



City of Pembroke

Diversity Advisory Committee

Community Town Hall

October 6, 2021

Committee Origins

- Following the article written by Cindy Tran after the assault of her grandmother, Thi Nga Doan, Mayor LeMay formed the Mayor's Diversity Roundtable.
- After several meetings, the roundtable recommended that Pembroke City Council formally create an advisory committee to handle matters relating to diversity, equity, and inclusion within Pembroke.
- The Diversity Advisory Committee was formally approved in January.
- Terms of reference share that committee membership includes:
 - Up to six citizen appointments
 - One representative from the Algonquins of Pikwakanagan First Nation appointed by the Chief and Council
 - One representative from the Local Immigration Partnership, or similar organization that works towards forwarding the goals of inclusion and diversity in Pembroke
 - Up to two members of Council, one of which is a member of the Pembroke Police Services Board
 - The following are resource appointments, which will help guide the Diversity Advisory Committee, but not be members of the Committee.
 - One representative from the Renfrew County District School Board, one representative from the Renfrew County Catholic District School Board
 - One representative from Algonquin College Pembroke Campus that works with international students at the College

Committee Responsibilities

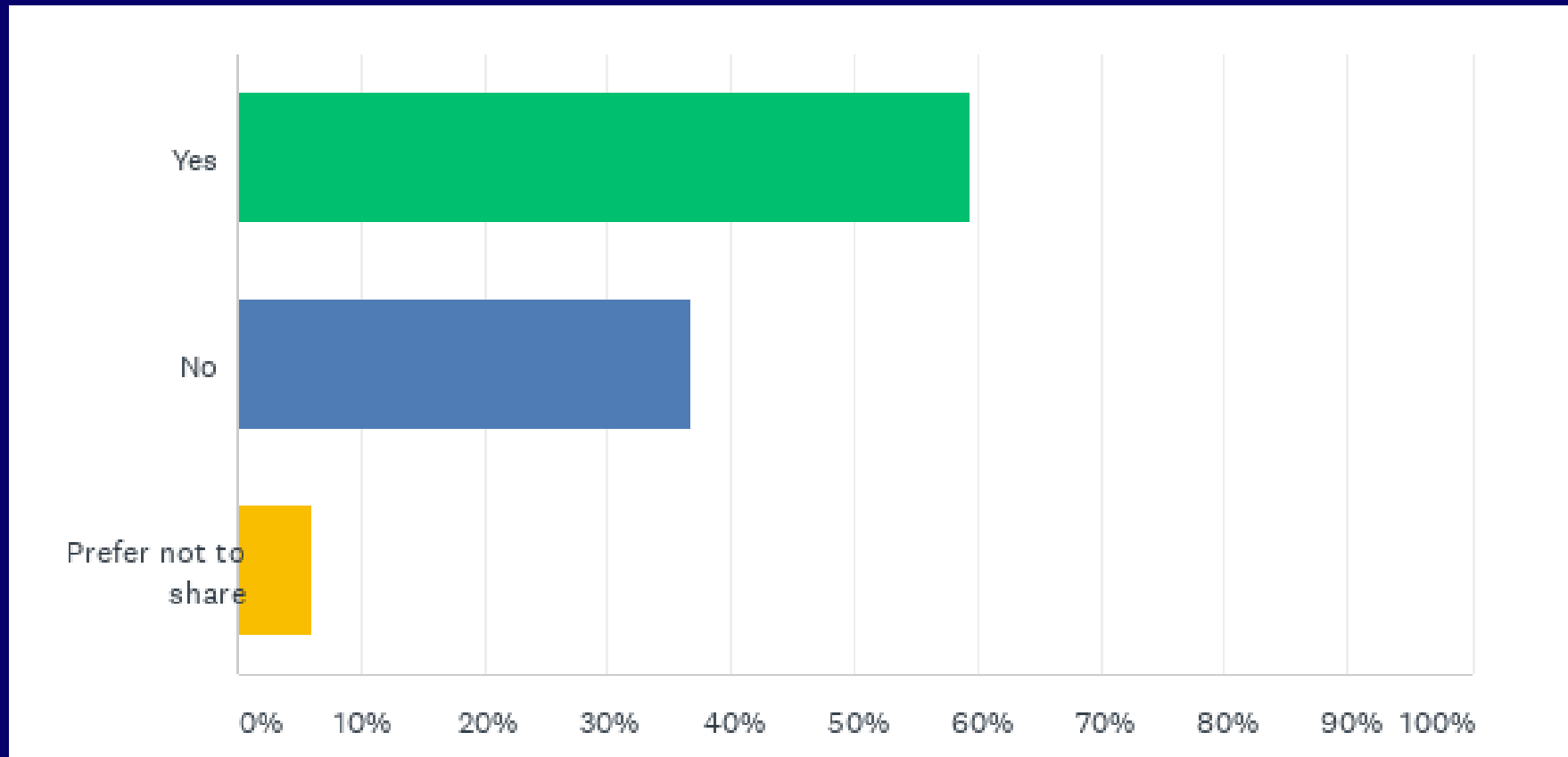
- The Pembroke Diversity Advisory Committee shall provide advice and make recommendations to the City of Pembroke on the following:
 - The development and creation of new policies, procedures, and by-laws related to diversity, equity, and inclusion;
 - The identification and implementation of community outreach activities, which further diversity, equity, and inclusion in the municipality. This includes providing assistance with and support for the implementation of education programs and for special events relating to diversity, equity, and inclusion matters;
 - Education and/or outreach to the public regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion and the work of the Diversity Advisory Committee and the City of Pembroke relating to diversity, equity, and inclusion;
 - Addressing incidents of racism, homophobia, transphobia and discrimination in the municipality, and advising the municipality on how to best deal with such incidents;
 - Additional measures to address racism, homophobia, and transphobia including any plans, studies and initiatives related to diversity, equity, and inclusion;
 - The development and updating, as required, of a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Action Plan;
 - Assisting the City with applying a diversity, equity, and inclusion lens to a range of municipal activities;

