



Report to: Council

Meeting Date: December 16, 2020

SUBJECT: Adoption of International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's (IHRA) Definition of Antisemitism
PREPARED BY: Claudia Storto, ext. 4737

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That the report dated December 16, 2020 entitled "Adoption of International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's (IHRA) Definition of Antisemitism" be received;
2. That a resolution adopting the IHRA's definition of anti-semitism be passed as set out in Appendix "A"; and
3. That staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to recommend the adoption of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's (IHRA) definition of antisemitism in accordance with the resolution attached as Appendix "A".

BACKGROUND:

Bill 168, the *Combating Antisemitism Act, 2020*, which references the IHRA, was introduced by the Province of Ontario and unanimously passed a second reading with all-party support on February 27, 2020. It was then referred to the Standing Committee on Justice Policy for consideration. On April 30, 2020, Council for the Regional Municipality of York adopted the IHRA definition of antisemitism, followed by other municipalities in the Region.

OPTIONS/ DISCUSSION:

Bill 168 recognizes that antisemitism is a "multi-faceted problem that requires a multi-faceted strategy". As such, a consistent interpretation of the definition of antisemitism in the application of various legislation and governmental policies designed to address discrimination and hate reflective of antisemitism is sought.

The City of Markham is Canada's most diverse City and is enriched by its thriving, active and engaged Jewish and Israeli communities. Through its Diversity Action Plan and other initiatives, the City continues to demonstrate leadership as it embeds diversity, equity and inclusion into our planning and design, our processes and policies, and our staff training and education. At Markham, it is acknowledged that we have a shared responsibility to stop antisemitism in all its forms through education and public consciousness as antisemitic demonstrations continue to threaten communities and undermine democracy.

Therefore, it is recommended that Markham Council adopt the resolution attached as Appendix “A” which sets out the IHRA’s definition of antisemitism:

“Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities”.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

N/A

HUMAN RESOURCES CONSIDERATIONS

N/A

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

This recommendation supports the City’s Building Markham’s Future Together strategic plan in the following corporate goal areas: exceptional services by exceptional people; engaged, diverse and thriving city; and safe and sustainable community.

BUSINESS UNITS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:

N/A

RECOMMENDED BY:

Kimberley Kitteringham
City Clerk

Claudia Storto
City Solicitor and Director of
Human Resources

ATTACHMENTS:

Appendix “A” - Resolution Adopting the IHRA’s Definition of Antisemitism