Community
Inclusion

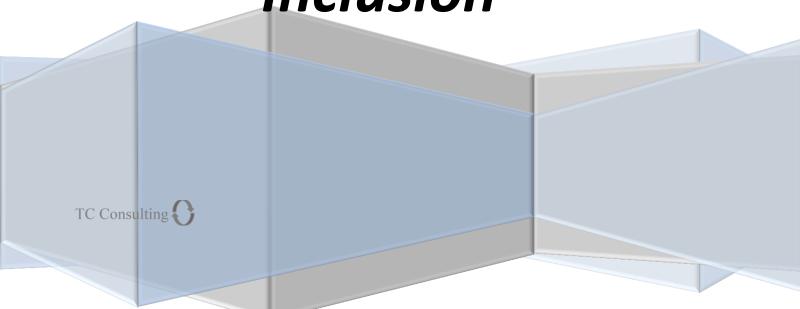TC Consulting

Introduction

The following is an excerpt from the President of the Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association Gordon Barnhart, as SUMA (along with The Multicultural Council of Saskatchewan) introduced a resource for communities entitled WELCOMING AND INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES in 2017.

Mr. Barnhart stated:

"Canada is a country that prides itself on being multicultural, and Saskatchewan's motto reflects that diversity. "Multis e gentibus vires" translates to "from many peoples strength."

Saskatchewan in 2017 is both strong and beautiful thanks to the contributions of its people. As a mosaic is made up of many different pieces to create a beautiful piece of art, Saskatchewan is made up of many different people — Indigenous, settler, immigrant — to create beautiful communities. Together, we are mighty; we are creative; we are one. "Our hometowns are where the people of Saskatchewan come together — to live, work, and play," said SUMA President Gordon Barnhart. "These hubs of activity are where various groups and types of people can build connections, making their communities stronger and more vibrant.

But there is much work still to be done."

Much work has been done regarding inclusion in our communities; however, many of us are still at the learning, assessing, inform and educate stages. This process, if to be long term and actually sustained as simply the culture of our community, needs to take the time and include all sectors as well as individuals in our communities.

There are no shortcuts to being inclusive and welcoming in our community; and it all starts with YOU, YOUR family, YOUR neighbours, YOUR organizations, YOUR Institutions/Businesses, simply put YOUR total community. There are resources to assist you in this process, however YOU still need to drive the initiative and build the relationships towards ensuring Welcoming and Inclusive environments.

ALL GOOD THINGS TAKE TIME; and community inclusion is no exception.

Utilize the following information as a guide to community inclusion; Share, copy, and change it to suit your preference, but PLEASE start the process towards an inclusive quality of life for all-it starts with YOU.

START THE CONVERSATION- What do you hear

At home, in your organizations, at your social activities, in your institutions, on the streets of your community……. RE: New Citizens & the topic of inclusion and welcoming?

START the Conversation and record your findings.

Family:

Friends:

Co-workers:

Organizations: (any groups you or family members are associated with)

Businesses/Institutions: (Retail Business Connections/Associates,Education,Health,Religious Institutions)

Other:

ID Common themes or comments from the various sectors above:

DISCUSS AND DEFINE

So everyone is on the same page when it comes to the use of terminology though this process; using words and/or phrases how you would define each of the following

Community:

New members of a community may include:

Cultures:

Diversity

Inclusion

Integration

Belonging

Definitions outlined in resources including:

- Sask Urban Municipal Association
- Multicultural Council of Sask Welcoming and Inclusive Communities 2017
- Dictionery.com
- Foam Lake New Citizen Initiatives

COMMUNITY:

A group of people living in the same place or having a particular characteristic in common

E.G.-"the City of Swift Current is a community "OR on a different level there are communities within a community E.G. "the hockey community"

Shall include:

All **Individuals, Elected Councils, Businesses** (big and small), **Organizations** & **Institutions** within the boundaries of the urban municipality and the surround Rural Municipality(s)(including Sport, Culture, Recreation, Heritage, Service/Fraternal Clubs, Faith /Religious etc. , Schools, Health Care, Protective Services etc.)

NEW MEMBERS OF A COMMUNITY MAY INCLUDE:

Immigrants, refugees, people moving from reserves and migrants (people from parts of the province or country)

CULTURES:

A particular nation, people, or other social group and their the customs, arts, social institutions, achievements civilization, lifestyle customs, traditions, heritage, and behavior characteristic of a particular social group

DIVERSITY:

Is the range of characteristics that make individuals unique

These characteristics include, but are not limited to:

National origin	Language
Perceived race	Colour
Ability	Ethnicity
Gender	Age
Religion	Sexual orientation
Gender identity	Socio economic status
Family structures	

INCLUSION:

Appreciating and valuing human differences by creating an atmosphere that promotes a sense of belonging where everyone feels respected and valued for their uniqueness

