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The Effectiveness of Workforce Diversity Management Program in Municipal Government; A Case Study of the City of Mississauga Program

Subject Keywords: Workforce Diversity Management, DEI, Public Administration Geographical Keywords: Canada, Ontario, City of Mississauga

MPA Research Report

Submitted to:

The Local Government Program

Department of Political Science

The University of Western Ontario

Calvin James
July 2024

Abstract

The Effectiveness of Workforce Diversity Management Program in Municipal Government; A
Case Study of the City of Mississauga Program.

Calvin George James

Public administration currently functions in an era where the traditional methods, teachings as well as processes no longer comport with the existing realities. Factors such as rapid globalization, immigration and integration have contributed to this change. This has resulted in an exponential increase in the number of individuals from foreign countries with diverse backgrounds and cultures working alongside local people within the same organization. This has led to increasing calls for governments and in particular, municipal governments to create a more diverse workforce that is reflective of the population they serve. A popular tool municipal governments including the City of Mississauga have utilized to achieve this is diversity management programs which is the focus of this report.

This report employed a mixed methodology in its exploration of "How Effective are Municipalities' Workforce Diversity Management Programs?" with a particular focus on the City of Mississauga's Workforce Diversity Management Strategy. This was assessed through the lens of the Values Principles Model (VPM) which articulated that for these programs to be effective, they must factor into consideration four key components; representation, participation, application and appreciation.

The research revealed that while the City has made progress in its quest to create a more diverse and inclusive work environment. The City has also experienced challenges as it works towards this goal. According to the data regarding *representation*, there is an overrepresentation of white employees and a significant underrepresentation of visible minorities at the City. Regarding *participation*, particularly at the leadership and High Potential (HiPo) employees' levels, the data revealed that visible minorities and women are underrepresented, while white employees and in particular, male employees are significantly represented at both levels of leadership. At the rank-and-file level, employees express a desire to participate in the process. Regarding *application*, the data revealed there are inconsistencies across divisions, departments, teams and leaders in the application of its diversity strategies. Lastly, regarding *appreciation*, data were limited in terms of incentives and benefits the City has in place to respond to the diverse needs of its employees.

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Calvin James

2024

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List of Abbreviations Used

AA Affirmative Action

CCOHS Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety

EDI Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

EEAC Employee Equity Advisory Committee

EEO Equal Employment Opportunities

ERG Employee Resource Groups

HiPo High Potential

HR Human Resources

ROPPA Review of Public Personnel Administration

SES Senior Executive Services

VPM Values Principles Model

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Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Background

Public administration currently functions in a post-modern era; a period in which the traditional methods, teachings as well as processes no longer comport with the existing realities (Sabharwal, Hijal-Moghrabi and Royster 2014). Several factors contributing to this change are; rapid globalization, immigration, integration and social changes. Over the past two decades, these events have contributed to the movement of free labour (Seliverstova 2021). This has resulted in an exponential increase in the number of individuals from foreign countries with diverse backgrounds and cultures working alongside local people within the same organization (Simon Rafaqat, Rafaqat, Rafaqat and Rafaqat 2022).

This led to demographic changes resulting in an increase in the number of ethnic and visible minorities employed in the labourforce (Newman, Ali, Powell and South 2023). In a report titled "Workforce 2000", Janssens and Steyaert (2003) revealed that while white men constitute the majority of the current workforce, it was forecast that over the next ten years, visible minorities such as people of colour and women would form a greater portion of the US workforce. The increase in representation of visible minorities brought along with it calls for public sector leaders to resolve the existing structural inequalities within their organizations (Newman et. al 2023). Pitts and Wise (2010) corroborated this argument noting that internal and external pressures for increased workforce diversity from groups that have been traditionally excluded from participating in the labourforce to advance racial and social equity within the public sector. According to Ospina (2001) increased advocacy from external minority movements such as; gays, women, people with disabilities, civil rights and Indigenous groups as

well as internal pressures from visible minorities within the labourforce who wanted to see increased diversity and less bias and discrimination led to legislative changes.

According to Pitts and Wise (2010), it led to the creation of a framework of laws, such as Affirmative Action (AA) and Equal Employment Opportunities (EEO) in the US and Canada to promote equity and representation within the public sector. The implementation of these frameworks resulted in labourforce improvement as evidenced by a report from the Review of Public Personnel Administration (ROPPA) which revealed that white males represented 86% of those employed in Senior Executive Service (SES) in the US federal government in 1980, however, by 2008 that number fell to 65% of SES employees (cited in Pitts and Wise 2010).

To sustain this progress, federal and local governments have increasingly implemented diversity management programs within their organizations. This popular tool, Hiranandani (2012) asserted, ensures organizations benefit from a diverse workforce as it allows organizations to hire skilled workers, increases creativity, fosters behavioural changes, reduces high turnover rates and absenteeism and ensures all employees along with their experiences and perspectives are represented in the organization (Hiranandani 2012). However, despite the progress made over the past two decades aimed at improving diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI), discrimination persists which Hiranandani (2012) argued contributes to the high turnover rate among visible minorities. This problem is not unique to the US, but is also an issue in Canada.

1.2 Definition of the Problem

Visibility minorities continue to experience bias and discrimination which has led to growing cynicism regarding the effectiveness of diversity management programs within their organizations (Hiranandani 2012). This is corroborated by a report published in 2004 by the

Conference Board of Canada titled "The Voice of Visible Minorities: Speaking Out on Breaking Down Barriers". It disclosed that despite two decades of implementation of employment equity legislation, a "sticky floor" still exists which continues to impede the progress of visible minorities, while the "glass ceiling" prevents them from occupying senior managerial positions within their organizations (cited in Hiranandani 2012). These challenges have resulted in increased "presenteeism", that is, employees are physically present, however, they are preoccupied with physical or emotional issues that remain unaddressed (Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2017), increased absenteeism as well as high turnover rates of visible minorities (Hiranandani 2012). And though in recent years, organizations have intensified their efforts to recruit visible minorities, they do not have adequate measures in place to retain these individuals resulting in the "revolving door" syndrome (Hiranandani 2012). This, Hiranandani (2012) explained, takes place because of biases and discrimination they encounter that make their work environment intolerable, therefore, compelling them to continuously leave the organization.

