

NO: R244

COUNCIL DATE: December 2, 2024

REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: **Mayor & Council**

DATE: **November 26, 2024**

FROM: **General Manager, Corporate Services**

FILE: **0330-01**

SUBJECT: **2025 Staff Inclusion Calendar**

RECOMMENDATION

The Corporate Services Department recommend that Council:

1. Receive this report for information; and
2. Direct staff to publish Mayor & Council greetings through local media advertisements, as provided in this report.

INTENT

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with information on cultural and community events and awareness days to be recognized as outlined in the 2025 Staff Inclusion Calendar (the "Calendar"), attached to this report as Appendix "I".

BACKGROUND

As one of the most culturally diverse cities in Canada, the City of Surrey is committed to fostering a diverse, inclusive and equitable workplace for all its employees. As part of that commitment, the City engages staff in recognizing a variety of cultural and community events and awareness days each year to foster understanding, knowledge and acceptance.

The City of Surrey's Staff Inclusion Calendar acts as a resource for staff and contains the key cultural and community events and awareness days that help guide the organization's diversity, equity and inclusion efforts while embracing the cultural richness of Surrey.

Several of the City's initiatives have been linked to the Calendar, including Fusion Festival, Surrey Canada Day, and National Indigenous Peoples Day celebrations. Additional initiatives are recognized through a variety of communication methods and staff events, providing opportunities for the City to connect with our community.

The Calendar is reviewed on an annual basis and updated based on activities observed by provincial, federal and international organizations. The City also seeks input from staff to identify potential events to be recognized.

DISCUSSION

The 2025 Staff Inclusion Calendar provides Council with information on key cultural and community events and awareness days to be recognized in 2025.

As outlined in the Calendar, the City will be holding four in-person staff events: Pink Shirt Day, Vaisakhi, Canadian Mental Health Week, and Christmas. All events identified in the Calendar will be recognized through one or more of the City's staff communication channels as described in Appendix "I" (e.g., CityNet intranet, CityNet E-card, Staff Event, Staff E-Newsletter, Local Media Advertisement).

There are three new additions to the 2025 Calendar:

- Family Day (February 17) – This provincial statutory holiday falls on the third Monday of February each year and gives families the opportunity to spend time together. While this statutory holiday first came into effect in 2013, was not previously recognized in the City's annual Staff Inclusion Calendar;
- Bandi Chhor Divas (October 21) – This Sikh celebration honours the release of Guru Hargobind Ji and 52 kings and represents freedom and justice; and
- International Day of Persons with Disabilities (December 3) – This day promotes the rights and well-being of persons with disabilities in our communities.

Staff will continue to review the Calendar on a regular basis to ensure that it:

- Celebrates Surrey's diversity and inspires City pride;
- Promotes understanding, knowledge and acceptance while creating an environment where everyone is treated with respect and dignity; and
- Is aligned with our strategic objective to be an employer of choice.

Option to Publish Mayor and Council Greetings through Local Media Advertisements

Mayor and Council may opt to share its greetings with the community through local media advertisements for eleven events, also reflected in Appendix "I". Accordingly, the Mayor and Council greetings would be published in the Cloverdale Reporter, Peace Arch News, and Surrey Now-Leader at a cost of \$3,500 for each greeting. The total cost to publish ten greetings in all three local community papers will be \$35,000.

Mayor and Council may also opt to share greetings with residents through multicultural media, in accordance with the City's Multilingual Communications Policy.

Funding to publish the greetings is available in the Mayor and Council's Operating Budget.

CONCLUSION

This report provides information regarding key cultural and community events and awareness days to be recognized, as outlined in the 2025 Staff Inclusion Calendar. In addition, Council may direct staff to publish Mayor & Council greetings through local media, as provided in this report.

Joey Jatinder Singh Brar
General Manager, Corporate Services

Appendix "I": 2025 Staff Inclusion Calendar

2025 Staff Inclusion Calendar

Goals: Enhance staff awareness, understanding, and acceptance of Surrey’s diversity and foster a safe and welcoming environment for staff to support our strategic objective to be an employer of choice.

Cultural and community events and awareness days to be celebrated and recognized through the following actions:

- CityNet posting – an event listing on CityNet (the City’s intranet) with information about the cultural and community events and awareness days to be recognized.
- CityNet E-Card – an E-Card available on CityNet (the City’s intranet) that City staff can use to send a greeting or best wishes to their colleagues and co-workers.
- Staff event – an in-person event to increase staff’s knowledge about the cultural and community events and awareness days to be recognized.
- Staff E-Newsletter – a weekly email sent to City staff to inform them about employee related news, events, training and programs.
- Local Media Advertisement – a message from Mayor & Council will be shared with the community through local media outlets.