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Survey

- A community survey was open from May 5-June 10 to hear from past and present residents of Pembroke
- Encouraged participation from BIPOC and LGBTQ2S+ communities
- Received 213 responses, over 50% were current residents of Pembroke
- Over 80% of respondents were between ages of 19-60, 64% were 19-45
- 60% of respondents were white
- Approximately 65% of respondents were heterosexual

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Survey

Have you personally experienced or witnessed homophobia in Pembroke?



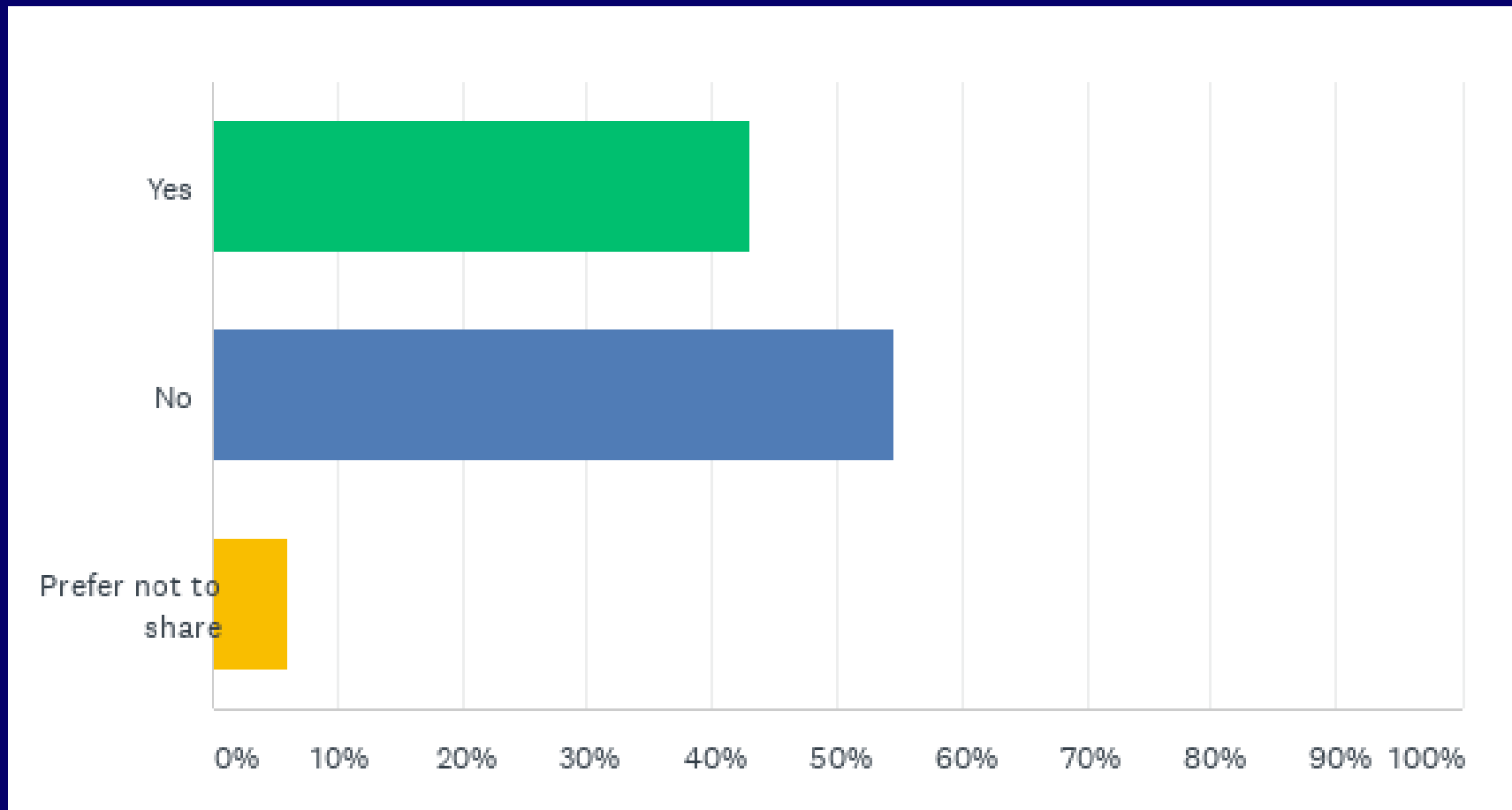
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Survey

