

## **Creating a Gender Equity Strategy and Gender Equality Office for Toronto**

**Date:** September 4, 2019  
**To:** Executive Committee  
**From:** Chief People Officer  
**Wards:** All

### **SUMMARY**

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This report responds to 2018.MM44.14, Creating an Intersectional Gender Equity Strategy and Gender Equality Office for Toronto. It seeks approval of the plan outlined in this report to develop a Gender Equity Strategy for advancing an intersectional gender-based lens into City programs and services, and internal workforce initiatives, along with the establishment of a Gender Equity Unit to lead the development and ongoing sustainment of the strategy.

Several cities around the world have initiatives and/or strategies to embed a gender-based analysis into local municipal service planning and programs (see Appendix A for a jurisdictional scan).

Gender inequities still persist in Toronto as evidenced by research and the experiences of diverse women, girls, trans and non-binary people (see Appendix B for a profile of gender inequities in Toronto). A Gender Equity Strategy would demonstrate the City of Toronto's commitment to eliminating intersectional gender inequities experienced by Torontonians, allow for the development of new partnerships to shift the landscape, and track progress on reducing and/or eliminating gender inequities in the city, while ensuring public transparency and accountability.

This report recommends the establishment of a Gender Equity Unit within the People and Equity Division to lead the development of the strategy in the following areas:

- develop tools and strategies for addressing intersectional gender equity in key areas such as housing, shelter, governance, transit planning, recreation, urban planning, youth, violence against women, affordable child care and budgeting;
- work with the People and Equity Division's recently established Equity and Inclusion Advisory Group to inform the development of the strategy;

- further integrate a more fulsome intersectional gender equity analysis within the City's annual Equity-Responsive Budgeting (Gender-Responsive Budgeting) process;
- align the Disaggregated Data Strategy with an intersectional gender equity lens;
- solicit public input from diverse women, girls, trans and non-binary Torontonians to inform priorities, outcome measures and the establishment of an ongoing advisory committee;
- develop an educational program to ensure a consistent intersectional gender-based framework is applied by City staff into program planning, service delivery, and policy development;
- develop a results-based accountability framework to measure progress; and
- identify and establish partnerships with key sectors.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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The Chief People Officer, People and Equity recommends that:

1. City Council direct the Chief People Officer to develop a City of Toronto Gender Equity Strategy and report to City Council with the strategy in the fourth quarter of 2021.
2. City Council express its support for establishing a Gender Equity Unit in 2020 within the People & Equity Division at the City of Toronto to develop the Gender Equity Strategy.
3. City Council direct the City Manager to include the new and enhanced request of \$283,132 gross and net for the establishment of 2 permanent full-time positions to staff the aforementioned Gender Equity Unit within People and Equity and \$50,000 gross and net to conduct Community Consultations, for a total of \$333,132 gross and net in the City Manager's Office 2020 Budget Submission for consideration as part of the 2020 Operating Budget process.

## **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

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There are no financial implications arising from this report in the 2019 Operating Budget.

The cost of developing a Gender Equity Unit within the People and Equity Division for 2020 is \$333,132, which will be included in the 2020 Operating Budget of the Office of the City Manager, subject to approval of City Council.

DESCRIPTION:	COST:
Establish 2 permanent full-time positions	\$283,132
Community Consultations (venue, material costs, promotion etc.)	\$50,000
<b>Total Cost:</b>	<b>\$333,132</b>

The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

**EQUITY IMPACT**

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Women, girls, trans and non-binary individuals make up more than 52 percent of Toronto's population<sup>1</sup>. They are as diverse as the City in terms of their ethnicity, race, age, religion, immigration status, ability, sexual orientation and income. Yet, they face disproportionately higher rates of violence, greater poverty including more precarious employment, lower wages, religious discrimination based on attire, and are underrepresented in political and professional leadership positions (see Appendix B for a profile of gender inequities in Toronto).