The City of Mississauga represents a microcosm of the challenges visible minorities experience in the wider Canadian labourforce. Findings from a survey conducted on the "Current State Inclusivity Assessment" revealed obvious differences in the perceptions and experiences of straight white able-bodied men and visible minorities. It was revealed that straight white able-bodied men were more likely to be in agreement that the City was committed to diversity and inclusion as opposed to visible minorities. Additionally, it was revealed that individuals within the visible minority groups have had or witnessed more exclusionary experiences than their straight white able-bodied male colleagues (Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2017).

These challenges lay the foundation on which this report seeks to examine the effectiveness of municipalities' workforce diversity management programs with a specific focus on how the City of Mississauga can address these systemic issues while striving to create a diverse and inclusive workforce.

1.3 Justification of the Report

While there exists extensive literature on diversity management programs and their impact on both public and private sector organizations, the majority of these studies were conducted in the US and are focused primarily on large private sector organizations.

Consequently, the results of these studies are unique to their context and may not be applicable to the Canadian setting, particularly as it relates to local government. It is for these reasons this work is being undertaken.

1.4 Research Questions

Pertinent questions this report seeks to answer are:

- i) To what extent are visible minorities represented within the City's labourforce?
- ii) To what extent does leadership support diversity policies and programs?
- iii) To what extent are visible minorities involved in decision-making?

1.5 Operationalization

According to Van Thiel (2014), this refers to "the process of giving a definition of the theoretical concepts of central interest to the research." (p.43). Below is a framework outlining the definition of key terminologies critical to ensuring clarity and uniformity of these terms utilized throughout this report:

• Municipality refers to a "geographic area whose inhabitants are incorporated."

(Municipal Act 2001) (see annex 2 for the map of the City of Mississauga)

- Diversity Management refers to the "systematic and planned commitment by organizations to recruit, retain, reward, and promote a heterogeneous mix of employees."
 (Gilbert and Ivancevich 2000, 75)
- Effectiveness refers to "the extent to which stated objectives are met." (Productivity Commission 2013, 6)

1.6 Delimitation of the Report

Outlining the delimitation of the report enables the researcher to make conscious exclusionary and inclusionary decisions relating to the boundaries of the report. Simon (2011) argued that this includes delimiting factors such as; research questions, variables of interest, theoretical perspectives the researcher adopted and the population he/she chooses to investigate." (p.2). As such, this report is limited to the City of Mississauga. This is to ensure its manageability due to time constraints among other limitations that would make conducting a thorough comparative analysis challenging.

1.7 Outline of the Report

This report contains Seven (7) Chapters that are structured as follow:

- Chapter One: Provides an introduction to the study.
- Chapter Two: This chapter focuses on the Literature Review. It contains scholarly views that are pertinent to this report.
- Chapter Three: Looks at the Conceptual Framework; Values/Principles Model (VPM) anchoring this report.
- Chapter Four: Presents the research design and methodologies employed to collect and analyze the data used in this report.

- Chapter Five: Provides a graphical representation and explanation of the data that are important to this report.
- Chapter Six: Provides an in-depth analysis of the data presented in this report.
- Chapter Seven: Provides the conclusion of this report.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

2.1 Diversity Management

Diversity Management, according to Gilbert and Ivancevich (2000), is the "systematic and planned commitment by organizations to recruit, retain, reward, and promote a heterogeneous mix of employees" (p. 75). Hur, Strickland and Stefanovic (2010) opined that diversity management programs because of their multifaceted design, incorporate organizational structure, cultural diversity and representation. This is achieved through initiatives such as; training, mentoring and diversity advocacy. However, Avery and McKay (2010) proffered that the implementation of an effective diversity management program stems from fostering a work environment within which all employees are encouraged to get involved in organizational processes. Sowa and Selden (2003) theorized that this can result in better policy outcomes in response to the needs of particular groups because such policies reflect the values and beliefs of the population they serve.

Studies have shown that the participation of racially heterogeneous groups in the decision-making process has proven to be more beneficial as opposed to racially homogenous groups. This is because racially diverse groups generate a variety of ideas and more possibilities in the creation and implementation of a strategy than homogenous groups (Rafaqat, Rafaqat, Rafaqat and Rafaqat 2022). Scholars have argued that representative bureaucracy is a means through which this can be achieved.

2.2 Representative Bureaucracy in Municipal Government

Effective democracies need a representative bureaucracy; the demographic composition of a government should be a reflection of the population it serves (Newman, Ali, Powell and

South 2023). This is concurred by Bradbury and Kellough (2011) who articulated that a demographically diverse public sector labourforce will result in the formulation and implementation of policies that also serve the interests of visible minority groups who because of their race, ethnicity and gender were historically alienated from the process. They further argued that "passive representation or the extent to which a bureaucracy employs people of diverse demographic backgrounds, will lead to active representation or the pursuit of policies reflecting the interests and desires of those people" (Bradbury and Kellough 2011, 3). As such, a representative bureaucracy generates policies that are generally reflective of the larger public interest.

2.3 Antecedents of Change in Municipal Government

Changing demographics, legal compliance and the increased need for organizational efficiency have led local governments to implement diversity management programs within their organizations to respond to these changes (Googins, Lennox, Soltani 2022). Local governments over the past two decades have made significant progress in trying to reflect the demography they serve, however, they continue to face challenges as many of them struggle to successfully implement their diversity management programs. Hur and Strickland (2015) advised that scholars of diversity management developed frameworks for the implementation of diversity management practices as local governments transitioned from being monolithic, to pluralistic and multicultural by actively developing policies and leveraging diversity. Some of these best practices include;

2.3.1 Diversity Plan. Kotter (1996) spoke about "developing a vision and strategy" of how this change will be achieved. Having a clear strategy in place that focuses on major areas that require improvement, for example, evaluating how they can make the organization more

appealing to potential diverse recruits or how to make employees aware that their talent and skills are appreciated by the organization. This will prevent the plan's objectives from getting lost among the organization's competing demands and therefore, prevent it from achieving its objectives (cited in Appelbaum, Habashy, Malo and Shafiq 2012).

2.3.2. Personnel Recruitment. The demographic composition of an organization is a benchmark of its environment concerning diversity. The more integrated an organization's employees, the more accommodating it is of diversity (Avery and McKay 2010). Avery and McKay (2010) postulated that research has shown a nexus between demographic composition and recruitment. They articulated that the results revealed a pattern known as "homosocial reproduction"; hiring persons whose demographics are similar to those of current employees (Avery and McKay 2010).

