

Cropped image courtesy Leah Benetti and the Cliffs of Fundy Geopark.



2026 Report: Equity & Diversity Plan

The Municipality of the County of Cumberland

Spring 2026

About the Plan



Coaches Creations Sports, Design & Photography.

The Equity and Diversity Advisory Committee (“the Committee”) made the plan. The Committee is a group of employees and citizens of the Municipality of Cumberland. The Committee created the Equity & Diversity Plan to share how to celebrate and better serve Cumberland’s increasingly diverse population. The Plan was developed to meet requirements under the *Dismantling Racism and Hate Act* (“the Act”).

About this Report



A map of the world showing where people had moved from, designed by the Welcoming Week Committee.

The Equity & Diversity Plan promises a report every year on how things are going. This is the 2026 report. Some actions have more information below them about what staff are doing to finish the task. The actions in the plan are shown below with one of 3 icons:

- ✓ Done
- ⚙ In progress
- ⌚ Not yet started

Because the Plan was released in fall 2025, few things are “done”. Some things in the “later” sections are left out of this report to keep it short.

Programs and Services



Welcoming Week 2024 at the Amherst Curling Club with the Latido Mexican Folklore Dancers. Photo: Coaches Creations Sports, Design & Photography.

Now



Consider adopting the Recreation Anti-Racism Charter.

- Meet with the recreation department.
- Present to Council.



To recognize important days like Acadian Heritage Day or Emancipation Day, visibly display support with signage, decals, flags, and/or lights.

- Staff have ordered outdoor lighting to project on the Upper Nappan Service Centre to celebrate various diverse ; these will be installed when the ground thaws in spring.
- Next steps:
 - o Finalize schedule of important days and write the social media posts that go with each day.



Provide anti-discrimination training for staff and key volunteers (e.g. firefighters), specialized for their public-facing roles.

- Staff have written an Equity & Accessibility training plan. This includes recommendations appropriate for different roles, and it covers different topics.
- Next steps:
 - o Present the training plan to management.
 - o Decide on priority trainings.



Promote anti-racism learning opportunities for the public.

- Staff published an article about Maurice Ruddick, “The Singing Miner”, an African Nova Scotian who was key in his fellow miners’ survival in the 1958 “bump”.
- Next steps:
 - o Find out what other municipalities are doing.
 - o Decide what type of information to emphasize.



Increase diversity in Municipal communications and promotional materials.

- The recreation department and the HR Generalist are particularly good at this.
- Increase use of photos with diverse populations in our communications.”

Next



87* With Mi'kmaq and relevant organizations, educate the public on Indigenous athletes in history.

- First steps:
 - o Research content.
 - o Meet with the recreation department.

*From the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 99 Calls to Action.

Human Resources and Administration



Michelle Parsons leads a smudge for Cumberland Chief Administrative Officer Greg Herrett, September 2024.



Consider creating a staff equity advisory committee.

- First steps:
 - Find out what other municipalities are doing.
 - Draft a Terms of Reference document.



Include cultural learning components in staff events when appropriate.

- October 2025: The Municipality's most recent all-staff event happened during Mi'kmaq History Month. Dr. Gerald Gloade was invited to speak. As in the photo above, Michelle Parsons led an optional smudge¹. Staff learned a lot and enjoyed the guests' contributions.
- Next steps:
 - Continue to build relationships with Mi'kmaw and 2SLGBTQIA+ organizations.
 - Start building relationships with African Nova Scotian, Acadian, Gaelic-speaking, and women's organizations.
 - Invite diverse people to give presentations to staff at events.



Anti-discrimination training for all staff.

- Fall 2025: An equity & accessibility training plan has been drafted.
- October 2025: (As above) The Municipality's most recent all-staff meeting had cultural training. It did not specifically address discrimination. However, learning about Mi'kmaw culture from Dr. Gloade is a good way for staff to become more open-minded and less likely to discriminate against a Mi'kmaw person.
- Next steps:

¹ Smudging is burning medicines like sage, sweetgrass, cedar, and/or tobacco in a shell. Participants pull the smoke toward themselves with their hands to relax the mind, body, and spirit.

- Decide how to move forward with the training plan within the budget.



Implement the respectful workplace, and accommodation, Equity and Accessibility policies.

- Employees who request accommodations work with their supervisor to make that request happen (or find another option to support the staff member).



Explore the inclusion of an Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) component in the procurement² policy.

- First steps:
 - Find out what other municipalities are doing.
 - Research how EDI impacts procurement.



Become familiar with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) as a framework for reconciliation. *[Inspired by TRC #43]

- First steps:
 - Read UNDRIP.
 - Find out how other rural municipalities use UNDRIP to inform their reconciliation processes.
 - Ask the Equity & Diversity Advisory Committee (EDAC) what they think.



57* Provide skills-based intercultural competence training for staff on topics such as the history and legacy of residential schools

- September 2024: The Municipality held a talking circle for Truth & Reconciliation Day. All staff and councillors were invited. Indian Residential School (IRS) survivor Carol Ann Knockwood shared her experiences at Shubenacadie RS with a small circle of staff and Mayor Gilroy.
- Next steps:
 - Staff made an Equity and Accessibility training plan. Soon it will be presented to management. Decide which training opportunities come first.

Consider extending the reach of the organization's land acknowledgement.

*From the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 99 Calls to Action.

² Procurement is how the Municipality buys goods and services. For example, awarding a contract to a particular construction company.

Leadership and Decision-Making



2024-2028 Members of Cumberland municipal council.

- ✓ Seek input into our Municipal Planning Strategy from Mi'kmaw partners. [*Inspired by TRC #47]
- ⚙️ Provide anti-discrimination training for senior administration and council, specialized for high-level positions and inclusive of gender-related concerns.
 - Staff have written an Equity & Accessibility training plan. This includes recommendations appropriate for different roles, and it covers different topics.
- ⚙️ Review policies and key procedures (e.g. grant allocation, procurement, budgeting) with an EDIA lens.
 - Policy documents on the municipal website have been analyzed for accessibility. A guide shows which documents need accessibility improvements (e.g. flat PDFs).
- ⚙️ Engage First Nation governments where appropriate on projects of common interest.
- ⚙️ Make a commitment to netukulimk (the sustainable use of resources) and care for the environment through the Community Energy and Emissions Plan (CEEP).
 - February 2025: Council received the CEEP. Staff are working on an Implementation Plan.
- ⌚ Recommend a policy for engagement with Mi'kmaq.
- ⚙️ Learn how to attract and retain diverse staff and councillors. Integrate that learning into common practice to empower diverse leadership.
 - The HR Generalist and Community Engagement Coordinator regularly take webinars to learn more about this.

*From the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 99 Calls to Action.