

**CITY OF HAMILTON**

**CORPORATE SERVICES DEPARTMENT**  
**Customer Service, Access and Equity Division**

<b>TO:</b> Chair & Members Audit, Finance and Administration Committee	<b>WARD(S) AFFECTED:</b> CITY WIDE
<b>COMMITTEE DATE:</b> June 10, 2013	
<b>SUBJECT/REPORT NO:</b> Update – Needs Assessment of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer (LGBTQ) Community of Hamilton and LGBTQ Space Requirements (FCS11104(e)) (City Wide)	
<b>SUBMITTED BY:</b> Mike Zegarac Acting General Manager Finance & Corporate Services	<b>PREPARED BY:</b> Jane Lee, 905 546-2424 ext. 2654
<b>SIGNATURE:</b>	

**RECOMMENDATION**

- (a) That the item respecting the Update – Needs Assessment of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer (LGBTQ) Community of Hamilton be considered complete and removed from the Audit and Administration Committee's (Corporate Services) Outstanding Business List;
- (b) That staff continue to report every 6 months with respect to the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer Space Requirements.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Needs Assessment of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer (LGBTQ) Community of Hamilton completed in 2008 was presented to Committee of the Whole and referred to staff for a report back to the Audit, Finance and Administration

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Committee. Staff were asked to provide quarterly updates with respect to the Needs Assessment generally and to provide updates every 6 months with respect to the LGBTQ space needs. This report provides the next quarterly update and the next 6 months update with respect to the need for space. The specific work related to the LGBTQ Needs Assessment is complete and further work that will address needs of the community will be dealt with as strategies are identified. It is recommended that the quarterly reporting be considered complete.

With respect to the space needs of the LGBTQ community, the immediate needs identified in early 2012 have been addressed for the near term; work is proceeding on the longer term space needs with review of alternative models in other communities, further identification of community space needs, and planning for an expanded Steering Committee to take the steps this fall to initiate a feasibility study.

***Alternatives for Consideration – Nil***

**FINANCIAL / STAFFING / LEGAL IMPLICATIONS** (for Recommendation(s) only)

**Financial:** N/A

**Staffing:** N/A

**Legal:** N/A

**HISTORICAL BACKGROUND** (Chronology of events)

In 2008, the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer Needs Assessment was presented to the Committee of the Whole. This community research study was completed by the Hamilton Social Planning and Research Council (SPRC) on behalf of Hamilton Pride with funding from Ontario Trillium Foundation. Over 200 members of the LGBTQ community participated and provided input to this study identifying needs of the LGBTQ community. This report was referred to staff for review and follow-up and a report back to the Audit, Finance and Administration Committee. An update and background information was provided to the Audit, Finance and Administration Committee was presented in November, 2011 and staff were asked to report back quarterly. Four quarterly updates have been provided since that time.

Two specific areas of focus being addressed by the City with the input and advice of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Advisory Committee of the City of Hamilton. One area of focus is with respect to Suicide Prevention. The Advisory Committee has provided feedback to the Hamilton Suicide Prevention Council, and will

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complete their work with a presentation to the Board of Health in June, 2013 with respect to their recommendations to the City.

The second area of focus is with respect to Space Needs for the LGBTQ community. This matter is identified on the Outstanding Business List as a separate topic with a direction from Council to report every 6 months. The motion approved by Council on November 30, 2011 with respect to space needs is as follows:

That staff be directed to investigate the possibility of available space, within City facilities, for use by the LGBTQ Advisory Committee and its community partners to meet to and carry out the recommendations outlined in Report FCS11104, the Needs Assessment of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Community of Hamilton.

That, should space not be available through the City, staff be directed to prepare a feasibility study respecting the requirements for that space, and report to the Audit, Finance & Administration Committee.

#### **POLICY IMPLICATIONS/LEGISLATED REQUIREMENTS**

The City's Equity Policy addresses the needs of under-served communities, including the members of the LGBTQ community, through the policy statements and desired outcomes as well as the Statement of Commitment to Meeting the Needs of the Underserved Communities.

#### **RELEVANT CONSULTATION**

The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer Advisory Committee of the City of Hamilton were consulted on the recommendation and concur that reporting to a committee of Council is advisable when there is progress or a specific issue to report about, and concur with the recommendation to continue with the 6 month reporting regarding LGBTQ Space Needs only.

#### **ANALYSIS / RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION**

(include Performance Measurement/Benchmarking Data, if applicable)

The Hamilton Positive Space Collaborative (HPSC), which was formed following the release of the LGBTQ Needs Assessment, is a group of community partners who have been working collaboratively since the study to address the recommendations of the study. The Mission of the Hamilton Positive Space Collaborative is as follows:

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The Hamilton Positive Space Collaborative advocates for the facilitation and creation of LGBTQ positive spaces in Hamilton through the development and enhancement of community services, resources, programming, training and education.

HPSC has recently undergone a strategic planning exercise, and have narrowed their focus to the following areas:

- Visibility and Media
- Education and Training
- Anti-Homophobia and Hate Crimes
- Services, Programs and Resources

The Collaborative has been working on building education and awareness of the member organizations, providing member organizations with tools to bring visibility and positive space to our organizations, to offer a forum for members to discuss issues, to provide knowledge to members so they are aware of and can access local resources, and to assist the members in discussing and seeking positive service experiences for members of the LGBTQ community. The City of Hamilton, through the Access and Equity Office, participates as a member of the Collaborative, and continues to seek advice and feedback from members of the LGBTQ community through the LGBTQ Advisory Committee.

