



DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION
CHARTER OF PEEL

Backgrounder & Guidelines

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Backgrounder

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

CHARTER OF PEEL

The Diversity and Inclusion Charter of Peel is a regional initiative to foster inclusiveness and equity in Peel. It supports the implementation of the [Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms](#), [Canadian Multiculturalism Act](#), [Canadian Human Rights Act](#), [Employment Equity Act](#), [Ontario Human Rights Code](#) and [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act](#). However, the Charter is not a legal document.

The Charter is a living document (see page 17 for more details), seeking to reflect the evolution of Peel and the changing legislative and regulatory landscapes. It acknowledges that change is a gradual process.

The development of the Charter was one of the recommendations of the Peel Newcomer Strategy Group’s (PNSG) Host Receptivity Working Group that was tasked in 2010 to outline recommendations related to host receptivity. PNSG formed a collaborative partnership with The Regional Diversity Roundtable to lead this initiative, recognizing their expertise in the field of diversity and inclusion.

The Charter was developed through meaningful community engagement to ensure it is by and for everyone who lives, works and plays in Peel. All stages of this process ensured representation from diverse residents and from non-profit, public, private, education, health and settlement sectors.

Engagement Process	# of People Engaged
Committee of Diversity and Inclusion Champions	10 people
In-Person and Online Consultations	180 people
Focus Groups	60 people
Contacted to Provide Feedback on Final Charter and Guidelines	255 people

Social Planning Council of Peel is the fiscal sponsor of this project, which is funded by the Ontario Community Builders Program of the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration. The Regional Diversity Roundtable is funded by the Ontario Trillium Foundation, an agency of the government of Ontario.

CHARTER RATIONALE

Peel is diverse and growing fast, offering immense opportunities:

Peel had a growth rate of **11.8%** 2006 to 2011 Greater than the Greater Toronto Area (GTA).



Immigrants make up **80%** population growth²



Responding to the needs of Ontario's urban **Aboriginal population** and improving **newcomers' employment prospects**

were 2 recommendations on how to build Ontario's 21st century workforce. ⁶

% of visible minorities & immigrants in...



Peel ranked **6th** overall in the **Ontario Urban Sustainability Report 2007**


4th in economic vitality
13th in livability/equity
15th in smart growth amongst **27** Ontario municipalities.⁴

Peel's population grew **30.8%** and its employment by **27.7%** from 2001-2011 & forecasted to grow by **46.1%** and its employment by **41.6%** from 2011-2041³

But serious challenges face many of Peel's diverse residents:

The recession of 2008 impacted Peel's labour market. The unemployment rate increased from 6.4% in 2006 to 10.8% in 2010, and then began to decrease, standing at 8.5% in 2011. Youth unemployment increased from 12.9% in 2006 to 16% over the same period.⁵

Immigrants made up 80% of the population increase in Peel region from 2006 to 2011 yet 33% live on a low income, three times the poverty rate of non-immigrants. The median income of recent immigrants is \$15,000 compared with \$28,000 for the total population.⁷ This, despite the fact that 44% of recent immigrants in Peel aged 15+ have a university degree, compared to 19% of Canadian-born Peel residents.⁸

15%
of Peel's population reports a disability 
&
18%
of them are living in **POVERTY**

About 15% of Peel's population reports a disability, and 18% of them are living in poverty.⁹

The population of seniors in Peel (65+ years of age) is increasing by almost three times the rate of Ontario and Canada¹⁰, and nearly 40% of them are living in poverty.¹¹

One in five children aged 0 to 5 lived in low income in 2005¹² and, in 2006, there were 10 low income children for every subsidized child care space in Peel.¹³

The number of Aboriginal peoples that live in Peel grew by 40.5% from 2001 to 2006, double Canada's rate and a third higher than Ontario's¹⁴, yet negative perceptions of Aboriginal peoples continue to persist.¹⁵

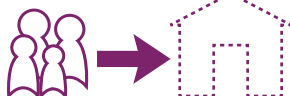
Peel's wait list for social housing was over 15,000 households,

with families without PRIORITY STATUS



waiting

12 to 15 yrs



for placement

Approximately 7 to 10% of the Ontario population is part of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer, Questioning and 2 Spirit (LGBTTIQQ2S) community¹⁶ yet, due to stigma and discrimination, this community is at higher risk of depression, anxiety, phobias, suicidal thoughts, self-harm, alcohol/drug dependence and face barriers accessing services.¹⁷