In an inclusive environment each person is:
-Recognized, developed, and their skills are routinely utilized
 -Valued because of, not in spite of, their differences so everyone can fully participate and thrive

INTEGRATION:

 Is new community members experience beyond settlement. Once people are settled and accepted in the community; It includes seeing themselves and being seen as contributors and feeling welcome to be themselves in many contexts

Integration, in contrast to assimilation, is focused on facilitating the process new members of a community, including immigrants, refugees, people moving from reserves and others parts of the province or country, experience beyond settlement to become part of their new communities

BELONGING:
Belonging has long been identified as a fundamental human need (Baumeister& Leary, 1995)

A Basic **Need** that should never be denied

To feel a sense of belonging, we must perceive that we are valued, respected, and have a fit with others (Mahar, Cobigo& Stuart, 2013)

START THE CONVERSATION-Belonging

Have you or someone you know; ever been made to feel excluded or like you did not belong?

Examples of How?

- As an individual / Personally

- In the community
  - In an Organization

  - In the neighbourhood ; a Particular Facility or Space

  - In an Institution or Place of Business

How did it make you/or the person feel?

What are your ideas to Promote Belonging and What do People need to feel Welcome at various levels in the community:

- Individually/Personally

- Neighbourhood

- Organizations

- Public Facilities / Spaces

- Institutions/Businesses

START THE CONVERSATION-Inclusive Community

What would an Inclusive Community look like to you?

What Barriers/Challenges do you think exist towards inclusion?

Defined-What makes a community inclusive?

A Welcoming and Inclusive Community is a community where its citizens and members feel safe, respected, and comfortable in being themselves and expressing all aspects of their identities. It is a place where each person shares a sense of belonging with its other members. It is home.
(SUMA/MCOS WIC 2017/DIC.COM)

Community Inclusion Process

START THE CONVERSATION - *Take the Lead*

Identify who may be a potential champion(s) to open discussion about Community Inclusion/Belonging

A champion is passionate about the community, desires progress and positive change, will commit to a process, and often may be regarded as a leader or visionary in the community. Champions may be individuals, groups, organizations, institutions etc. Find your champion:

- Individual(s)

- Existing Organization/institution

- Newly formed group to deal with issue

- Other

START THE CONVERSATION Community Scan-Then to Now –The Changes/Challenges

Process to gather and obtain information may include:
History books
Local pioneers sharing circle
Local museum
Local historians (we all have them) personal interviews
Local Newspaper office old newspapers
Stats Canada-Sask Health Covered Populations
Urban and Rural Municipal Offices
Local Organizations, Businesses, Institutions-face to face discussions
An advantage in smaller communities because it is easier to access info- but there is no easy way- it takes time and effort

Start gathering the information for a scan of the community; and provide a snapshot of where the community has come from, where you are now, and changes and challenges

Historical Settlement (Cultures): Then and Now

Populations: Then and Now

Services: Then and Now

Business, Institutions, Organizations: Then and Now

List Significant Changes in the Community

ID Challenges that have resulted from changes

START THE CONVERSATION Engaging/Involving the Community

Time to Engage and Involve the Community to assist guide inclusion initiatives

Engagement Options may include:

- Focus Groups
- Town Hall Meetings
    - Graffiti Walls
    - Question Stations
- Organizational Surveys
- Personal Surveys(Survey Monkey)
- Attend & Present at Organizational Meetings(you go to them)
- Social Media Forums
- Other?

What community engagement option would you consider?

Agenda Items for Community Engagement may include:

- Educate on Inclusion and Belonging and It's Importance
- Educate the Community Scan Information
    - Historical Settlement(Cultures)
    - Populations
    - Services
    - Business , Institutions ,Organizations
    - Significant Changes
- ASK and LEARN
    - What is important to them?
    - Is Inclusion and Welcoming Important?
    - What type of community do they want?
    - What challenges do they see in the community?
    - What solutions to they suggest towards inclusion and welcoming?
    - Are they willing to help with the work?
    - Other?

START THE CONVERSATION Recognize/Accept and Assess Challenges

Taking the information you have gathered and what you have learned from community engagement it is now time to identify, accept and assess the challenges that have been placed before you and your group of champions. Taking what you learned and developing a plan of action is the next step. Make sure to keep the information that you gathered from the community at the forefront during your planning process; a good guide to remember is that …..”Collectively as a whole the community is usually never wrong”

Community Challenges towards being Welcoming and Inclusive are:

START THE CONVERSATION Plan of Action

Get to work outlining the specifics with details;

- ID Who needs to be Involved in Planning

- Establish Vision and Outcomes and Goals for Inclusion initiatives

- What Supports/Resources may be required

- Action Plans/Delivery

- Review/Evaluate/Re-visit/Repeat as necessary

- Share and Celebrate Inclusion Work