To mitigate these personal and structural biases and create a diverse environment, Joseph (2023) argued that Human Resources (HR) managers must tailor the techniques employed in the recruitment process. Efforts such as collaborating with different professional associations that cater to visible minorities, participating in career events and job fairs aimed at visible minorities, establishing partnerships with educational institutions with a diverse student population, revising job descriptions to address biases, utilizing various social media platforms to reach a diverse audience are recruitment methods organizations can employ to attract a more diverse pool of candidates (Joseph 2023). These are initiatives organizations can utilize to increase their ability to attract and hire varied talents as they seek to create a diverse, inclusive and successful workplace.

2.3.3 Diversity Training and Development. Changes in the composition of the workforce coupled with increasing pressures to promote visible minorities including women into

senior positions have led to changes in most departments which has also impacted diversity-related training (Hur and Strickland 2015). According to Laudicina (1995), it is now a requirement that all department members are exposed to some training, especially those at the supervisory and managerial levels to sensitize and create awareness of the new realities of a changing labourforce as well as "valuing diversity" (p. 182). However, Wyatt-Nichol and Antwi-Boasiako (2012) cautioned that training goes beyond creating awareness, but it also includes providing employees with practical skills in addressing diversity challenges.

- 2.3.4 Diversity Management Review Committees. The creation of such committees charged with evaluating an organization's policies and procedures relating to recruitment, selection and performance evaluation is important to effective diversity management. According to Hur and Strickland (2012), such committees ensure issues relating to diversity receive continued attention from management and ensure that urgent diversity issues are addressed. As such, establishing such committees signals the organization's level of commitment to diversity management.
- 2.2.5 Affirmative Action Plan. This plan, Hur and Strickland (2012) wrote, is the most rudimental approach and commitment of an organization to equal employment opportunities.

 The incorporation of such a plan is especially beneficial to visible minorities and underrepresented groups within the public sector as it mitigates the disparity in the representation of these groups in the labourforce.
- **2.3.6 Diversity Advocates.** Establishing such a team whose responsibility it is to advance diversity activities, sends a strong message to the employees that the organization is in support of diversity. It also helps to ensure that leadership maintains its commitment to resolving diversity challenges (Hur and Strickland 2012). The importance of such a team is further supported by

Kotter (1995) who emphasized the importance of "creating a guiding coalition" will assist in mitigating employee resistance to change efforts, especially from those who want to see the status quo remain in place (cited in Appelbaum et. al 2012).

2.3.7 Managerial Support and Accountability to Diversity Initiatives. Leadership plays a critical role in the promotion of an organization's diversity management program. Wyatt-Nichol and Antwi-Boasiako (2012) propounded that beyond words, leaders must show in their behaviour, for example, they can show their commitment to diversity and inclusion through their policy statements, speeches and meetings. This is endorsed by Hur and Strickland (2015) who reasoned that managers' show of support for diversity management programs and the need for a diverse workforce can have a positive impact on the organization and reduce employee resistance. To ensure leaders actively promote diversity within the organization, Wyatt-Nichol and Antwi-Boasiako (2012) suggested that their performance evaluations and salaries are connected to the organization achieving its diversity and inclusion goals.

2.3.8 Employee Involvement. The participation of employees in the process plays an integral role in amassing support for the program. Hur and Strickland (2015) stated that involving employees during the formulation stage of the process provides them with a sense of ownership which in turn can mitigate their resistance to the initiative. Leaders, Hur and Strickland (2015) reported, can get employees involved in the process through the creation of things such as diversity task forces and diversity boards to create initiatives as well as identify and address challenges that may affect the effectiveness of the program.

2.4 Potential Advantages of Workforce Diversity Management

Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS) (2024) outlined several advantages that may result from workforce diversity. These include:

- Greater creativity and innovation solutions generated because of diverse perspectives and experiences.
- Increased engagement and retention of employees because they feel valued and included.
- Increased diversity helps to reduce biases, disparities and unseen barriers within the organization.

2.5 Potential Challenges of Workforce Diversity Management

CCOHS (2024) outlined several challenges that may arise from workforce diversity. These include;

- Underrepresentation of visible minorities, especially when developing initiatives.
- Difficulties adequately addressing various identities and experiences present.
- Resistance from employees who fear the status quo could be replaced.
- Prejudices, stereotypes and biases could hinder the decision-making process.

In conclusion, this Chapter provided a detailed discourse of the scholastic arguments regarding diversity management and the best practices surrounding effective diversity management programs. The Chapter also identified some of the potential advantages and disadvantages of workforce diversity. The ensuing chapter focuses on the Conceptual Framework anchoring this report.

Chapter Three: Conceptual Framework

The Values/Principles Model (VPM) framework is used as the premise of this report in contextualizing the effectiveness of the City of Mississauga Workforce Diversity Management Strategy. It identifies means through which an organization can measure its existing position and where it needs to be on its journey of diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) which include; representation, participation, application and appreciation (Beach and Segars 2022). These will be discussed in the subsequent paragraphs.

Values/Principles Model (VPM)

Organizations that devote attention to all four values rather than one or two see higher rates of employee satisfaction. REPRESENTATION PARTICIPATION The action of speaking To take a meaningful or acting on behalf of someone. and active role in or the state of being DIVERSITY, organizational activities EQUITY, AND represented INCLUSION A range of voices and perspectives, fair treatment, equality of opportunity, and fairness in access to information and resources; a feeling of respect and belonging APPLICATION APPRECIATION The action of putting Recognition and enjoyment DEI into operation of the good qualities of DEI

FOUR CORE VALUES OF DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

Source: Beach and Segars (2022)

3.1 Representation. This aspect of the model Beach and Segars (2022) posited, is anchored in the notion that diversity must be viewed as an asset, that is, organizations embracing employees for their unique talents which in turn enriches the culture and decision-making of the organization. Meaningful representation, Beach and Segars (2022) articulated, requires leaders to remove barriers to demographic representation whether it is in their hiring process or existing policies and procedures that have historically alienated visible minorities.