In Census 2011, 5,685 people reported speaking French as the primary language at home¹⁸ yet there is a lack of services available in French.¹⁹ For Francophone newcomers, settlement is more difficult due to both language and racial discrimination.²⁰

Across Peel, males 15 years and older had higher median employment incomes than females in the same group in 2006. The income gap ranged from \$11,197 in Mississauga to \$16,545 in Caledon.²¹

About 29% of homeowners and 43% of renters in Peel faced housing affordability challenges (spending more than 30% of household income on shelter) in 2005.²² By mid-2010, Peel's wait list for social housing was over 15,000 households, with families without priority status waiting 12 to 15 years for placement.²³

BENEFITS OF THE CHARTER

When people are able to participate in and engage with their communities in meaningful ways, respect for all forms of diversity increases, and barriers are overcome. Inclusion not only involves implementing human rights-based legislation, but it promotes social and economic growth, while decreasing the negative impacts of exclusion like anti-social behavior, violence and unsafe neighbourhoods.²⁴ Focusing on people's strengths enables countless community initiatives that effectively address needs and increase equity and inclusion for the community-at-large.²⁵



Implementing equity, reducing barriers and increasing inclusiveness at the individual, neighbourhood and organizational levels can lead to the following potential benefits for people:

- More vibrant, creative, healthy, engaged and connected communities
- Improved access to needed information, services, supports, opportunities
- Improved livelihoods
- Improved support for children, youth and extended families including reduced child poverty and violence²⁶
- More seniors living at home in dignity while being connected with communities²⁷
- Increased civic engagement.²⁸



A recent study shows that diverse leaders are linked to financial prosperity, innovation and social inclusion.²⁹ Diversity among leaders of organizations is crucial to:

- Financial performance
- Attraction and retention of highly skilled staff and
- Promotion of inclusion, trust and goodwill within the community.³⁰

By increasing diversity, organizations capitalize on different skill sets, unique perspectives, communication skills and cultures. The benefits of implementing diversity and inclusion promising practices in organizations include:

- Improved decision-making quality at all organizational levels
- Increased innovation and productivity
- Increased employee/client/customer satisfaction
- Increased attraction and retention of talent pool
- Improved staff attendance
- Increased organizational morale
- Better meeting the demands of current markets/programs, finding new ones, addressing clients' needs and achieving a broader customer/client base
- Reduced costs
- Improved inter-cultural understanding and enhanced social growth, harmony, and prosperity.³¹



Guidelines

INDIVIDUALS USING THE CHARTER

**The charter encourages self-reflection.
Some examples include:**

- Increasing open-mindedness and respect for all types of diversity
- Understanding biases, privileges and power differences
- Improving clarity of communication with diverse people.

Other ways to use the charter include:

- Seeking opportunities for education
- Role modelling inclusive behaviours among family, friends, co-workers
- Raising awareness of the Charter
- Championing and advocating about diversity, equity and inclusion issues
- Connecting with others doing similar work.

ORGANIZATIONS USING THE CHARTER

Organizations need to create realistic action plans with sufficient resources to implement change initiatives, including setting up regular monitoring and evaluation mechanisms that measure equity outcomes and adapt to changes through time. Building accountability into action plans is very important. Organizations can use the Charter as a benchmark to ensure that policies, practices and behaviours are equitable and inclusive.



88,000
businesses
Employing over
600,000
workers

Examples of promising practices for different sectors include:

- Creating an equity and inclusion statement as part of the organization's vision
- Producing equity and inclusion tools kits for hiring managers and recruiters
- Setting up mentorship programs for individuals from diverse groups
- Using a diversity in governance toolkit with board members and/or leadership
- Creating and implementing policies and practices that reflect the diverse needs of the work force and other stakeholders
- Ensuring information is accessible, for example translated and interpreted, for all clients served
- Providing child care and transportation support for caregivers accessing services

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- Ensuring urban planning and built design enables welcoming, accessible communities for diverse people, including accessible schools, parks, recreation, libraries, faith-services and public transit
 - Providing ongoing learning opportunities about equity and inclusion for board/staff/volunteers
 - Implementing existing legislation and regulations
 - Engaging communities in asset-based approaches to sustainable community development
 - Partnering and sharing with others to achieve improvements; and
 - Creating recognition and incentive mechanisms to celebrate and encourage equity and inclusion.