The City works towards addressing the needs of the LGBTQ community in several ways. The work of the Access and Equity Office in implementing the City's Equity and Inclusion Policy will address, over time, system issues regarding service to LGBTQ communities. The City's Equity Policy addresses the needs of under-served communities, including the members of the LGBTQ community, through the policy statements and desired outcomes as well as the Statement of Commitment to Meeting the Needs of the Underserved Communities. There are several implementation tools being created and initiatives underway including updates to the Anti-Racism Training in order to connect the training more clearly to the Equity and Inclusion Policy, including meeting the needs of the LGBTQ community. A By-law/Policy Review tool is being developed to embed in our policy, program, process review and development process, the principles of the Equity and Inclusions Policy. Members of the LGBTQ Advisory Committee have participated in the consultation that took place in development of this tool. A communications plan to implement the Equity and Inclusion Policy, including messaging to encourage attitudinal change about the underserved communities is also under development. Input from the LGBTQ Advisory Committee along with the other advisory committees will also be sought before the plan is completed. Finally, the Employment Systems Review, which will be undertaken this year, will identify and propose changes to address barriers faced by the underserved communities, including the LGBTQ community, in our employment processes. Input from our Advisory Committee will also be part of this process.

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There have been two areas of specific focus at the City as a result of the LGBTQ Needs Assessment, and the input from the City's LGBTQ Advisory Committee. One focus area is with respect to Suicide Prevention. The Advisory Committee has provided feedback to the Hamilton Suicide Prevention Council, and will complete their work with a presentation to the Board of Health in June, 2013 with respect to their recommendations to the City.

The other specific area of focus is with respect to LGBTQ space needs, which Council has asked for updates on every 6 months. A collaborative group of community members have been meeting with the City since February, 2012 with respect to LGBTQ Space Needs. Both short and long term needs have been discussed. Initially, short term space needs were identified for four groups:

- After school drop in space for LGBTQ youth and allies
- Rehearsal space and performance space for Gay Men's Chorus
- Meeting space for Primetimers Hamilton
- Dedicated space for LGBTQ Wellness Centre (approx. 2000 sq ft downtown)

As noted in a report, the immediate needs of the Gay Men's Chorus and Primetimers have been met for the foreseeable future. Space was made available for them by a community organization. Also as noted in an earlier report, our contact from the group of youth who were requesting space has moved on to post-secondary studies, and we are currently not aware of unmet needs in the youth community as it relates to drop-in space. One of the teachers that supports a positive space group in one of the local high schools meets with the collaborative and will advise of any unmet student needs should they arise. The one group whose immediate needs were unmet as of the last report was the LGTBQ Wellness Centre. They have since entered into an arrangement with the AIDS Network to meet their needs for the next one-two years.

As the immediate needs have been met, the LGBTQ Space Needs Steering Committee has focused on identifying the longer term community space needs, and the information required to initiate a feasibility study. The Steering Committee has commenced researching basic models from other municipalities where similar centres for meeting the needs of LGBTQ community members are in place as well as operating models from other community groups and partnerships. This work is in preparation for a feasibility study. In addition, the need to more specifically identify community space needs and obtain feedback from community members with respect to their needs for space was identified by the Steering Committee. In 2013, the LGBTQ Wellness Centre is undertaking community research related to their areas of focus and programming, which includes community consultation. They offered to add a component to their research to obtain information related to community needs for space as part of their study. The LGBTQ Space Needs Steering Committee agreed with their suggestion, in order to complete an area of information needed to initiate a feasibility study. Funding will be provided through the Customer Service, Access and Equity Division operating budget. The research will take place over the remainder of 2013 and in the first quarter

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of 2014. Initial results should be available this fall, to facilitate the work of the Steering Committee in planning for the initiation of the feasibility study as directed by Council. Two members of the Steering Committee will participate on the project Advisory Committee.

Staff will continue to report every 6 months with respect to the LGBTQ Space Needs.

#### **ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION**

(include Financial, Staffing, Legal and Policy Implications and pros and cons for each alternative)

Nil

#### **ALIGNMENT TO THE 2012 – 2015 STRATEGIC PLAN:**

##### **Strategic Priority #1**

A Prosperous & Healthy Community

*WE enhance our image, economy and well-being by demonstrating that Hamilton is a great place to live, work, play and learn.*

##### **Strategic Objective**

1.5 Support the development and implementation of neighbourhood and City wide strategies that will improve the health and well-being of residents.

##### **Strategic Priority #2**

Valued & Sustainable Services

*WE deliver high quality services that meet citizen needs and expectations, in a cost effective and responsible manner.*

##### **Strategic Objective**

2.2 Improve the City's approach to engaging and informing citizens and stakeholders.

2.3 Enhance customer service satisfaction.

##### **Strategic Priority #3**

Leadership & Governance

*WE work together to ensure we are a government that is respectful towards each other and that the community has confidence and trust in.*

##### **Strategic Objective**

3.2 Build organizational capacity to ensure the City has a skilled workforce that is capable and enabled to deliver its business objectives.

#### **APPENDICES / SCHEDULES**

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Nil

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*OUR Vision: To be the best place in Canada to raise a child, promote innovation, engage citizens and provide diverse economic opportunities.*

*OUR Mission: WE provide quality public service that contribute to a healthy, safe and prosperous community, in a sustainable manner.*

*OUR Values: Accountability, Cost Consciousness, Equity, Excellence, Honesty, Innovation, Leadership, Respect and Teamwork*