Addressing intersectional gender inequities in City of Toronto programs, service delivery, outcomes and workforce initiatives will help to decrease inequities experienced by diverse women, girls, trans and non-binary people in the City of Toronto.

**DECISION HISTORY**

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**MM44.14 - Creating an Intersectional Gender Equity Strategy and Gender Equality Office for Toronto**

On July 23, 2018, Toronto City Council adopted a motion directing the City Manager to develop a framework for a Gender Equity Strategy and Gender Equality Office for the City of Toronto and to report back to the Executive Committee in 2019 on a framework that will include:

- a) established targets and strategies for addressing intersectional gender equity in key areas such as housing, shelter, governance, transit planning, recreation, urban planning, youth, violence against women, affordable child care and budgeting;

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<sup>1</sup> Statistics Canada, Census, 2016

- b) establishing an ongoing advisory committee to inform the development of the strategy as well as the development and review of existing and new City policies and programs;
- c) an implementation plan and annual reporting for intersectional Gender-Responsive Budgeting;
- d) a feasibility analysis of establishing a fully resourced and staffed Gender Equity Office; and
- e) the collection of disaggregated data.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2018.MM44.14>

## COMMENTS

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### Developing a Gender Equity Strategy

Gender inequities exist in Toronto as evidenced by research and the experiences of diverse women, girls, trans and non-binary people (see Appendix B for a profile of gender inequities in Toronto).

Several cities around the world have undertaken initiatives and/or strategies to embed a gender-based analysis into local municipal service planning and programs (see Appendix A for a jurisdictional scan). There is no single, effective model undertaken by other municipalities to advance gender equity. Each municipality has developed a structure and methodology that responds to local needs and priority areas, including: housing, childcare, safety, leadership and representation, and civic engagement.

Three best practices have been recognized to identify and remove systemic barriers experienced by women, namely:

- Incorporating a consultation process for setting priorities
- Developing an outcome-based framework which takes an intersectional approach to policies, programs and practices, coupled with robust data collection and reporting
- Dedicated staff resources

A Gender Equity Strategy would demonstrate the City of Toronto's commitment to eliminating intersectional gender inequities experienced by Torontonians, allow for the development of new partnerships aimed at reducing gender inequities, and track progress on reducing and/or eliminating gender inequities in the city, while ensuring transparency and accountability.

The City of Toronto has some initiatives currently underway that are addressing gender equity. In order to develop an overarching Gender Equity Strategy, however, requires a dedicated Gender Equity Unit to lead the following:

- develop tools and strategies for addressing intersectional gender equity in key areas such as housing, shelter, governance, transit planning, recreation, urban planning, youth, violence against women, affordable child care and budgeting;
- work with the People and Equity Division's recently established Equity and Inclusion Advisory Group to inform the development of the strategy;
- further integrate a more fulsome intersectional gender equity analysis within the City's annual Equity-Responsive Budgeting (Gender-Responsive Budgeting) process;
- align the Disaggregated Data Strategy with an intersectional gender equity lens;
- solicit public input from diverse women, girls, trans and non-binary Torontonians to inform priorities, outcome measures and the establishment of an ongoing advisory committee;
- develop an educational program to ensure a consistent intersectional gender-based framework is applied by City staff into program planning, service delivery, and policy development;
- develop a results-based accountability framework to measure progress; and
- identify and establish partnerships with key sectors.

The establishment of a Gender Equity Unit within the People and Equity Division would enable focused and dedicated resources to ensure a robust strategy is developed through public consultations, strategic partnerships, training and resource development and the creation of a results-based accountability framework. Through the 2020 budget process, People and Equity Division will be seeking additional resources for two full-time staff to form the Gender Equity Unit.

Several of the existing equity strategies identified by Council provide an opportunity to establish actions and performance measures to address the specific needs and inequities experienced by diverse women, girls, trans and non-binary people in Toronto. Thus far, City staff and management have demonstrated an interest in integrating a gender equity analysis in City efforts. However, many staff and management do not have a fulsome and consistent framework to integrate an intersectional gender-based analysis in the design and development of programs, services, planning and strategies. Tools, resources, educational materials and accountability measures are needed to ensure a consistent approach to embedding an intersectional gender-based framework.