RESOURCES TO HELP IMPLEMENT THE CHARTER

[The Regional Diversity Roundtable \(of Peel\)](#) is a charitable not-for-profit committed to building inclusion and diversity competence that results in the institutionalization of equity. They offer a wide range of resource materials, workshops and learning events.

[Peel Newcomer Strategy Group](#) is a collaborative facilitating and championing a coordinated and multi-sectoral strategy for the successful integration of newcomers in Peel.

[The Social Planning Council of Peel](#) has a range of useful resources that provide planning guidance from the neighbourhood to the organizational levels, including resources addressing quality of life as well as specific populations such as seniors and visible minorities.

[ImmigrationPeel.ca](#) is a resource for both newcomers and employers in Peel.

[Skills Without Borders](#) is a Brampton Board of Trade project to connect employers with skilled immigrants.

[Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council](#) provides programs and tools for employers and immigrants to ensure that skilled immigrants find meaningful employment and are well integrated into the work place in the Greater Toronto Area.

[Ontario Healthy Communities Coalition](#) has numerous educational publications and tool kits to help community groups in their efforts to improve the well being of their communities.

[Tamarack Institute for Community Engagement](#) has a wealth of resources, including tool kits, models and processes, related to community engagement, community based strategies, communities collaborating, movements for change and sustaining social innovation. They also have links to resources related to an immense range of topics from the roles of local government to quality of life.

Other local, regional and national resources include:

- *A Framework for Creating Health Equity in the Toronto Central LHIN*, Mount Sinai Hospital
- *Diversity in Action... Building Blocks of a Successful Diversity and Equity Program*, The Regional Diversity Roundtable and Maureen Brown
- *Diversity in Governance: A Toolkit for Inclusion on Nonprofit Boards*, Maytree Foundation
- *Diversity Lens*, Canadian Mental Health Association
- *Diversity Reports* and *DiverseCity Greater Toronto Leadership Project*, Maytree Foundation
- *Employers Resource Guide*, Skills Without Borders, Brampton Board of Trade
- *Employment Equity Taking Action*, Health and Racism Working Group
- *Equity and Inclusive Education in Ontario Schools: Guidelines for Policy Development and Implementation*, Ontario Ministry of Education
- *Glossary of Terms*, The Regional Diversity Roundtable
- *Good Ideas from Successful Cities: Municipal Leadership on Immigrant Integration*, Maytree Foundation

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- *Hamilton Region's Social Inclusion Consultation Workbook*, City of Hamilton, Hamilton Community Foundation, Hamilton Centre for Civic Inclusion, Hamilton Roundtable on Poverty Reduction, Social Inclusion Advisory Committee, Caledon Institute of Social Policy
 - *Health Equity Impact Assessment*, Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care
 - *Health Equity Promising Practices Inventory*, Central Local Health Integration Network
 - *HIV/AIDS as an Episodic Disability in the Workplace*, Interagency Coalition on AIDS and Development
 - *Inclusive Organizations: A Tool for Continuous Improvement in Health and Social Service Agencies*, Immigrant Women's Association of Manitoba Inc.
 - *Peel Data Centre*, Region of Peel
 - *Portraits of Peel*, Social Planning Council of Peel
 - *Realizing the Promise of Diversity: Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy*, Ontario Ministry of Education
 - *Striving for Best Practices and Equitable Mental Health Care Access for Racialised Communities in Toronto: Research Report*, Sarah Shahsiah and Dr. June Ying Yee
 - *Vibrant Communities (2002-2010) Evaluation Report*, Tamarack an Institute for Community Engagement

EVALUATING THE CHARTER'S IMPACT AND NEXT STEPS

For the next phase, meaningful community engagement will continue in order to determine the best mechanism to ensure the Charter's impact is evaluated on an ongoing basis. Endorsing individuals and groups will work together for community accountability, positively challenging each other to achieve change in their lives and organizations.

This mechanism will also regularly review and revise the Charter, Backgrounder and Guidelines to reflect relevant changes. The community will be regularly informed of new developments.

ENDORISING THE CHARTER

Go to www.regionaldiversityroundtable.org/?q=node/629 or contact (905) 457-7288 ext 258 to endorse the Diversity and Inclusion Charter of Peel.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Go to www.regionaldiversityroundtable.org/?q=node/631 or contact (905) 457-7288 ext 258 for more information.