- 3.2 Participation. As a value, participation means cultivating a work environment where all employees feel free to share their knowledge as well as participate in the decision-making which is important to ensuring inclusion (Beach and Segars 2022). For this to be achieved, Beach and Segars (2022) reasoned that it requires greater engagement with each community. Those organizations that can appreciate this fact and actively foster an environment that facilitates greater participation, especially of underrepresented groups will result in diverse perspectives and solutions leading to better decision-making (Beach and Segars 2022).
- 3.3 Application. This is the most difficult of the four aspects of the model. According to Beach and Segars (2022), the application of DEI requires the redesigning of established processes or systems relating to the development and promotion of employees, recruitment which for a long time favoured one group of people over another because of their gender, race and self-expression. Beach and Segars (2022) warned that this can be challenging because it requires changing how things are done which may result in resistance from those groups of employees who benefit from the existing structure. Beach and Segars (2022) argued that this will require leaders to begin having conversations regarding how to use new perspectives to reframe their issues, the adaptability of their existing structures and processes as well as reevaluate highly regarded assumptions about their organizations.
- **3.4 Appreciation.** This aspect, Beach and Segars (2022) postulated, is the bridge between representation, participation and application when combined has powerful harmonious effects such as; maintaining the momentum of the progress made, highlighting acceptable behaviours as well as showing the impact and progress made. Fostering an appreciation for DEI, Beach and Segars (2022) noted, starts with leaders' recognition of their staff for their efforts. This signals to

them that their contribution is valued. This results in a decline in turnover rates within the organization, especially among visible minorities.

In conclusion, this Chapter provided an in-depth overview of the VPM and its four major components; representation, participation, application and appreciation. The next chapter will discuss the Research Design.

Chapter Four: Research Design

In conducting any research, researchers must provide the methodology utilized in approaching the research to establish the credibility of one's work. This Chapter provides a discourse on the methodology employed in writing this report.

4.1 Research Methodology

This report utilized a mixed approach; both quantitative and qualitative. This methodology was selected because it "mixes or combines quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, approaches, concepts or language into a single study." (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie 2004, 17) resulting in a fuller and more comprehensive study which is not achievable using either method.

4.2 Method of Data Collection

Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected using desk research. According to Van Theil (2014), this refers to the usage of data that have been collected or produced by someone else. Both qualitative and quantitative data were obtained from data contained in the Mississauga 2021 Diversity and Inclusion Survey Results. Additionally, qualitative data were obtained from publicly available data from secondary sources such as; the City of Mississauga Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and its 2021 and 2022 Progress Reports, government websites, journal articles and research publications among other reputable sources relating to this research topic.

4.2 Sample

The unit of analysis; your object of study (Van Theil 2014), is employees at the City of Mississauga. They were used to analyze the City's workforce diversity management program. Questionnaires were distributed to the 7143 employees at City and of that number 3354 completed the questionnaires resulting in a response rate of 47% across the entire organization. It was further disclosed that of the 478 leadership employees; managers, directors and commissioners, 431 completed the survey resulting in a response rate of 90% from that group. Additionally, of the 264 employees regarded as High Potential (HiPo), that is, employees within the organization who are identified by leadership as future leaders, 237 completed the survey resulting in a response rate of 89% from that group (Diversity and Inclusion Survey Results 2021).

4.4 Method of Data Analysis

Quantitative data were reproduced through graphical representations of the results identified in the City's 2021 Diversity and Inclusion Survey Results Report. Qualitative data were analyzed through the use of Content Analysis of his secondary sources. The data retrieved from both methods were triangulated to create major themes.

4.5 Research Limitations

In writing this report, the researcher encountered several limitations. These include:

• The researcher had to rely exclusively on secondary data in writing this report. Therefore, he cannot say for certain the conclusion drawn is completely accurate.

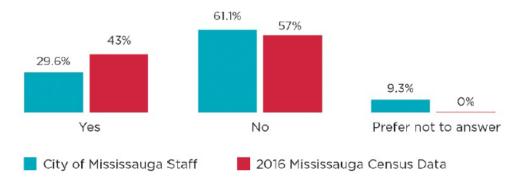
- The researcher was confined to creating a narrative from existing data whose rationale and research methodology may not have necessarily comported with his own methodology.
- Time constraint was a major factor that affected the efforts of the researcher. This report had to be submitted by mid-July of his third semester which was insufficient because he also had other personal and career obligations to fulfill.

In conclusion, this Chapter provided an in-depth discourse on the Research Design and the methodology utilized which included; research methodology, method of data collection, sample, method of data analysis and the research limitations. The resultant chapter will discuss the Presentation of Data.

Chapter Five: Presentation of Data

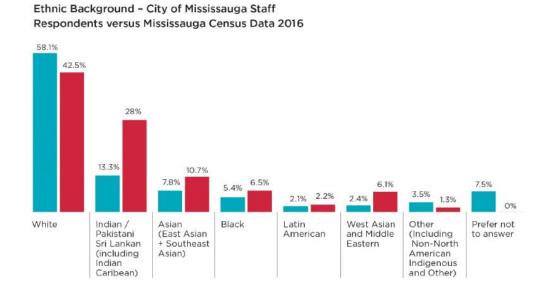
This Chapter provides graphical presentations and explanations of demographic and inclusion data that align with this report. The data presented were exported from the City of Mississauga 2021 Diversity and Inclusion Survey Report. These data will be examined in the subsequent paragraphs.

Identification as a Racialized Person - City of Mississauga Staff Respondents



Source: City of Mississauga 2021 Diversity and Inclusion Survey Report

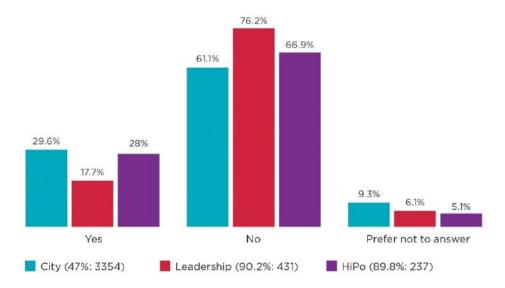
5.1 The line chart above in Figure 1, shows a graphical representation of the question "do you identify as a racialized person?". Approximately 29.6% of respondents selected "yes", while 43% of the population indicated "yes" in the 2016 Mississauga Census Data. Contrastingly, 61.1% of respondents selected "no", while 57% of the population selected "no" in the 2016 Mississauga Census Data. 9.3% chose not to answer the question.