As earlier indicated, dedicated staff resources are essential to the successful development of a Gender Equity Strategy. As part of the development of the strategy, the Gender Equity Unit will examine various implementation models that have demonstrated long term success along with evaluation and monitoring mechanisms.

## **Key Actions**

The development of the Gender Equity Strategy will focus on the following key actions:

## **1. Existing divisional programs and strategies**

Existing City divisional initiatives are addressing gender equity in the areas of housing, shelter, gender-based violence, human trafficking, child care and workforce initiatives (see Appendix C for additional information on these initiatives). The Gender Equity Strategy will provide an opportunity to develop tools and strategies for addressing intersectional gender equity in these areas.

In addition, the Gender Equity Strategy will provide an opportunity to ensure an intersectional gender equity analysis is embedded within the following existing corporate-wide initiatives:

### *a) Equity Lens Tool*

The Gender Equity Unit will work to enhance the existing online Equity Lens tool by developing additional educational material and resources to guide staff in integrating an intersectional gender analysis in the development of programs, services, policies, budgeting, and other initiatives.

In addition, an Intersectional Gender Analysis Guide will be developed to help City staff learn more about gender, equity and intersectionality and assist them in applying this knowledge to program and policy development, implementation and evaluation. The Intersectional Gender Analysis Guide would be a supplement to the Equity Lens Tool and help draw staff's attention to the way intersectionality, gender and equity are framed and will assist divisions in more effectively responding to the challenges of the increasingly diverse population that the City serves.

### *b) Corporate Strategic Directions*

The establishment of a Gender Equity Unit will ensure that City staff leading work on mobility, housing and other strategic priorities will have access to expertise on applying an intersectional gender analysis to their work. In addition, key provisions of the multi-year workforce diversity plan will address gender inequities experienced by the City's workforce.

## **2. Advisory Committee and Public Consultations**

The People and Equity Division established an Equity and Inclusion Advisory Group in May 2019. The advisory group has a gender focus with membership predominantly of diverse women from various sectors. This group will be further engaged in the development of the City's Gender Equity Strategy as thought leaders representing various sectors to advance equity, diversity, accessibility and inclusion at the City of Toronto.

The Gender Equity Unit will also lead public consultations with diverse women, trans and non-binary people utilizing the expertise of the Equity and Inclusion Advisory Group to determine:

- Gender equity priorities in the City of Toronto,

- The scope, membership and responsibilities of an ongoing advisory committee, and
- Accountability mechanisms.

### **3. Equity-Responsive Budgeting (Gender-Responsive Budgeting)**

Since 2016, the City of Toronto has incorporated equity and gender-based analysis in the annual budget development process. All Divisions are required to report on the impact that changes in the Operating Budget could have on Indigenous people and equity-seeking groups, with a particular focus on women and persons with low income. The purpose of equity-responsive budgeting is to inform the budget debate and decision-making process in order to advance the City's equity goals, including gender equity.

The City of Toronto has taken a phased approach to equity-responsive budgeting:

- For the 2017 Operating Budget, an External Review Panel, comprised of academics and community members with equity expertise, analyzed and reported on the potential equity impacts of proposed service level changes.
- For the 2018 Operating Budget, all divisions and agencies were directed to apply the [online Equity Lens tool](#)<sup>2</sup> to all proposed changes (efficiencies, reductions, new and enhanced) in their 2018 Operating Budgets. The application of the Equity Lens tool helped identify potential equity impacts and generate an Equity Impact Statement. The Statements were incorporated into the City's operating budget system (PBF) and included in appendices of the divisions' and agencies' Operating Budget Notes.
- For the 2019 Operating Budget, priority was given to increasing staff capacity to conduct an equity impact analysis and incorporating Equity Impact Statements in the divisions' and agencies' Operating Budget Notes.
- For the 2020 Operating Budget, efforts will continue to be focused on enhancing training for staff and deepening the equity impact analysis. The focus will remain on changes in the Operating Budget. A capital project will be identified to pilot the use of the equity lens.

