to pursue farming prospects.	- Identify Municipal lands for potential farming project.	- Cooperate with community and civil society organizations to identify folks interested in farming project.	- Work to create a cultural resource assessment framework for new developments in the Municipality.	- Collaborate with Indigenous communities to develop a Reconciliation Garden that includes medicinal plants and interpretations.	- Review vacant land assets and consider transferring to Mi'kmaq communities as an act of Reconciliation.

Access & Equitable Delivery					
Action	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
Explore opportunities to develop a 'system navigator' position at the Municipality.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Consider providing additional support to grant applicants by providing a contact person to give advice and provide support on applications or debrief those who applied to improve their applications.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Review scholarship program and evaluation criteria to ensure they are accessible to all communities.</li> <li>- Consider designating a percentage of the scholarships to reach Mi'kmaq, African Nova Scotian, Black and 2SLGBTQIA+ Youth.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Adjust grant policy to include diversity criteria in the evaluation of applications. Consider ownership, leadership, employees, geography, and training investments when establishing criteria.</li> <li>- Consider adjusting the grant program to reduce administrative burden for small grants.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Launch system navigator pilot project.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Evaluate and strengthen system navigator project framework.</li> </ul>
Consider culturally relevant and targeted recreation projects or programs, co-developed with the communities they are intended to serve. Consider cost-sharing of activities and resources for Indigenous, African Nova Scotian, Black and 2SLGBTQIA+ Youth.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cooperate with community and recreation team to prioritise culturally competent recreation programs for diverse communities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Implement culturally competent recreation program.</li> <li>- Explore opportunities for Kings Transit to engage more closely with the communities it serves.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Work with Canada Post, real estate community and educational institutions to develop and distribute welcome packages for newcomers and new residents of the County that provide information on services and programs available.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Explore development of a list of locally available translation services and develop a standing offer for services.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Review cultural recreation program and amend where necessary.</li> <li>- Implement translation services.</li> </ul>

Access & Equitable Delivery Cont'd					
Action	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
Collaborate with Kings Transit to explore options and implement pilots for more accessible and regular transit in rural parts of county and examine geographical distribution of services when making decisions.	Support Kings Transit in increasing equitable and innovative service delivery opportunity particularly to underserved populations.				