JANUARY

Date	Celebration/Event	Action
January 7	Orthodox Christmas A celebration in many nations all over the world and is customarily celebrated after the New Year in the Gregorian calendar.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CityNet posting • CityNet E-Card • Staff E-Newsletter
January 29	Lunar New Year Recognized around the world by Chinese, Korean and Vietnamese people as a celebration of the New Year based on the lunar calendar.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CityNet posting • CityNet E-Card • Staff E-Newsletter • Local Media Advertisement

FEBRUARY

Date	Celebration/Event	Action
February 1 - 28	Black History Month A remembrance and celebration of important people and events in the history of the African diaspora.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CityNet posting • Staff E-Newsletter
February 17	Family Day A day to focus on the importance of family and gives people the opportunity to spend time together.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CityNet posting • Staff E-Newsletter • Local Media Advertisement
February 26	Pink Shirt Day Raises awareness about the effects of bullying. On this day people wear pink to symbolize their stand against bullying. Originated in Nova Scotia, Canada in 2007.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CityNet posting • Staff E-Newsletter • Staff event

February 28 – March 29	Month of Ramadan Muslims honour the teachings of scriptures; abstain from food during the day-light hours and activities that distract from the central values of Islam.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CityNet posting • CityNet E-Card • Staff E-Newsletter • Local Media Advertisement
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MARCH

Date	Celebration/Event	Action
March 8	International Women’s Day Celebrates women’s achievements throughout history and across nations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CityNet posting • CityNet E-Card • Staff E-Newsletter
March 20	Nowruz Meaning “The New Day”, this signifies the Persian New Year and spring Equinox. Celebrated by people from diverse ethnic communities and religious backgrounds for thousands of years.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CityNet posting • CityNet E-Card • Staff E-Newsletter
March 26	Purple Day A global grassroots event to increase awareness about epilepsy. People are invited to wear purple and host events in support of epilepsy awareness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CityNet posting • Staff E-Newsletter
March 29 - 30	Eid-al-Fitr Recognized by Muslims all over the world, Eid-al-Fitr is a feast that celebrates the culmination of the month of Ramadan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CityNet Posting • CityNet E-Card • Staff E-Newsletter • Local Media Advertisement

APRIL

Date	Celebration/Event	Action
April 1 - 30	Autism Acceptance Month Provides an opportunity for us to come together to increase acceptance and understanding of autism and to help end the stigma and discrimination that some autistic people experience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CityNet posting • Staff E-Newsletter
April 12 - 20	Passover An eight-day Jewish festival that commemorates the Israelites’ Exodus from Egypt and their transition from slavery to freedom. In Israel, Passover is celebrated for seven days.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CityNet posting • CityNet E-Card • Staff E-Newsletter
April 14	Vaisakhi Celebrated as a harvest festival in many northern states of India and around the world. During Vaisakhi, Sikhs and Hindus reflect on the values taught to them by their Gurus.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CityNet posting • CityNet E-Card • Staff event • Staff E-Newsletter • Local Media Advertisement
April 20	Easter A Christian holiday that celebrates Jesus Christ’s resurrection.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CityNet posting • CityNet E-Card • Staff E-Newsletter

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Media Advertisement
April 22	Earth Day Celebrates our natural environment and encourages people to get involved in learning about protecting and enhancing the natural world. Surrey's Party for the Planet is BC's largest Earth day celebration.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CityNet posting Staff E-Newsletter

MAY

Date	Celebration/Event	Action
May 1 - 31	Asian Heritage Month Provides an opportunity for us to celebrate and learn more about the many achievements and contributions of Canadians of Asian descent.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CityNet posting Staff E-Newsletter
May 12 - 18	Mental Health Week Raises awareness about mental health issues faced by Canadian children, youth and adults.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CityNet posting Staff event Staff E-Newsletter
May 25 - 31	National AccessAbility Week (NAAW) Celebrates the contributions of Canadians with disabilities and promote efforts to increase accessibility and inclusion in Canada.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CityNet posting Staff E-Newsletter