END NOTES

¹ Statistics Canada. 2006 Census.

² Peel Data Centre.

³ Hemson Consulting Ltd. "Greater Golden Horseshoe Growth Forecasts to 2014: Technical Report." November 2012.

⁴ Pembina Institute. "Ontario Community Sustainability Report 2007."

⁵ Peel Data Centre. <http://opendata.peelregion.ca/data-categories/economic-activity.aspx> (Labour Force Characteristics for Peel, Annual Average; Number of Business Establishments in Peel)

⁶ Ontario Chamber of Commerce, Mowat Centre for Policy Innovation. "Emerging Stronger: A Transformative Agenda for Ontario."

⁷ Peel Data Centre.

⁸ Peel Data Centre.

⁹ Peel Fair Share Task Force, Social Planning Council of Peel, United Way of Peel Region, Region of Peel. "Portraits of Peel 2011: A Community Left Behind."

¹⁰ Peel Data Centre.

¹¹ Peel Fair Share Task Force, Social Planning Council of Peel, United Way of Peel Region, Region of Peel. "Portraits of Peel 2011: A Community Left Behind."

¹² Region of Peel. "2006 Census Highlights: Report to General Committee." October 24, 2008.

¹³ Peel Fair Share Task Force, Social Planning Council of Peel, United Way of Peel Region, Region of Peel. "Portraits of Peel 2011: A Community Left Behind."

¹⁴ Peel Data Centre.

¹⁵ Association for Canadian Studies, Canadian Race Relations Foundation. "Views on Aboriginals in Canada." March 2013. Accessed March 28 2013 <http://nationtalk.ca/story/survey-of-attitudes-towards-aboriginals-shows-need-for-more-dialogue/>

¹⁶ City of Toronto. Long-Term Care Homes and Services. Diversity Our Strength – LGBT Tool Kit. December 2008.

¹⁷ Regional Diversity Roundtable. "LGBTTIQQ2S Practice Brief."

¹⁸ Peel Data Centre. http://www.peelregion.ca/planning/pdc/data/census/2011-Census/languages/Languages_8-5x11.pdf.

¹⁹ As observed by Conseil scolaire de district catholique Centre-Sud, French Catholic School Board.

²⁰ Peel Newcomer Strategy Group. "Newcomer Settlement and Inclusion in Peel: Building on Existing Assets. The Full Report on the Vision of a New Model for Enhancing Newcomer Settlement Services in Peel." Page 20.

²¹ Peel Data Centre. <http://opendata.peelregion.ca/data-categories/demographics/canada,-ontario,-peel-education,-employment,-income-2006.aspx>.

²² Region of Peel. "2006 Census Highlights: Report to General Committee." October 24, 2008.

²³ Peel Fair Share Task Force, Social Planning Council of Peel, United Way of Peel Region, Region of Peel. "Portraits of Peel 2011: A Community Left Behind."

²⁴ Sherri Torjman, Anne Makhoul. "Social Inclusion in the City of Hamilton." Caledon Institute: June 2011.

²⁵ Caledon Institute. "Celebrating the Strengths of 'Vulnerable' Neighbourhoods." June 2011.

²⁶ Jamie Gamble. "Evaluating Vibrant Communities 2002-2010." Tamarack Institute. 2010.

Sherri Torjman, Anne Makhoul. "Social Inclusion in the City of Hamilton." Caledon Institute: June 2011.

²⁷ Halton Region's Elder Services Advisory Committee. "The Quality of Life for Seniors in Halton: A Guide for Future Planning." March 2007.

²⁸ Sherri Torjman, Anne Makhoul. "Social Inclusion in the City of Hamilton." Caledon Institute: June 2011.

²⁹ Wendy Cukier, Margarat Yap, Kristen Aspevig, Lennie Lejasisaks. *DiverseCity Counts 3 – A snapshot of Diverse Leadership in the GTA.* 2011.

³⁰ Regional Diversity Roundtable. "Under Representation of Visible Minorities in the Workplace Practice Brief."

³¹ Brampton Board of Trade. "Skills Without Borders Employers' Resource Guide."

Dr. Jeffrey Gandz. *A Business Case for Diversity.* Fall 2001.

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