



City of Hamilton Report for Consideration

To: Mayor and Members
Emergency and Community Services Committee

Date: May 7, 2026

Report No: HSC26014

Subject/Title: Transition of the Committee Against Racism to Anti-Racism Community Liaison Group

Ward(s) Affected: (City Wide)

Recommendations

That the transition of the Committee Against Racism to an Anti-Racism Community Liaison Group **BE APPROVED**.

Key Facts

- Report CM23025(b), approved by Council on March 5, 2025, directed Children's and Community Services staff to report back to the Emergency and Community Services Committee on the creation of a Community Liaison Group (CLG) to replace the Committee Against Racism.
- Direction included that this group be resident-led, staff facilitated and have a clear ability to make their voice heard by Council.
- Engagement was conducted in the form of interviews identifying themes and specific community needs to help tailor the Community Liaison Group recommendation.
- This report responds to that direction with a tailored solution, based on research, best practice, and community engagement to address issues of racism, both specific and systemic.

Financial Considerations

Not Applicable.

Background

In 2023, a motion was brought forward to review the City's Volunteer Advisory Committees, followed by direction to pause and undertake a broader review of these entities, including the Committee Against Racism (CAR). As part of this review, engagement was conducted by the Hamilton Social Planning and Research Council (SPRC) with former committee members. This engagement identified several areas requiring change, which formed the basis of the recommendation to transition to a Community Liaison Group (CLG) model, as outlined in CM23025(b).

Beginning in 2024, City staff conducted an extensive review of the City's Community Safety and Well-Being (CSWB) Plan. This review identified community engagement and diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility as core guiding principles. This work presents an opportunity to strengthen both the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan and the City's broader civic engagement approach by more intentionally integrating Community Liaison Groups into this framework.

Community Liaison Groups are an engagement model designed to support ongoing, responsive feedback based on the needs of priority communities. The City continues to support the Hamilton Anti-Racism Resource Centre (HARRC) and its important work in the community. Given the rising rates of hate crimes and hate incidents – particularly those motivated by racism – additional tools are required to more effectively address persistent and systemic inequities. In this context, maintaining a focused Anti-Racism Community Liaison Group remains an area of urgent relevance.

Analysis

As part of this work, City staff met with community partners, including the Hamilton Anti-Racism Resource Centre (HARRC) and the Hamilton Anti-Hate Coalition, to identify approaches that build on existing community efforts rather than creating new or

duplicative processes. Through these discussions, HARRC expressed interest in serving as the champion for the Anti-Racism Community Liaison Group, with ongoing support from City staff.

HARRC is well positioned to support the next phase of this work due to its strong leadership in anti-racism initiatives and relationships across the community. Locating the Anti-Racism Community Liaison Group within HARRC supports a community-led approach while maintaining clear connections to broader, city-wide anti-racism efforts. This approach is consistent with the City's goal of modernizing civic engagement by supporting models that meaningfully inform City decision-making and policy development.

This collaborative model allows HARRC and City staff to work closely together, making efficient use of existing community knowledge, relationships, and expertise. It also helps avoid duplication and improves coordination across related initiatives. Through regular engagement with community partners, the model creates clearer and more consistent pathways for community voices to shape City priorities and actions.

City staff will provide backbone support to the Community Liaison Group by ensuring alignment with City processes, coordinating across divisions, and supporting reporting to Council through established channels. Overall, this approach balances community leadership with ongoing City support to sustain engagement and support informed action for the initial one-year trial period.

Community Engagement

Staff conducted one-on-one interviews and engaged directly with community partners, including HARRC and the Hamilton Anti-Hate Coalition, to explore approaches that build on existing community efforts and to gather feedback on the proposed Community Liaison Group. The flexibility of the model was met with positive feedback, as was the shift toward a less bureaucratic approach. Community members also noted the vulnerability associated with being livestreamed or recorded for public viewing, which was identified as a particular risk for racialized individuals given the current social and cultural climate. Moving away from this requirement, which is common to Advisory

Committees, was therefore viewed as a positive and protective feature of the Community Liaison Group model.

Recruitment

Recruitment for the Anti-Racism Community Liaison Group will be led by the Hamilton Anti-Racism Resource Centre, with support from City staff to ensure alignment with City processes and principles of inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility.

Recruitment will remain open and adaptive to support broad and diverse participation from residents and community partners with lived and professional experience related to racism and systemic inequities.

Transparency and Engagement with Council

Community Consultation Reports and/or delegations emerging from the Community Liaison Group can be brought forward to the appropriate committee of Council to share key themes, community perspectives, and recommendations related to racism, discrimination, and community safety.

One Year Trial Period

The Anti-Racism Community Liaison Group will be implemented on an initial one-year trial period. This approach recognizes that the Community Liaison Group model is an evolving approach and allows for assessment of its effectiveness, community engagement, and overall structure.

At the conclusion of the one-year period, staff will report back to Council in Q2 2027 with findings and recommendations to inform future direction.

Alignment with the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan

The revised Community Safety and Well-Being Plan for 2025-2029 is grounded in guiding principles, two of which are community engagement and diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility. The transition of the Community Liaison Group to this department presents an opportunity to align this form of community engagement with the principles and implementation of the plan.

The ongoing process of revision for the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan requires significant community engagement, and the Community Liaison Groups represent another avenue for public participation. Feedback from the Community Liaison Group will then inform and drive additional action items for the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan, creating a channel for engagement and change. Community Liaison Groups also present a way to action key insights of the Community Safety and Well-Being, creating a two-way opportunity for relationship building and issue deployment.

Bringing this Community Liaison Group in alignment with the Community Safety and Well-Being also supports the principle of system collaboration, another guiding principle of the Community Safety and Well-Being revision. Aligning existing City strategies with the Community Safety and Well-Being ensures a more cohesive and strategic approach.

Alternatives

Not Applicable.

Relationship to Council Strategic Priorities

3. Responsiveness & Transparency

- 3.1. Prioritize customer service and proactive communication.
- 3.2. Get more people involved in decision making and problem solving.
- 3.3. Build a high performing public service.

Previous Reports Submitted

[CM23025\(b\) Volunteer Advisory Committee Review \(February 26, 2025\)](#)

Consultation

Internal and External Partners consulted on the project include:

- Internal Departments and Divisions:
 - Healthy and Safe Communities: Children's and Community Services
 - City Manager's Office: Communications and Engagement

- Corporate Services: Office of the City Clerk
- External Partners:
 - Hamilton Anti Racism Resource Centre
 - Hamilton Anti-Hate Coalition

Appendices and Schedules Attached

Not applicable.

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