Source: City of Mississauga 2021 Diversity and Inclusion Survey Report

5.2 The line chart above in Figure 2, provides a pictorial representation of the question "with which race(s) and/or ethnicities do you identify?". Approximately 58.1% of respondents indicated they were "white" with 42.5% of the population indicating same in the 2016 Mississauga Census Data. 13.3% of respondents indicated they were "Indian/Pakistani, Sri Lankan (including Indian Caribbean)" with 28% of the population indicating same. 7.8% of respondents indicated they were "Asian (East Asian + Southeast Asian" with 10.7% of the population indicating same. 5.4% of respondents indicated they were "Black" with 6.5% of the population indicating same. 2.1% of respondents indicated they were "Latin American" with 2.2% of the population indicating same. 2.4% of respondents indicated they were "West Asian and Middle Eastern" with 6.1% of the population indicating same. 3.5% of respondents indicated they were "Other (including Non-North American, Indigenous and other)" with 1.3% of the population indicating same. While 7.5% of respondents chose not to answer the question.

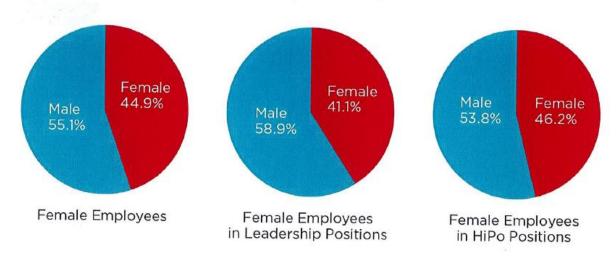
Leadership Breakdown at City of Mississauga by Identification as Racialized



Source: City of Mississauga 2021 Diversity and Inclusion Survey Report

5.3 The line chart above in Figure 3, depicts a visual representation of the question "leadership breakdown at the City of Mississauga by identification as racialized". Approximately 29.6% of the respondents selected "yes", they were racialized. Of that number 17.7% were in leadership, while 28% were in the HiPo group. Contrastingly, 61.1% of the respondents selected "no" they were not racialized. Of that number 76.2% were in leadership, while 66.9% were in the HiPo group. 9.3%, 6.1% and 5.1% of the City employees, those in leadership and the HiPo group chose not to answer the question respectively.

Female Employees in Leadership Positions

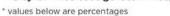


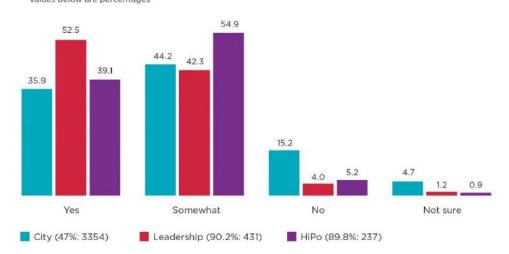
Source: City of Mississauga 2021 Diversity and Inclusion Survey Report

5.4 The pie chart above in Figure 4, presents a visual representation regarding "female employees in leadership positions." The data revealed that females accounted for approximately 44.9% of the City's labourforce, while males accounted for more than half (55.1%) of the labourforce. Regarding leadership positions, the data revealed that females accounted for 41.1% of the City's leadership positions, while males accounted for more than half (58.9%) of employees in leadership positions. Regarding HiPo employees positions, females accounted for 46.2% of HiPo employees positions, while males accounted for more than half (53.8%) of HiPo employees positions within the City.

Leadership Breakdown by Familiarity with Diversity Strategy

- City of Mississauga Staff Respondents





Source: City of Mississauga 2021 Diversity and Inclusion Survey Report

5.5 The line chart above in Figure 5, depicts a visual representation regarding "leadership breakdown by familiarity with the Diversity Strategy". Approximately 35.9%, 52.5% and 39.1% of the City employees, leadership and HiPo employees respondents selected "yes" respectively. 44.2%, 42.3% and 54.9% of the City employees, leadership and HiPo employees respondents selected "somewhat" respectively. 15.2%, 4.0% and 5.2% of the City employees, leadership and HiPo employees respondents selected "no" respectively. While 4.7%, 1.2% and 0.9% of the City employees, leadership and HiPo employees respondents selected "not sure" respectively.

In conclusion, this Chapter provided a detailed analysis of the City's participant responses regarding demographics and inclusivity questions. The data revealed major disparities concerning the representation of visible minorities in the City's labourforce and leadership positions both at the senior and HiPo employees levels as well as the underrepresentation of women in terms of employment and leadership positions when compared to their male

counterparts. Lastly, the data revealed that half the City's leadership is familiar with the diversity strategy. The next chapter presents a detailed discourse on the findings of this report.

Chapter Six: Discussion of Findings

This report sought to identify the effectiveness of municipalities' diversity management programs with particular emphasis placed on the City of Mississauga. Using the VPM as the anchor in assessing the effectiveness of the City of Mississauga's diversity management program, the following four major themes emerged: underrepresentation of visible minorities within the City's workforce, underrepresentation of visible minorities within leadership, inadequate support of diversity programs from leadership and greater support for benefits and rewards programs. These will be discussed in the ensuing paragraphs.

6.1 Underrepresentation of Visible Minorities within the Workforce

According to the VPM, *representation* plays an instrumental role in successfully implementing an effective diversity management program. The theory of Representative Bureaucracy underscored that a government's demographic composition should reflect the population it serves (Newman et al. 2023). This is corroborated by Bradbury and Kellough (2011) who informed us that a demographically diverse public sector labourforce will result in more effective problem-solving and policy-making.

Among the strategic goals of the City of Mississauga Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Strategy (2017) is to "be a workplace that fosters a culture of diversity and inclusion" (p.15). However, data revealed that a mere 29.6% of the City's labourforce identified themselves as being racialized when compared to more than half (57%) of the wider population who considered themselves racialized. This suggests that racialized employees are significantly underrepresentation within the City's workforce when compared to the wider population. Further disaggregation of the data showed that except for those who considered themselves white which accounted for more than half (58.1%) the City's workforce and which also exceeded the

municipality's white population (42.5%). All other ethnic groups are underrepresented in the City's workforce when compared to the larger population (see Figure 2). This is bolstered by concerns expressed by its employees. The report noted that "employees from all groups reported concerns about fairness and consistency of hiring process." (Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2017, 12). The data suggest the majority of the City's employees who reside in other municipalities are predominantly white, hence the overrepresentation of this group of employees that also exceeds the municipality's white population. A possible explanation for this is the City's lingering "homosocial reproduction" culture which the City would have developed over many decades. Avery and McKay (2010) refer to this as a kind of culture where HR continues to hire individuals with similar demographics as those of their current employees. As such, despite having a workforce diversity management plan in place, existing cultural biases and prejudices perpetuate the current racially homogenous composition of the Corporation which impedes it from creating a more diverse workforce.

