

WOOD BUFFALO IN RECOVERY: (RE)BUILDING A WELCOMING & INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY



CAITLIN DOWNIE AND TINNA EZEKIEL, REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF WOOD BUFFALO

CCMARD

- Canadian Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination (CCMARD)
- Support human rights & combat racism & discrimination
- The Municipality joined CCMARD in 2006

“...by taking action to combat racism and multiple forms of discrimination, municipalities are able to build respectful, inclusive and safe societies where everyone has an equal opportunity to participate in the economic, social, recreational, and political life of the community.”

Call for a Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination, 2005

DIVERSITY MILESTONES



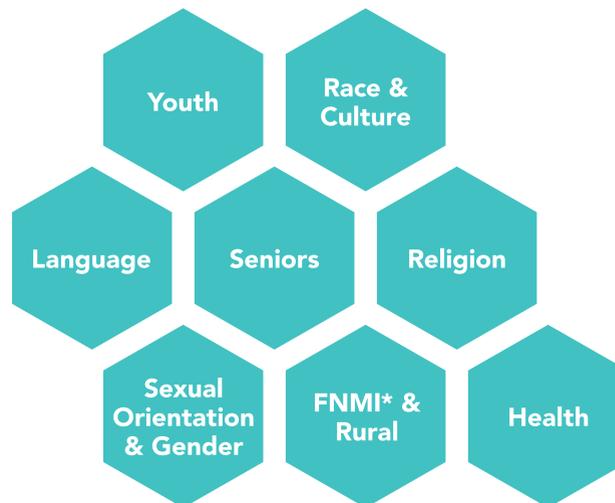
PATHWAYS TO CHANGE

- Interdepartmental Committee on Inclusion, Diversity, & Equality (IDCIDE)
 - Internal committee
 - Recommends policies & procedures internal to the Municipality
- Regional Advisory Committee on Inclusion, Diversity, & Equality (RACIDE)
 - External committee
 - Community advocates
 - Advises on community initiatives and recommendations for strategies
- Diversity Plan
 - Community plan developed by the community for the community
 - Gives focus for diversity & inclusion initiatives

DEVELOPING THE DIVERSITY PLAN



FACTORS OF DIVERSITY-ENGAGEMENT



*FNMI- First Nations, Métis, Inuit

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- **Accountability:** set clear goals, monitor progress and measure results
- **Transparency:** continuous communication and reporting between the Municipality, organizations, and residents
- **Support:** build capacity in the community to undertake the Diversity Plan. The Municipality, RACIDE, and IDCIDE support the plan administratively and strategically

DIVERSITY PLAN GOALS

- Effectively communicate information to the residents of Fort McMurray
- Identify, involve, and engage stakeholders at all levels
- Promote a sense of community by celebrating and recognizing diversity
- Increase understanding through education and training
- Foster trust and collaboration between groups and individuals
- Reduce barriers to supports and services

WOOD BUFFALO WILDFIRE 2016

Factors impacted by the Wildfire that influence the Diversity Plan include:

- Population
- Psychosocial
- Sense of Community
- Economy
- Environment
- Support Services
- Housing

“Sometimes we think of loss as just maybe our home in particular, that’s the most obvious, but there are so many other things. For example, I could lose my relationship with my neighbor who is no longer there, some of my personal mementos, my sense of safety and security in the community.”

Michael Donaldson- Supervisor, Counselling Services, Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo

RECOVERY & INCLUSION

- **Lessons Learned:** facilitated sessions with interagency groups representing vulnerable populations
- **Information Centres:** located within affected neighbourhoods, these centres provide a wide range of support services
- **Reconnect:** family and community events focused on re-establishing social support networks and community life
- **Outreach:** bringing support services to vulnerable groups including seniors, ethnocultural minorities, etc.

“Mental health interventions aimed at re-establishing social support networks include bringing families, neighbourhoods, and the larger community back together as soon as possible after a disaster”

Hutton, D (2001). Psychosocial Aspects of Disaster Recovery: Integrating Communities into Disaster Planning and Policy Making. Institute for Catastrophic Loss reduction.

NEXT STEPS

- Engagement sessions
- Community wide survey
- Canadian Index of Well Being
- Outreach
- Community connection initiatives