



CARE: Cultural Awareness & Racial Equity

Employee Resource & Advisory Group Charter

Executive Sponsors:	Julie Parascondola, Parks Director Teri Smith, HR Director
Employee Co-Chairs:	Gina Esposito, Labor Relations Analyst (HR) Michael Mage, Government Performance Coordinator (HR) Tanisha Roberts, Planning Technician (ECD)
Employee Contributors:	Lori Guilfoyle, Human Services Coordinator (Parks) Uriel Varela, Interim Racial Equity Manager (Admin)

I. Purpose:

This charter will establish an Employee Resource & Advisory Group for Cultural Awareness & Racial Equity (CARE). CARE will be an internal, voluntary, employee-led group for fostering a diverse and inclusive workplace aligned with City of Kent mission, values, and goals to create a *Thriving City* and *Inclusive Community*. CARE will provide opportunities for employees to learn from and network with each other around common identities and experiences by “embracing our diversity and advancing equity through genuine community engagement” ([City of Kent Strategic Framework, 2018](#)).

In addition to its role as an employee resource group for learning and development, CARE will also work as an advisory group. Together with City leadership, CARE will propose recommendations and improvements for advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion at the City of Kent.

II. Objectives:

In support of the Race and Equity initiatives at the City of Kent and in coordination with the Interdepartmental Team on Equity and Social Justice, City leadership and employees, CARE seeks to achieve the following objectives:

1. Reinforce the City of Kent mission to create a safe, thriving, sustainable and inclusive community.
2. Create a safe space for employees to learn and share perspectives about culture and racial identities.
3. Provide employees with resources to enhance understanding about cultures and ethnicities.
4. Empower employees with the opportunity to suggest ways the City can further embrace cultural and racial differences.
5. To achieve City goals of embracing diversity and advancing equity by directly engaging with City employees and City leadership to be proactive in this pursuit.
6. Understand, learn, and begin to identify how the City can become an actively “anti-racist” organization. Definition: “Anti-racism is the practice of identifying, challenging, and changing the values, structures and behaviors that perpetuate systemic racism” (Source: [Ontario Anti-Racism Secretariat](#)).

III. Membership:

All City employees are welcome to join CARE:

1. Membership is voluntary.
2. Members are expected to:
 - 2.1. Work with their manager to participate in CARE with the understanding that individual work goals must still be met.
 - 2.2. Participate in an average of 2-hours per month for meetings during regular workhours.
3. Members will establish community agreements including, but not limited to:
 - 3.1. Confidentiality: To maintain a “brave space” where everyone can learn and grow, members are asked to share experiences and lessons, not spread gossip that identifies individuals.
4. Meetings should encourage interaction and may be intentionally limited in size/format/delivery.

IV. Roles & Responsibilities:

1. **Budget:** Not required.
 - 1.1. CARE believes that educating for diversity, equity, and inclusion can be done effectively through voluntary employee engagement that does not require any initial budget. If a future budget is needed, CARE will apply for it using the regular budget process.
2. **Minimum meetings:** CARE will offer regular meetings, with a minimum of 6 meetings annually.
3. **Minimum structure:** CARE members will select at minimum of 2 co-chairs to be renewed annually. The CARE charter should be reviewed and updated every 2-years.
 - 3.1. Education: CARE encourages on-going employee discussion, education, and engagement to advance best practices for diversity, equity, and inclusion at the City of Kent.
 - 3.2. Sustainability: CARE encourages short and long-term planning to ensure a positive and lasting impact for both current and future City of Kent employees.
 - 3.3. Feedback: CARE may coordinate with City leadership and City employees to make recommendations in the interest of workplace improvement.
4. **Executive Sponsor:** ELT (Executive Leadership Team)/Mayor’s Office will designate a department director(s) as a/an executive sponsor(s) to be renewed annually.

The executive sponsor(s) will:

 - 4.1. Be open to learning about diversity, equity, and inclusion and promote CARE values, information, and opportunities.
 - 4.2. Provide coaching and feedback on CARE charter, goals, activities, and requests.
 - 4.3. Meet with CARE co-chairs on at least a monthly basis or as required by group activities.
 - 4.4. Be reasonably responsive to requests for guidance from CARE co-chairs.
5. **Public Records Requests (PRRs):** As City employees, please remember that PRRs (Public Records Requests) still apply to CARE meetings. This means that anything that is written or recorded could be made public. CARE organizers will not record any meetings.

6. **HR Reporting Requirements:** CARE Members should be mindful when discussing current workplace issues. If any City staff, teams, or departments are identified and if there is any allegation of violating City policy (discrimination, personnel, etc.) then it must be reported to HR (Human Resources).

V. Meetings & Activities:

1. **CARE intentions:** To foster a welcoming environment that celebrates differences and encourages learning and advocacy:
 - 1.1. Epiphany (an awareness, an awaking, a light bulb moment).
 - 1.2. Intentionality (be uncomfortable to push yourself to build a bridge and relationship with someone you normally won't connect with).
 - 1.3. Empathy (sometimes you just need to be present - even if you don't know what to say, show up).
 - 1.4. Advocacy (use your resources, abilities, and influences against injustice and to make life more equitable for someone else who is marginalized).
 - 1.5. Sustainability (scale responsibilities to keep momentum going all year, every year).
2. **Potential meeting topics:** CARE members will offer meeting topics that support employee learning and develop competency in diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Topics may include, but are not limited to:

 - 2.1. Reviewing common terminology and concepts (race vs. ethnicity, equality vs. equity, social constructs, stereotyping, implicit bias, privilege, and systematic racism).
 - 2.2. Normalizing the discussion of race and equity and to promote understanding across difference.
 - 2.3. Fostering a workplace environment and that is attractive to a diverse pool of candidates.
 - 2.4. Examining history, data, and systems as it relates to race and equity in government.
 - 2.5. Sharing personal experiences while recognizing multiple identities and perspectives.
3. **Potential voluntary activities:**
 - 3.1. Exploration of race and equity resources and education (internal and external).
 - 3.2. Participate in local events and/or service opportunities in diverse communities.
 - 3.3. Host a book group for employees on diversity, equity, and inclusion topics.
 - 3.4. Other opportunities as determined by CARE members in consultation with City employees and City leadership.