JUNE

Date	Celebration/Event	Action
June 1 - 30	Pride Month Celebrates people's diverse sexual and gender identities, histories and cultures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CityNet posting Staff E-Newsletter
June 20	World Refugee Day Honours the spirit, courage and contributions of millions of refugees worldwide.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CityNet posting Staff E-Newsletter
June 21	National Indigenous Peoples Day Recognizes the accomplishments and contributions of First Nations, Inuit and Métis people of Canada. Surrey's National Indigenous Peoples Day celebration invites people to honour and share in the cultural heritage of Indigenous Peoples, both past and present.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CityNet posting Staff E-Newsletter Local Media Advertisement
June 24	St. Jean Baptiste Day Honours and celebrates the French-Canadian culture and heritage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CityNet posting Staff E-Newsletter
June 27	Canadian Multiculturalism Day Celebrates Canada's multicultural diversity and appreciates contributions of groups and communities to Canadian society.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CityNet posting Staff E-Newsletter

JULY

Date	Celebration/Event	Action
July 1	Canada Day A national holiday celebrating when Canada became a country in 1867. Surrey Canada Day is Western Canada's largest July 1 event.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CityNet posting • CityNet E-Card • Staff E-Newsletter

AUGUST

Date	Celebration/Event	Action
August 1	Emancipation Day Celebrates the strength and perseverance of Black communities in Canada. It marks the actual day in 1834 that the Slavery Abolition Act of 1833 came into effect across the British Empire.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CityNet posting • Staff E-Newsletter
August 9	Rakhi Hindu and secular festival celebrating the love and duty between brothers and sisters.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CityNet posting • Staff E-Newsletter
August 31	International Overdose Awareness Day This day is the world's largest annual campaign to end overdose, remember without stigma those who have died from overdose, and acknowledge the grief of the family and friends left behind.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CityNet posting • Staff E-Newsletter

SEPTEMBER

Date	Celebration/Event	Action
September 22 - 24	Rosh Hashanah Marks the beginning of the Jewish New Year and covers two of the 10 High Holy days that conclude with Yom Kippur.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CityNet posting • CityNet E-Card • Staff E-Newsletter
September 30	National Day for Truth and Reconciliation A national day to commemorate the history and legacy of the residential school system. This day honours the resilience, dignity and strength of survivors and intergenerational survivors and remembers the children who never came home.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CityNet posting • Staff E-Newsletter

OCTOBER

Date	Celebration/Event	Action
October 10	World Mental Health Day Raises awareness of mental health issues around the world and mobilizes efforts in support of mental health.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CityNet posting • Staff E-Newsletter
October 16	World Food Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CityNet posting • Staff E-Newsletter

	A day of action against hunger where people around the world come together to declare their commitment to eradicate hunger in our lifetime.	
October 20	Diwali Known as the celebration of light, Diwali is celebrated by Hindus, Sikhs and Jains as the victory of good over evil, spiritual enlightenment and new beginnings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CityNet posting • CityNet E-Card • Staff E-Newsletter • Local Media Advertisement
October 21	Bandi Chhor Divas A Sikh celebration that honours the release of Guru Hargobind Ji and 52 kings, representing freedom and justice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CityNet posting • CityNet E-Card • Staff E-Newsletter • Local Media Advertisement

NOVEMBER

Date	Celebration/Event	Action
November 11	Remembrance Day Serves as an opportunity for Canadians to recognize the contributions Veterans and current members of the armed forces have made and continue to make.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CityNet posting • Staff E-Newsletter
November 16	Louis Riel Day (BC) Honours the contributions and achievements of Louis Riel who was an advocate for the rights of the Métis people and a symbol of native independence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CityNet posting • Staff E-Newsletter

DECEMBER

Date	Celebration/Event	Action
December 3	International Day of Persons with Disabilities A day to promote the rights and well-being of persons with disabilities in all spheres of society and development, and to increase awareness of the situation of persons with disabilities in the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CityNet posting • Staff E-Newsletter
December 14 - 22	Hanukkah Celebrated for eight days, Hanukkah is a Jewish holiday commemorating the rededication of the second Holy Temple in Jerusalem.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CityNet posting • CityNet E-Card • Staff E-Newsletter • Local Media Advertisement
December 25	Christmas Day A Christian holiday that marks the birth of Jesus Christ. Christmas celebrations combine Christian religious ceremonies with traditions and customs influenced by ancient winter festivals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CityNet posting • CityNet E-Card • Staff event • Staff E-Newsletter • Local Media Advertisement