
From: Lyndon George <lyndon@harrc.ca>

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Dear Clerk,

I'm Lyndon George, Executive Director of the Hamilton Anti-Racism Resource Centre and I am writing to request the following for inclusion in the Mayor's task force on transparency, access, and accountability.

My work Address: 1 James St. N, Hamilton, ON

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Mayors Taskforce for Transparency, access and accountability

At HARRC, we regularly hear from individuals who face discrimination in schools, workplaces, and public spaces. Their experiences paint a clear picture: racism is not an abstract issue; it is a daily reality that undermines trust in our institutions.

This distrust is compounded when people feel excluded from decision making processes or when the mechanisms for addressing their concerns are vague and inaccessible.

One of the most pressing challenges is the lack of accessible avenues for racialized residents to voice their concerns safely and effectively.

How can we expect individuals to report inequities if they fear their voices are ignored?

How can we rebuild trust when communities feel that their concerns are met with silence or inaction?

When communities are left in the dark about how decisions are made about who gets resources, whose voices are prioritized, and how accountability is ensured, the gap between governance and the people it serves grows wider. A perfect example is just this past week members of the city's own committee against racism were left seeking answers as to why their volunteer advisory committee was recommended to be disbanded without being connected to a staff liaison.

The Mayor's Task Force has a unique and powerful opportunity to set a new standard for governance in Hamilton. We can begin to dismantle systemic barriers with communities that have felt excluded for far too long.

Another example is advocating for greater transparency regarding how the Hamilton Police Service selects its community advisory panels is essential to fostering trust. The city of Hamilton should urge HPS to follow the city's new citizen selection process for the police service board and allow applicants who have concerns with sharing sensitive personal information with the police to submit applications through the city of Hamilton and not HPS. Racialized and marginalized communities, who often experience over-policing or systemic inequities, need assurance that these panels genuinely represent their voices and concerns.

Without transparency, skepticism arises about whether the panels are diverse, impartial, or adequately engaged with the broader community's needs.

Lyndon George

Executive Director, Hamilton Anti-Racism Resource Centre

Hamilton Anti-Racism Resource Centre (HARRC)

McMaster Continuing Education Centre

1 James St. N, Room 106

Hamilton, ON, L8P 1A1

Phone: 905-525-9140 Ext 20464

Email: Info@harrc.ca