To mitigate this challenge, the City's HR who is the guardian of the hiring and selection process has an instrumental role in the development and implementation of policies and programs that will align with the City's workforce diversity and inclusion strategy. Joseph (2023) argued that HR managers must tailor the techniques employed in the recruitment process such as collaborating with different professional associations that cater to visible minorities and participating in career events and job fairs aimed at visible minorities. The City can also implement an Affirmative Action Plan which Hur and Strickland (2012) note is a basic tool public sector organizations can implement to ensure equal employment opportunities, especially for visible-minorities and underrepresented groups that have historically been marginalized from participating in the labourforce.

While the City has taken steps to address this issue, for example, the City has hired a Talent Diversification and Inclusion Specialist to assist develop DEI initiatives relating to talent acquisition (Progress Report 2022). It has also undertaken a Recruitment and Succession Planning Process Review to assess its recruitment and promotional strategies which looks at these issues using an equity lens. The City can also consider establishing a Diversity Management Review Committee. Hur and Strickland (2012) articulated that having such a committee in place can assist with the review of the City's recruitment, hiring and selection policies and procedures. In developing these policies, the CCOHS (2024) articulated that they factor into consideration the "intersectionality" of every group to identify the multiple and overlapping identities that impact the various ways we experience discrimination for example, revising job descriptions to address biases and where necessary, ensure that urgent issues relating to diversity and in this case representation of visible-minorities within the organization get the attention it deserves from management so that they are able to address the issue and achieve its objective of creating a more diverse and inclusive work environment.

6.2 Underrepresentation of Visible Minorities within Leadership

According to the VPM, *participation* is important to the successful implementation of effective diversity management programs, therefore, a critical component of the effective implementation of the City of Mississauga Workforce Diversity Management Strategy is the participation of its employees and in particular, its visible minorities. Bach and Segars (2022) articulated that for this to be effective, the organization must cultivate a work environment where all employees feel free to share their knowledge as well as participate in the decision-making process. This is supported by Hur and Strickland (2015) who highlighted that the participation of

employees plays an integral role in gaining support for the organization's diversity initiatives that can foster an inclusive work environment (Bach and Segars 2022).

The participation of visible minorities at both the leadership and staff levels is a challenge that the City of Mississauga needs to resolve. Data revealed that racialized employees are significantly underrepresented in leadership positions, comprising a dismal 17.7% as opposed to the whopping 76.2% of employees who do not consider themselves racialized who are in leadership positions. A similar disparity also obtains in the HiPo group in which a mere 28% of employees belonging to this group identify themselves as being racialized. This is in contrast to the overwhelming (66.9%) of employees belonging to this group who do not consider themselves to be racialized. These data suggest that whites occupy the vast majority of leadership positions both at the senior and HiPo employee levels at the City.

Additionally, the data revealed a gender disparity between male and female employees in leadership positions. It shows that less than half (41.1%) of female employees occupy leadership, while over 58.9% of male employees occupy leadership positions within the organization. A similar result was also obtained for those occupying HiPo employee positions which revealed less than half (46.2%) of females occupy leadership positions, while 53.8% of males occupy leadership positions in this group. This data give credence to the idea that there still exists a "sticky floor" that continues to impede the progress of visible minorities, while the "glass ceiling" prevents more visible minorities and women from occupying managerial positions within their organizations (cited in Hiranandani 2012).

Furthermore, these data counter the City's goal of creating an inclusive and diverse work environment. It is imperative that the City's leadership composition also reflects its demography for its diversity plan to be effective. This is supported by the theory of

Representative Bureaucracy which reasoned that in an active bureaucracy, senior bureaucrats whether knowingly or unknowingly make policy decisions that advance the interests of those groups that share similar attributes whether race, gender or ethnicity etc. This is evidenced by a study done by Rosenbloom and Kinnard (1977), which found that visible minorities occupying senior positions in the Department of Defence thought it was their responsibility to address the needs of those who were underrepresented (cited in Sowa and Selden 2003). As such, it is important that the composition of the City's leadership team also comprise those in the visible minorities as their experiences and perspectives can assist the City in its policy development as well as recruiting are retaining other individuals from underrepresented groups and mitigating resistance from its employees.

Additionally, the underrepresentation of women in leadership can pose a serious challenge to the City's purpose to increase problem-solving and innovation throughout the entire organization (Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2017). According to Ferrary and Deo (2022), empirical studies have revealed that women and men possess different values, experiences and beliefs that are beneficial to problem-solving and policy-making processes. As such, the promotion of more women in leadership positions within the City can help create a more heterogeneous group that can generate more creative solutions. However, Ferrary and Deo (2022) quipped that organizations that practice discrimination are depriving themselves of talented employees. Therefore, the City in its diversity efforts must incorporate policies and procedures that will facilitate the promotion of more women into leadership as it tries to create a more diverse and inclusive labourforce.

At the rank-and-file level, employees expressed concerns regarding their participation in the process. Interviews conducted with employees revealed individuals from visible minorities reported "experiencing and witnessing more exclusionary experiences than their straight, white able-bodied male colleagues" (Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2017, 12). These experiences could result in the "revolving door" syndrome (Hiranandani 2012) which takes place because of biases and discrimination visible minorities encounter at the City, making their work environment intolerable, therefore, compelling them to continuously leave the organization (Hiranandani 2012). It is to be noted, however, that employees expressed optimism about the implementation of the workforce diversity management program. Moreover, it is critical to highlight that employees expressed "a desire to be engaged in the process and to receive updates and communication about the results of the assessment and the Strategy" (Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2017, 12). These data are critical to the City's efforts in getting employees to participate in the process. Their participation and engagement are important to the successful implementation of the program as well as mitigating employees' resistance to change the organization is currently undergoing.

The City has established an Employee Equity Advisory Committee (EEAC) charged with providing the City and senior leadership advice on fostering a culture that promotes EDI at all levels of the organization (Progress Report 2021). The City also aims to implement Employee Resource Groups (ERG) that are led by staff who share common experiences charged with the duty of increasing engagement and inclusivity in the corporation and providing support to their members (Progress Report 2022). These are efforts that will assist employees to participate in the process and gain their support. This supports best practices such as the establishment of diversity advocates (Hur and Strickland 2015) or guiding coalitions (Kotter 1995) that are responsible for promoting diversity management activities to staff as well as ensuring leadership maintains its commitment to resolving diversity challenges.