→ **Examples of incidents included:**

- “People saying the rainbow crosswalk is promoting sin or that it's a waste of money.”
- “The comments overheard during the Pride parade and during the construction of the Pride crosswalk were terrible. I saw many similar comments on Facebook posts of local community pages expressing homophobia from people I knew in the community.”
- “When it became known that I was a lesbian I experienced egging of my house and car in Pembroke.”
- “I was looking for housing in Pembroke and was rejected based on the fact that I am gay.”
- “Egged walking town the sidewalk. Slurs called out when walking down the street. Intrusive questioning about my sexuality. Physical/ verbal violence. Told my lifestyle (sexuality) was inappropriate by healthcare professionals.”

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Survey

Have you personally experienced or witnessed transphobia in Pembroke?



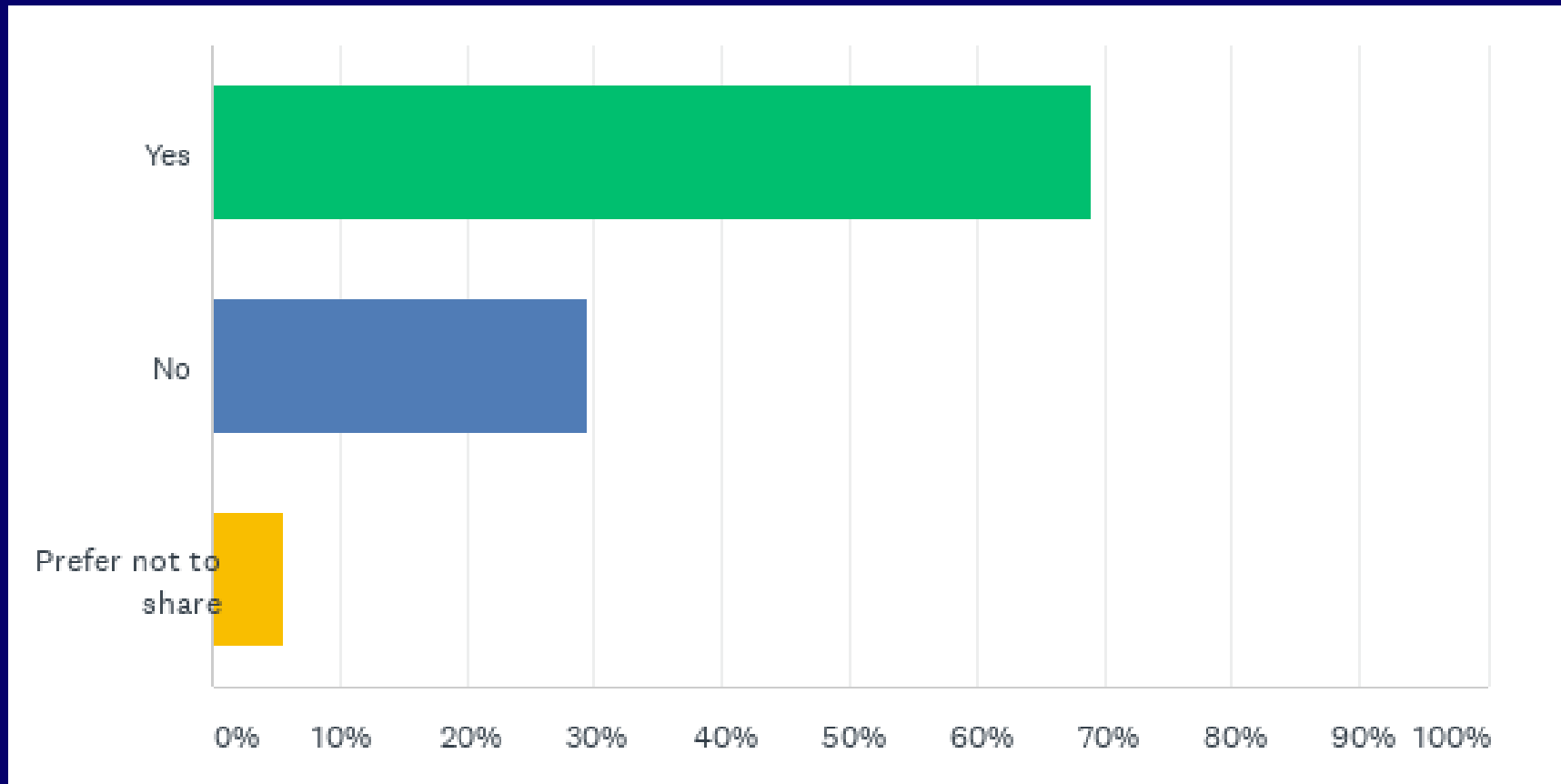
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Survey

→ **Examples of incidents included:**

- “Heard a colleague complaining about “how annoying these trans people are” and felt very concerned because my workplace is healthcare and my colleagues are nurses.”
- “My friend was assaulted for using the bathroom.”
