



June , 2010

2010

Welcoming and Inclusive Communities

AUMA Mayors' Caucus

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Background

- In 2006, AUMA received a grant from the Human Rights, Citizenship and Multiculturalism Education Fund to develop a toolkit on creating welcoming and inclusive communities.
- The goal of this project was to provide resources and support to communities that had signed onto CMARD as well as those municipalities that were implementing their own welcoming and inclusive initiatives.

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WIC Toolkit

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Provides ideas municipalities can adapt to the unique realities of their communities including:

- Key ingredients for success
- Ideas for planning and implementation
- Municipal illustrations
- Resources

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WIC Partnership

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Building on the success of the toolkit, the Welcoming and Inclusive Communities initiative was formed. It is a partnership between AUMA, the Alberta Human Rights Commission and the Human Rights branch of Alberta Culture and Community Spirit.



Government of Alberta
Culture and Community Spirit



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What is a Welcoming & Inclusive Community?

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A Welcoming and Inclusive Community is one which is free from discrimination and where residents feel able to participate in all aspects of the social, cultural and economic life on the municipality.

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Benefits

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- Building a positive community reputation
- Attracting and retaining labour and business
- Adjusting to new demographics
- Preventing conflict
- Dealing with existing discrimination
- Acting on your Municipal Sustainability Plan

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WIC and Municipal Sustainability

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Welcoming and Inclusive initiatives meet requirements under the social and cultural dimensions of the Municipal Sustainability Plans (MSPs).

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MSP – Social Dimension

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Harmonious and Inclusive. Allowing the growth of communities in a way that promotes stability, diversity, affordability and a high quality of life for all.

- Does your MSP respond to the needs and interests of a diverse population regardless of age, income, culture or physical ability?
- Does your MSP provide equitable access to community services by all citizens including low-income persons, persons with disabilities, visible minorities, aboriginals, seniors or others?

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MSP – Cultural Dimension

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Identity and Sense of Place. Celebrating vibrant and festive communities for the expression and enhancement of a distinct identity and strong sense of place.

- **Does your MSP contribute to the creation of a sense of community identity and belonging?**
- **Does your MSP encourage opportunities for the expression and celebration of diverse cultural backgrounds and identities?**

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Example – Fort Saskatchewan

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Guiding Principle

“We commit to being a welcoming community – a place for everyone. We will create a safe community by knowing and respecting one another. Trust and compassion are created through multi-generational and multi-cultural events. We embrace diversity. We will actively reach out to fellow citizens encouraging them to participate in this community. We promote a variety of opportunities for careers and recreation. We ensure social programs, amenities, and services are available to support our community.”

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Two Opportunities

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- **The Canadian Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination (CMARD)**
- **The Provincial Network of Welcoming and Inclusive Communities**

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What is CMARD?

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- **CMARD is a part of an international network of municipalities actively engaged in combating racism and discrimination.**
- **In Canada, the Coalition is supported by the Canadian Commission for UNESCO.**
- **The Alberta Human Rights Commission and the Human Rights branch of Alberta Culture and Community Spirit have championed and promoted the Coalition in Alberta.**
- **There are currently more than 30 municipalities signed onto CMARD. Nine of these are located in Alberta.**

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CMARD Members in Alberta

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Brooks	Calgary
Drayton Valley	Edmonton
Grande Prairie	Innisfail
Lethbridge	Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo
St. Albert	

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Why Municipalities?

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- Municipalities function at the most practical level and are more involved in the lives of their residents.
- Municipalities are the ideal place to develop policies, programs and strategies.

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How Will Municipalities Benefit?

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- Become part of a larger network of municipalities who share your vision of creating a welcoming and inclusive community.
- Document and advance work within your own jurisdiction.
- Exchange practices and expertise among municipalities.
- Publicly acknowledge your municipality's commitment to building a safe community.
- Cooperate and share responsibility with other local organizations and citizens to take action.
- Develop shared resources.

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CMARD Common Commitments

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CMARD Commitments are divided into three areas of municipal responsibility:

1. Municipality as guardian of public interest.
2. Municipality as an organization.
3. Municipality as a community based on the respect of human rights and diversity.

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How Does a Municipality Join?

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- Council passes a resolution
- Once passed, Council forwards resolution to UNESCO and to AUMA (WIC Initiative).
- Municipality creates and implements an action plan to address issues of discrimination and promote diversity in their community.

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Provincial Network of Welcoming & Inclusive Communities

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Vision

The Provincial Network of Welcoming and Inclusive Communities promotes and helps to create welcoming and inclusive communities throughout the province through education, networking and shared resources.

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Objectives/Goals

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- To provide an opportunity for network amongst participating municipalities.
- To provide an opportunity for the sharing of best practices and resources.
- To provide support to municipalities as they work to become more welcoming and inclusive.
- To broaden the reach of welcoming and inclusive initiatives throughout the province.
- To increase the number of Alberta municipalities actively engaged in becoming more welcoming and inclusive.

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Highlights

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- A 2-day learning and networking meeting was held in September 2009.
- Provincial network has established 4 working groups.
- A webpage located on the AUMA site has been created. A microsite is in development.
- A membership strategy has been developed and is currently being implemented.
- Community profiles have been collected from municipalities to build a knowledge base of best practices and lessons learned.
- Review of current literature and programs being completed.

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Highlights

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- A working group has been formed to look at the creation and implementation of a provincial public awareness campaign.
- Support and resources have been provided to municipalities to help them join CMARD or develop their own action plans.
- WIC newsletter created and distributed.

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In Conclusion...

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Municipalities have a responsibility to ensure their community is a place where all of its citizens feel safe, respected and able to participate in all dimensions of community life.

Joining CMARD and the Provincial Network of Welcoming and Inclusive Communities are two ways that municipalities can publicly demonstrate their commitment to sustaining and welcoming and inclusive environment for all.

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For more information...

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Marc Colbourne

Senior Project Coordinator

Welcoming and Inclusive Communities

Alberta Urban Municipalities Association

mcolbourne@auma.ca

780.989.7419

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