

Community Priority: Diversity

Citizens' Diversity Vision, 2027

“Our shared vision is for Kitchener to be a community where all residents have equitable access to, and meaningful inclusion in the social, economic and cultural fabric of civic life.”

Diverse individuals and communities make up the population of Kitchener. Our citizens value the contribution of all of our people. And we are a community that believes that our cultural diversity provides a living fabric that binds our community together. Diversity is our strength - past, present and future.

Our future of a cohesive, strong Kitchener lies within our inclusive vision of society - a society that is equitable and built on the strength of its differences. Citizens want to live in a community that acknowledges and embraces ethnic, cultural and social differences.

Strategic Directions:

To ensure that Kitchener embraces opportunities to build an inclusive community – Compass Kitchener recommends that the following strategic directions be undertaken:

1. That the city create a Corporate culture that is inclusive and represents the diversity of our community through:
 - A review of the Corporation's diversity, in its broadest definition, and the use of results as a foundation against which to measure future change and progress.
 - The development of policy and strategies to ensure broad access, equity and inclusion of our diverse citizens in the life of the Corporation.
2. That the city allocate appropriate resources to enable the Corporation to define and realize goals and objectives of a broad community diversity strategy, including corporate and program-specific policies and procedures.
3. That the city support staff in implementing the 2006-07 priorities from the Leisure Facilities Master Plan including the development of a volunteer strategy, youth strategy, seniors strategy and leisure access strategy.
4. That the city's efforts to engage the public in initiatives and decisions that affect them include communication and outreach appropriate for, and accessible to, diverse audiences.
5. That various projects and strategies be co-ordinated when they are similar in results and/or theme, and that they each include two-way communication with citizens to enhance access, equity and inclusion of all citizens.
6. That staff continues to oversee priorities for physical accessibility improvements in city facilities as required under the Ontario Disabilities Act (ODA), 2001, including:
 - The corporate-wide implementation of all requirements identified in the Accessibility Standards of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, and the 2006 Accessibility Plan.
 - The administration of funds from the Corporate Accessibility Capital Fund to remove barriers across city facilities.
 - An audit of its facilities to determine any existing barriers to persons with disabilities so that a priority plan can be developed to address these issues.
 - That the city acts as an advocate with other orders of government to secure formal recognition of the skills, abilities and designations of foreign-trained citizens - within public and private organizations.

Key corporate strategies which support the Diversity theme can be found under Appendix 1.3.