- “A man spat on me in the street due to a trans flag bracelet I was wearing. A dentist purposefully misgendered me and called me, “she/he/it/whatever.”
- “At a restaurant on a Sunday morning, two tables were vocal about injuring any trans person that walked down Pembroke Street or entered Riverside Park. It was impossible for the whole dining area not to overhear their conversation.”

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Survey

Have you personally experienced or witnessed racism or discrimination in Pembroke?



Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Survey

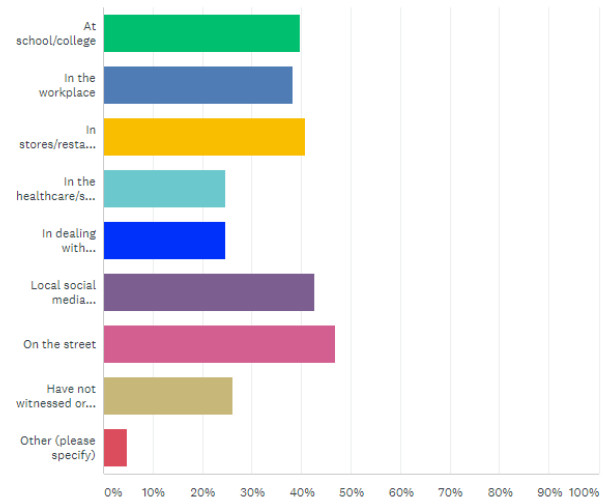
→ Examples of incidents included:

- “Was teased at work about "having coronavirus now" because I have Chinese ancestry. Heard colleagues say they didn't want to work shifts with me.”
- “I've heard many stories from local students in nursing who have had people refuse treatment and use the n-word towards them.”
- “Push back when asking for a legal tax rebate. also, being obviously followed by store staff while shopping.”
- “I have supported newcomers to the area and have experienced racism and discrimination firsthand from everyone from local elected officials, councillors, mayors, MPs, employment service providers, social assistance staff, employers, neighbours, teachers, the list goes on. I have worked with employers who made judgments simply based on a name.”

