



## **Executive Report**

# **Leading Equitable and Accessible Delivery (LEAD) Improvement Action Plan**

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### Summary

Having gone through LEAD Self-Assessment Process, the Municipality of Clarington is ready to operationalize the LEAD Improvement Action Plan. Departmental support and resources are crucial in implementing the actions identified, such as in Human Resources, to work on workforce diversification and accessibility and inclusion training. Such support will enable Clarington to be a leader and model accessibility and inclusion in Durham Region, being the first municipality to embark on the LEAD process.

### Background

In April 2021, the Municipality of Clarington undertook the LEAD Process, *a system integrated approach for municipalities, non-profits and corporations to implement organization-wide accessibility and inclusion practices*. Going through the LEAD Process showcases the organization's commitment to its' journey towards becoming more accessible and inclusive, both in its operations and programs and services for Clarington residents and businesses. A total of 14 individuals participated in the 2-day self-assessment, including the CAO, Councillors, Directors, Managers and community stakeholders, from various departments and levels. Abilities Centre provided the facilitation and will provide additional follow-up support throughout the LEAD process.

Following is a high-level summary of the areas for improvement in the ten LEAD themes, with the applicable self-rating (out of 4).

### Recommendation Highlights

#### **A. Organizational Management**

##### 1. Leadership, rating 2.5:

Develop a diversity recruitment and advancement strategy to increase diversity representation at the management level, collecting demographic data, determining metrics and implementing process.

##### 2. Structure, rating 3:

- a. Include accessibility and inclusion as a standing agenda item in quarterly cross-departmental meetings, for continuous improvement and collaboration
- b. Ensure employee diversity and inclusion committee has representation from the disability and other marginalized communities

3. Governance, rating 2.25:

Review and embed accessibility and inclusion reference and requirements in Policies, Terms of Reference, Memorandum of Understanding, Requests for Proposal and contracts, beyond reference to AODA.

4. Strategy, 2.25:

Develop strategic plans with key accessibility and inclusion indicators across all departments, prioritizing customer service, parks and recreation.

**B. Organizational Resources**

5. Finances, rating 2.5:

a. Council and all departments budget for accessibility and inclusion, similar to Community Services, or have a percentage of the corporate budget dedicated to accessibility and inclusion.

6. Suppliers and Partnerships, 2.5:

Research and implement applicable guidelines and training on accessible, inclusive and socially responsible procurement practices.

7. People Management

Workforce Development, 2.75:

- a. Develop a corporate diversity recruitment strategy inclusive of persons with disabilities, at all levels and across all departments, expanding on existing employment partnerships with disability organizations.
- b. Incorporate accessibility and inclusion requirements in job descriptions, and explicit statements welcoming applicants from disability and other marginalized communities.

Workforce Training, 2.75:

- a. Develop annual calendar of accessibility and disability-inclusion training delivered in a variety of formats by facilitators with lived experience; include accessibility awareness in annual calendar of events.
- b. Create a feedback mechanism to identify resources managers require to support employees with disabilities and other marginalized groups, and to improve on accessibility training and events.
- c. Utilize monthly "Lunch and Learns" and other team and departmental meeting times to insert learning moments related to accessibility and inclusion.

Accommodation and Performance Review, 2.5:

- a. Enhance accommodation policy and procedure throughout the employment cycle, beyond onboarding.
- b. Audit Return-to-Work processes through the lens of accessibility, inclusion and lived experience rather than focusing on medical, physical & functional assessments.



- c. Implement personal/diversity days to support employees with disability and cultural identities.
- d. Strengthen accessibility and inclusion indicators in performance reviews.

### **C. Organizational Delivery**

- 8. Program and Service Development and Delivery, rating 3.5:  
Develop all programs and services from an equity and accessibility lens from the design stage, especially for adults and seniors, such as public consultations, registration and payment methods.
- 9. Communications and Marketing, 3.1:  
Ensure accessible communication systems, information formats and marketing are implemented by all departments to increase participation from marginalized groups.
- 10. Facilities and Digital Supports, 2.9:  
Make continuous accessibility upgrades to assistive technologies and indoor facilities beyond community centres.