




Hamilton

CITIZEN COMMITTEE REPORT

To:	Chair and Members Audit, Finance & Administration Committee
From:	Marlene Dei-Amoah, Chair Committee Against Racism 
Date:	December 5, 2019
Re:	Committee Against Racism – Transitional Model for the Re-opening of HARRC (CAR-19-01)

Recommendation:

To create a transitional model to enable the Hamilton Anti-Racism Resource Center (HARRC) to be re-opened no later than the end of February 2020. To successfully complete this, we require the following items:

- a) That McMaster University and the Hamilton Centre for Civic Inclusion confirm in writing their intentions regarding their respective future funding contributions to HARRC.
- b) That the HARRC website ownership be transferred from McMaster University to the Committee Against Racism (CAR) and a webmaster to be employed to manage the content and organization of the HARRC website.
- c) That an online service including data collection, referral lists, and legal aid resources be made available on the HARRC website no later than end of February 2020.
- d) That the City of Hamilton continue its original commitment of \$100,000 for 2020 and to provide an additional funding of \$100,000 for 2020 to be potentially offset from a) above.
- e) That a consultant be hired to aid in the development and implementation of an independent board of directors with an expected completion date of no later than December 31, 2020.
- f) That CAR will provide Council with an update as of September 2020.

CAR: Transitional Model for the Re-opening of HARRC (CAR-19-01)

Background:

The HARRC Pilot Project is an initiative of the Committee Against Racism that was approved by City Council in 2015. HARRC was created to fill the service gaps in Hamilton that relates to anti-racism, anti-discrimination and anti-oppression. HARRC's mandate was to: provide support, assistance and information by offering the option for individuals to speak directly to a trained staff member on matters relating to racism or race related oppression or provide referrals to the appropriate service provider. HARRC was to produce valuable information to further understand the issues of racism experienced by individuals and, in turn, help the City determine appropriate options to address these issues as well as to track records of racial discrimination complaints. HARRC is a community collaboration between the City of Hamilton, McMaster University and The Hamilton Centre for Civic Inclusion. HARRC opened in April 2018 and paused in February 2019.

The purpose of this report is to recommend a transitional operating model for HARRC based on feedback received from the community via online survey and focus groups. Therefore, to help expedite the re-opening of the much needed HARRC this report recommends the interim transitional operational model to help provide a stable foundation for transition to the long-term operational model.

Analysis/Rationale:

Since the pausing of HARRC in February 2019, three major community engagement activities have been completed that have allowed for a better understanding of the characteristics HARRC needs to have to properly serve the City of Hamilton.

The first major initiative involved attending a variety of local community festivals and events in order to reach members of the communities who may have experiences with racism.

The second major community engagement activity was an online survey. The results of the survey showed that HARRC needs to provide these four main services:

1. Data Collection
2. Legal Aid
3. Counselling
4. Referral Services

The third major community activity was a presentation of the online survey results held on October 29, 2019 followed by breakout rooms where focus groups were held to discuss which operating model the community would trust the most and find the most effective. After reviewing the comments given by the focus groups, the following themes were identified:

- HARRC shall be independent of the City of Hamilton and any other major organization/institutions.

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- Needs to have more staff/ resources (funding, volunteer programs, etc.).
- Needs to resume all activities immediately.
- Accessibility and inclusivity for center location is very important
- Sustainability of HARRC should be a priority.
- Provide four main services highlighted above.
- Increased transparency with HARRC Operations.
- Funded by City of Hamilton

Based on the feedback received from these activities, CAR is recommending that the best way forward is the restart HARRC for a defined transitional period. During this period, HARRC activities will resume with an online presence and CAR will support the development of an independent board of directors to take over the long-term governance of HARRC.

An example model is provided below:

Basic model – Board of Directors, Administrative Staff, Funding provided by City of Hamilton.

Board of Directors:

- Chair
- Vice Chair
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Five Members (9 directors)

Paid staff (full time or part time) – executive director, webmaster, project staff, office coordinator, operations manager, etc.

Working committees (service providers) – legal support, counselling services, data collection services, referral services, etc.

Ward subcommittees (volunteers) – ward representative, President, Vice President, Treasurer, recording secretary, etc.

A spider web organizational structure would be suitable to ensure every Hamiltonian is made aware of HARRC and has access to the services.

While mindful of the feedback from the community that this needs to be a stand-alone organization, it is evident to meet the timing of February 2020, CAR will require the City of Hamilton's involvement during this transitional period. It is anticipated that the City of Hamilton's involvement will decrease over time as the independent board of directors is created and assumes greater, and ultimately full, responsibility for the operation of HARRC.