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Survey

Within Pembroke, in which of the following settings have you witnessed or experienced racism, discrimination, or unfair treatment because of race? Check all that apply

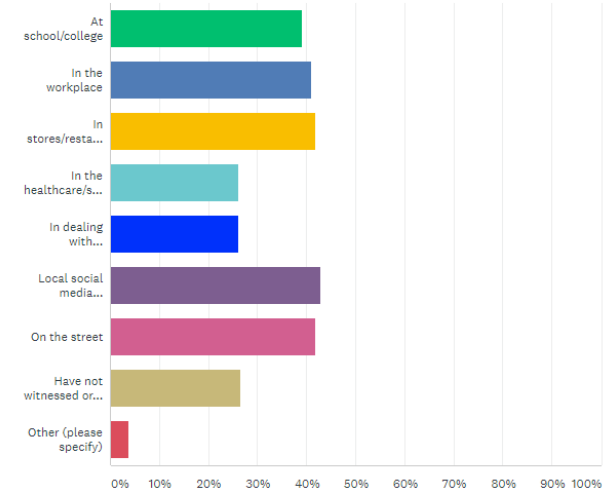
Answered: 211 Skipped: 2



| ANSWER CHOICES | RESPONSES |
|------------------------------------------|-----------|
| At school/college | 39.81% 84 |
| In the workplace | 38.39% 81 |
| In stores/restaurants | 40.76% 86 |
| In the healthcare/social services system | 24.64% 52 |
| In dealing with police/justice system | 24.64% 52 |
| Local social media groups/forums | 42.65% 90 |
| On the street | 46.92% 99 |
| Have not witnessed or experienced | 26.07% 55 |
| Other (please specify) | 4.74% 10 |
| Total Respondents: 211 | |

Within Pembroke, in which of the following settings have you witnessed or experienced racism, discrimination, or unfair treatment because of ethnicity? Check all that apply

Answered: 210 Skipped: 3

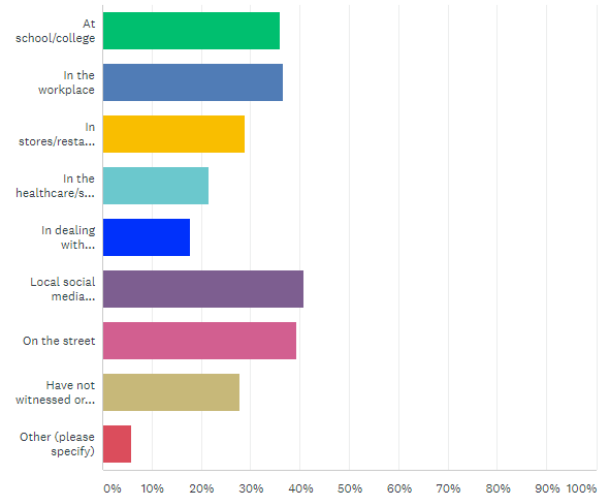


| ANSWER CHOICES | RESPONSES |
|------------------------------------------|-----------|
| At school/college | 39.05% 82 |
| In the workplace | 40.95% 86 |
| In stores/restaurants | 41.90% 88 |
| In the healthcare/social services system | 26.19% 55 |
| In dealing with police/justice system | 26.19% 55 |
| Local social media groups/forums | 42.86% 90 |
| On the street | 41.90% 88 |
| Have not witnessed or experienced | 26.67% 56 |
| Other (please specify) | 3.81% 8 |
| Total Respondents: 210 | |

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Survey

Within Pembroke, in which of the following settings have you witnessed or experienced homophobia, discrimination, or unfair treatment because of sexual orientation? Check all that apply