The Gender Equity Unit will work with Social Development, Finance and Administration Division (SDF) to integrate a more fulsome intersectional gender equity analysis into the annual equity-responsive budgeting process along with supporting training and education materials.

### **4. Disaggregated Data Strategy**

On May 22, 2018, City Council adopted the recommendations in the "[Supporting Equity Goals with Disaggregated Data](#)"<sup>3</sup> report to Executive Committee. This report

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<sup>2</sup> [https://insideto-secure.toronto.ca/webapps/equity\\_lens/](https://insideto-secure.toronto.ca/webapps/equity_lens/)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2018/ex/bgrd/backgroundfile-114840.pdf>

outlined a framework with equity and human rights, privacy and open government as the three key principles that will guide the use of disaggregated data at the City of Toronto. The report directed City staff to develop guidelines to assist divisions with the collection, analysis, reporting and use of disaggregated data to support the City's equity goals through equity-informed program planning and service delivery.

The Disaggregated Data Strategy will provide direction to City divisions on how to collect, analyze and use gender disaggregated data to understand who is accessing services and to inform equitable program planning and service delivery.

Disaggregated data will also allow for an intersectional analysis to understand access barriers and inequitable outcomes of diverse women, trans and non-binary people. The collection and use of disaggregated gender data will be a key focus along with ensuring that it aligns with the Gender Equity Strategy.

City staff have been developing a report and guidelines that identify the processes, tools and resources required to implement the effective collection and use of disaggregated data. The guidelines will provide direction to City divisions on how to collect socio-demographic data such as race, gender, age and disability, and how to use that data to better understand and address inequities in access to and impact of City services. This report is due to City Council in 2020.

## **5. Gender Equity Unit**

In order for the successful development and ongoing sustainment of a Gender Equity Strategy, the establishment of a Gender Equity Unit within the People and Equity Division is needed. The Gender Equity Unit will consist of 2 full-time staff to lead the aforementioned key actions, along with the following additional actions:

### *a) Results-based Accountability Framework*

Results-based Accountability (RBA) is a data-driven, decision-making process to help communities and organizations get beyond talking about problems to taking action to solve problems. RBA will identify the end results to be achieved to address gender inequities in Toronto, and breakdown the means to achieve these results including population indicators and performance measures.

### *b) Establishing Partnerships*

A critical component in the development of the Gender Equity Strategy will be establishing key partnerships with other sectors addressing gender inequities, including private, public and non-profit organizations to leverage learnings and share performance outcomes. The Gender Equity Unit will establish formal and informal partnerships with key sectors and play a convening role in establishing a partnership and accountability table of these key stakeholders.

### *c) Education Program*

There is currently limited training, tools and resources to support integrating a gender equity analysis. The Gender Equity Unit will develop an educational program to ensure a consistent intersectional gender-based framework is applied by City staff into program planning, service delivery, and policy development.

*d) Policy Development*

The Gender Equity Unit will lead the development of a City-wide gender inclusion policy that will ensure trans and non-binary employees and service users have equitable access to employment and City services.

## **Next Steps**

Once the strategy is developed, staff will report back to Council in the fourth quarter of 2021. This report will include a process for implementation including a results-based accountability framework. The report will also identify any additional resources that are required to fully implement the strategy.

## **CONTACT**

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Waheeda Rahman White, Director, Equity, Diversity and Human Rights, People and Equity Division, [waheeda.white@toronto.ca](mailto:waheeda.white@toronto.ca), 416-397-4118

## **SIGNATURE**

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Omo Akintan  
Chief People Officer  
People and Equity Division

## **ATTACHMENTS**

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Appendix A - Jurisdictional Scan  
Appendix B – A Profile of Gender Inequities in Toronto  
Appendix C - City of Toronto Gender Equity Initiatives Currently Underway