6.3 Inadequate Support of Diversity Programs from Leadership

The VPM highlighted that *application* is central to the successful implementation of effective diversity management programs. Among some of the diversity management best practices is having a diversity plan which is important to implementing organizational change. One of the goals of the City's Workforce Diversity Management Strategy is that "processes, policies, plans, practices, programs and services align to meet the diverse needs of those we serve." (Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2017, 15). However, employees raised several concerns regarding the City's current policies and procedures. An issue that was often reported by employees is "the organization's lack of consistency in the application of policies and procedures across Departments, Divisions, teams and leaders." Additionally, "employees across all demographics and Departments, Divisions report inconsistency across Departments, Divisions, teams, and leaders in the levels of support for diversity and inclusion as well as issues of bias, fairness and transparency and tolerance for harassing and discriminatory behaviour." (Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2017, 11).

This is further evidenced by statistical data which revealed that only half (52.5%) of leadership indicated that they were familiar with the City's diversity strategy. Additionally, it was revealed that "concerns were expressed throughout all groups that this initiative will not be owned and driven by the leadership and therefore, will not get the focus and resources it requires to be successful." (Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2017, 12). While the report noted on aggregate there were favourable responses. It, however, quipped that "there are key demographics that do not believe the City is as committed to diversity and inclusion, signaling that not all employees are experiencing the City in the same way. In particular, respondents who identified as gender non-conforming, racialized (in particular Black), Indigenous, and as having

a disability are less positive and assured about the City's commitment to diversity and inclusion." (Diversity and Equity Survey Report 2021, 24).

These data provide a possible explanation for the lack of consistency and commitment of half the leadership in the application of policies, especially as it relates to the promotion of diversity and inclusion within the Corporation. This serves as a limitation because leadership plays an instrumental role in the diversity management process. This is supported by Wyatt-Nichol and Antwi-Boasiako (2012) who argued that beyond words, leaders must show in their behaviour their commitment to diversity and inclusion as their show of support for diversity management program and the need for a diverse workforce can have a positive impact on the organization will mitigate resistance from employees (Hur and Strickland 2015).

One of the ways the City is ensuring leadership commitment to the application of its policies relating to diversity is through its Leader Skills Assessment which incorporates basic EDI to increase the awareness of leaders of the various levels of privilege, microaggressions and their biases. This also includes Leader Competencies which incorporate things such as "driving for results" (Progress Report 2021, 5). However, this may not be sufficient to mitigate the leaders' nonchalance and inconsistencies in the application of the strategy. As such, to mitigate this challenge, Wyatt-Nichol and Antwi-Boasiako (2012) suggested that their performance evaluations and salaries are connected to the organization's achieving its diversity and inclusion goals.

6.4 Greater Benefits and Rewards Programs

The VPM noted that *appreciation* is important to the successful implementation of effective diversity management programs. As the City achieves its strategic goals in the implementation of its workforce diversity management program, recognition of the diverse needs

of its population can assist in fostering an equitable and inclusive culture. Beach and Segars (2022) argued that when an employee sees that different contributions and perspectives are given recognition, they become hopeful that their contribution will also be appreciated by the organization. A review of publicly available documents did not reveal an incentive structure to advance the continued success of the program. However, the City has implemented changes in its Paid Holiday Policy. The Corporation has modernized its non-union Paid Holidays Policy facilitating flexibility while acknowledging the City's commitment to EDI. Additionally, its Council gave approval for a new National Day for Truth and Reconciliation paid holiday for all of its employees (Progress Report 2021).

This initiative, however, may not be sufficient in the City's aim towards attracting and retaining workers. To bolster this incentive, D'Amico (2023) posited incorporating a total rewards program that reflects the various aspects of an employee's experience including compensation and benefits. This can be achieved by assessing the organization's rewards and benefits through an EDI lens to identify whether compensation or benefits disproportionately impact one group of employees, for example, providing religious floater holidays where an employee can work on a statutory holiday that is inconsequential to them and replace that day-off for one of their own religious holidays (D'Amico 2023). Also, D'Amico (2023) suggested ensuring the organization's compensation structure is fair and equitable, that is, job levels and salary structures are based on the required skills and not the individual in the job where their race, gender or ethnicity may foster unintentional prejudices. Additionally, D'Amico (2023) reasoned that leaders should ensure their benefits package meets the needs of their diverse labourforce. Laudicina (1995) refers to this as a "cafeteria" plan to facilitate the various needs of its employees. This can be done by incorporating flexibility in its offerings by enabling

employees to take advantage of the benefits that meet their unique or cultural needs whether it is childcare, flexible work hours, hybrid or remote work options. D'Amico (2023) opined that these can be effective in meeting their DEI objectives as these incentives can make a major difference for those employees with different ethnic or cultural backgrounds.

In conclusion, this Chapter provided a detailed discourse of the major themes emerging from the application of the VPM four major components; representation, participation, application and appreciation from which the City's Workforce Diversity Management Strategy was evaluated. The data revealed that although the City has made progress in its aim to improve diversity and inclusion within its organization, more work needs to be done in these areas. The data showed that in relation to representation, there is an overrepresentation of white employees and a significant underrepresentation of visible minorities at the City despite the municipality's predominantly racialized population. In relation to *participation*, particularly at the leadership levels, the data revealed that visible minorities and women are underrepresented, while white employees and in particular, male employees are significantly represented at both the senior and HiPo employees' levels. At the rank-and-file level, employees express a desire to participate in the process which can redound to the benefit of the City in retaining its employees. In terms of application, the data revealed there are inconsistencies across divisions, departments, teams and leaders in the application of its diversity strategies. Lastly, in relation to appreciation, data was limited in this area, however, suggestions of best practices were advanced that the City may consider if it has not already done so in responding to the diverse needs of its employees. The subsequent chapter discusses the conclusion of this report.