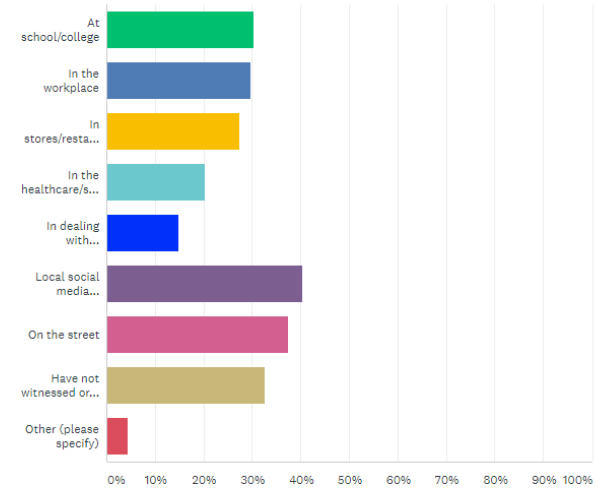
Answered: 208 Skipped: 5



| ANSWER CHOICES | RESPONSES |
|------------------------------------------|-----------|
| At school/college | 36.06% 75 |
| In the workplace | 36.54% 76 |
| In stores/restaurants | 28.85% 60 |
| In the healthcare/social services system | 21.63% 45 |
| In dealing with police/justice system | 17.79% 37 |
| Local social media groups/forums | 40.87% 85 |
| On the street | 39.42% 82 |
| Have not witnessed or experienced | 27.88% 58 |
| Other (please specify) | 5.77% 12 |
| Total Respondents: 208 | |

Within Pembroke, in which of the following settings have you witnessed or experienced homophobia, transphobia, discrimination, or unfair treatment because of gender identity? Check all that apply

Answered: 208 Skipped: 5



| ANSWER CHOICES | RESPONSES |
|------------------------------------------|-----------|
| At school/college | 30.29% 63 |
| In the workplace | 29.81% 62 |
| In stores/restaurants | 27.40% 57 |
| In the healthcare/social services system | 20.19% 42 |
| In dealing with police/justice system | 14.90% 31 |
| Local social media groups/forums | 40.38% 84 |
| On the street | 37.50% 78 |
| Have not witnessed or experienced | 32.69% 68 |
| Other (please specify) | 4.33% 9 |
| Total Respondents: 208 | |

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Survey

→ **Survey question: “What do you see as the largest systemic problems that are presently barriers to achieving equity in Pembroke?”**

Answers included:

→ “Limited community outreach programs.”

→ “Lack of education.”

→ “Not enough support or opportunities for immigrants and new residents.”

→ “Ignorance and lack of acknowledgment that there is a problem.”

→ “Inaccessibility to services – language barriers, cultural barriers.”

→ “Lack of representation in leadership positions.”

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Survey

→ Survey question: “What actions would you want to see implemented to encourage improved representation of currently underrepresented groups in positions of leadership across various sectors?”

Answers included:

- “Create community-driven and community-wide sustainable policies around representation in the workplace and on boards.”
- “Strategic recruitment of leaders of historically underrepresented communities.”
- “Reach out to marginalized groups and connect with them, welcome them.”
- “Invite diverse speakers on a range of topics to bring people together and foster community.”
- “Incentivize underrepresented communities to run for government positions.”
- “Spotlight LGBTQ2S+ and BIPOC-owned businesses in the media.”
- “Newspaper articles highlighting interesting areas of an underrepresented group.”

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Survey

→ Survey question: “What actions do you believe could be taken within Pembroke in the short- and long-term to improve our community for marginalized groups including racialized and LGBTQ2S+ members?”

Answers included:

- “Visibility in media, celebrations and sharing of cultures and practices, public art celebrating diversity.”
- “Cultural competency and inclusion training for different organizations.”
- “Creating safe spaces virtually and physically.”
- “Immediate antiracism training for hospitals, police forces, and child and family services from credible training sources than can prove their training has improved client treatment.”
- “Review existing policies, engage people from marginalized groups for feedback and change policies that do harm.”
- “Create a space for people to anonymously report instances of racism, discrimination, anti-queer, or anti-trans bias.”

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Roundtable

- A roundtable was held on May 26 via Zoom with approximately 20 participants
- Moderated by Jodi Bucholtz of the Local Immigration Partnership
- Intended to be an open discussion of experiences and ideas to compliment the survey

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Roundtable

- One individual shared their experience with racism in the workplace as a healthcare worker, in the school system, and in securing safe and affordable housing for their family.
- One individual shared their experience having homophobic slurs repeatedly yelled at them on the street, leading them to feel unsafe in their own neighbourhood.
- A local employer shared that they encouraged applications from women in the BIPOC and LGBTQ2S+ communities and received significant backlash.
- One individual shared the experience which they and fellow nurses had working in the healthcare system as Asians and the racism in the workplace they had endured since the beginning of the pandemic. The individuals eventually left the employer because the incident was reported to their manager and their union, but was never addressed. The individual noted they never felt like a “person of colour” until they came to Pembroke and realized how different their experiences were here compared to a larger city.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Roundtable

- Among ideas that were shared for how to improve:
 - The more people have exposure to different cultures, the more open-minded they will be.
 - A community centre for culture would allow people to regularly share cultures and ideas.
 - Indigenous support services within the hospital – provide a safe space for individuals within the hospitals.
 - Stickers for local businesses to display to share they are a safe space.
 - Make it clear and known that City Hall is a safe space
 - City of Pembroke and Local Immigration Partnership could look at collaborating on a campaign about speaking out to empower people to say something when instead of being a bystander.
 - Representation from BIPOC in more leadership positions is key.

Diversity Advisory Committee: Next Steps

- Work with staff to begin the development of a diversity, equity, and inclusion action plan for Pembroke
- This action plan will lay out a course of action for council and staff related to issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion in Pembroke for the foreseeable future

Local and National Mental Health and Support Resources

- Talk4Healing: 1-855-554-HEAL, talk4healing.com, a culturally-grounded, fully confidential helpline for Indigenous women available in 14 languages across Ontario
- Indian Residential School Survivors Society: 1-800-721-0066, irsss.ca
- Métis Nation of Ontario 24-hour Mental Health and Addictions Crisis Line: 1-877-767-7572
- Hope for Wellness Helpline: 1-855-242-3310, hopeforwellness.ca, phone and online chat services available 24/7 to all Indigenous peoples across Canada in English and French. On request, phone counselling is also available in Cree, Ojibway, and Inuktitut.
- Walk-in Counselling Clinics: walkincounselling.com, no referral is required for the Walk-In Counselling Clinic. You will be assisted, with no appointment, on a first-come, first-serve basis during the Walk-In Counselling Clinic hours. The Walk-In Counselling Clinic is open to Ontario residents within the greater Champlain region. The Walk-in Counselling Clinic offers counselling services in English, French, Arabic, Spanish, Somali, Cantonese and Mandarin at a variety of different locations. Clinic hours are available at different locations throughout the week, including evenings and weekends."

Local and National Mental Health and Support Resources

- Mental Health Services of Renfrew County, 24/7 Mental Health Crisis Line: 1-866-996-0991
- PFLAG Renfrew County: 1-888-530-6777, ext. 572, 100% volunteer-run, and we do our best to answer all phone calls. If we are unable to answer, please leave a voicemail message if you feel safe and comfortable to do so. If you are in a crisis situation, please contact one of the services below. They operate 24/7.
 - Distress Centre of Ottawa and Region: 613-238-3311
 - Trans Lifeline: 1-877-330-6366
 - LGBTQ Youthline: 1-800-268-9688
- Robbie Dean Family Counselling Centre: 613-629-4243, Free short-term individual and group counselling services, support for issues surrounding BIPOC and LGBTQ2S+ challenges. Culturally sensitive counsellors including an Indigenous counsellor on staff with Indigenous cultural programming in place; new and expanding First Nation (status and non-status) Métis and Inuit supports. Free services for those that do not have access to services on Pikwakanagan First Nation or any extended health insurance.

Local and National Mental Health and Support Resources

- Mental Health Services Renfrew County, Pembroke location: 613-732-8770 ext. 8005
- The Phoenix Centre Child, Youth, and Family Treatment Program: 613-735-2374, provides individual and family therapy (brief and long-term) for children and their families. Attachment, trauma, and intensive services available.
- Child and Youth Crisis Line, Eastern Ontario: 1-877-377-7775
- Kids Help Phone: call 1-800-668-6868, text 686868, kidshelpphone.ca
- Women's Sexual Assault Centre of Renfrew County: 1-800-663-3060, a community-based volunteer organization with 24-hour support and crisis line for support, information and referral to survivors of sexual violence.
- Fem'aide: 1-877-336-2433 (crisis line), provincial support line for francophone women affected by violence. Offers a listening ear, information, safety planning, information and referral to local services, regional and provincial.
- Black Youth Helpline: 1-833-294-8650, serves all youth and specifically responds to the need for a Black youth specific service, positioned and resourced to promote access to professional, culturally appropriate support for youth, families, and schools.