Chapter Seven: Conclusion

This report sought to examine the "Effectiveness of Workforce Diversity Management Program in Municipal Government" with particular emphasis being placed on the City of Mississauga's Workforce Diversity Management Strategy created in response to the changes taking place in the demographic composition of its population and the labourforce. To achieve this, the report sought to answer the following questions;

- To what extent are visible minorities represented within the City's labourforce?
- To what extent does leadership support diversity policies and programs?
- To what extent are visible minorities involved in decision-making?

This undertaking revealed that while the City of Mississauga has made progress in its efforts to be a reflection of the people it serves and create an inclusive work environment, much more work still needs to be done in creating a diverse and inclusive labourforce. Despite having a workforce diversity and inclusion strategy in place, in terms of *representation*, the City continues to experience challenges as the majority of its labourforce remains white, while its visible minorities remain significantly underrepresented. As such, HR, its Talent Diversification and Inclusion Specialist as well as the Diversity Committee will have to reevaluate its policies and procedures relating to recruitment and selection to balance its workforce diversity efforts.

The City will also need to address the lack of *participation* of visible minorities and women at the leadership and HiPo employees' levels of the Corporation both of which are dominated by white men. Having a heterogenous leadership team is important to the City's diversity and inclusion efforts because of the diverse perspectives and experiences such a group brings. The City must continue building on the progress made in getting employees to participate

in the process. This will assist in its efforts to foster a diverse and inclusive work environment while mitigating any resistance.

It is to be noted that while the City has made progress in the *application* of its diversity efforts such as creating and implementing its workforce diversity and inclusion strategy which includes DEI training among other initiatives to create sensitivity and awareness among its leaders and staff. More needs to be done to mitigate the inconsistencies in the application of these policies and programs within its departments, divisions, teams and leaders. More also needs to be done in getting leaders to play their part in promoting its diversity efforts as having half its leadership being aware and the other half being somewhat aware of its diversity strategy does not redound to the organization's long-term benefit of fostering a diverse and inclusive work environment. As Hur and Strickland (2015) so eloquently articulated, leadership support for diversity management programs and the need for a diverse workforce is critical to the program's success.

Lastly, the City needs to place greater effort in its commitment to showing *appreciation* in its reward and recognition of its employees by factoring into consideration the varying needs of its workforce. D'Amico (2023) highlighted that this is an effective way to maximize the organization's commitment to DEI. As such, it is imperative that other municipalities incorporate the outlined DEI best practices as well as the lessons learned from the City of Mississauga's experience to effectively implement their own workforce diversity management strategy in their respective corporations.

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Annex 1: City of Mississauga Diversity and Inclusion Survey Report Questionnaire

Section One: Dem	ographic Questions:	
Immigrants to Canad	l <u>a</u>	
Please indicate which statement applies to you: O I was born in Canada O I was born in another country, and immigrated to Canada within the last 5 years (on or after January 1, 2015) O I was born in another country, and immigrated to Canada before January 1, 2015 O Prefer not to answer		
<u>Age</u>		
2. What is your age: O Under 20 O 20-29 O 30-39 O 40-49 O 50-59 O 60-69 O 70-79 O Over 79 O Prefer not to an	swer	
based on the top 20 la		tly, in addition to English. This checklist is uga according to the 2016 Census. Please m in the text box.
O Urdu O Mandarin O Arabic O Polish O Punjabi O Cantonese O Spanish O Tagalog	O Vietnamese O Portuguese O Tamil O Hindi O Gujarati O Ukrainian O Italian O French	Korean Farsi Russian Serbian Prefer not to answer I would like to specify additional languages:
O Tagalog	O French	O Prefer not to answer

Indigenous Peoples of North America/Turtle Island

4. Do you identify as an Indige O Yes O No O Prefer not to answer	nous Person of North America,	/Turtie Island?
O Inuit O Métis	apply: tatus and non-status, treaty or non- n Native/Native Hawaiian Peop	
Race and Ethnicity		
5. Do you identify as a Racializ	ed Person?	
people who are non-Caucasian	in race or non-white in colour	erm 'racialized person' includes rand does not include Indigenous about Indigenous Peoples is in the
O Yes O No O Prefer not to answer		
		ect all options that apply, e.g. to please provide them in the text
O Black - African (e.g.,	O Indigenous person from	O West Asian and Middle Eastern
Ghanaian, Kenyan, Somali)	outside North America	(e.g. Arab, Lebanese, Iraqi)
O Black - Caribbean (e.g., Barbadian, Jamaican)	O Latin American (e.g. Columbian, Ecuadorian)	O White - European (e.g., English, Italian, Portuguese, Irish)
O Black - North American	O South Asian (e.g. Indian,	O White - North American (e.g.,
(e.g., Canadian, American) O East Asian (e.g. Chinese,	Pakistani, Sri Lankan) O Southeast Asian (e.g.	Canadian, American O I would like to specify an identity
Japanese, Korean)	Cambodian, Filipino,	not listed:
O Indian-Caribbean (e.g., Guyanese with origins in India)	Vietnamese)	O Prefer not to answer

Disability

7. Do you identify as a person with a disability? Disab				
conditions, and may be temporary, sporadic, or perm	anent.			
O Yes				
O No				
O Prefer not to answer				
If yes, please select any of the following categories that apply to you. The following checklist is illustrative and not exhaustive and additional options may be specified in the textbox.				
O Mobility/dexterity limitations (e.g. a broad term referring to any physical disability that limits the physical function of one or more limbs.) O Hearing (e.g. Hard of hearing, Deafness) O Vision (e.g. Glaucoma, Vision loss) O Speech/language (e.g. Difficulty generating or emitting verbal messages, such as Aphasia) O Neurological Disorders (e.g. Epilepsy, Chronic Pain, Parkinson's Disease or Multiple Sclerosis) O Developmental disabilities (e.g. Tourette's, Autism Spectrum)	O Mental/emotional health (e.g. Depression, Anxiety Disorder, Schizophrenia, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder or Substance Use Disorder) O Learning or behavioral disabilities (e.g. Dyslexia, Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder) O Chronic Health Conditions (e.g. health conditions or disease that is persistent or otherwise long lasting) O I would like to specify:			
Condenda de la composição	O Prefer not to answer			
Gender Identity				
8. How do you identify with regards to your gender? Select all that apply.				
O Woman				
O Man				
O Non-Binary, Gender Queer, or a similar term				
O Two-Spirit				
O Transwoman				
O Transman				
O I would like to specify an identity:				
O I do not identify with a gender				
O Prefer not to answer				

Annex 2: Map of the City of Mississauga

