



City of Hamilton Report for Consideration

To: Chair and Members
Emergency and Community Services Committee

Date: May 7, 2026

Report No: HSC26013

Subject/Title: Transition of the LGBTQ Advisory Committee to
2SLGBTQIA+ Community Liaison Group

Ward(s) Affected: City Wide

Recommendations

That the transition of the LGBTQ Advisory Committee to the 2SLGBTQIA+ Community Liaison Group **BE APPROVED**.

Key Facts

- CM23025(b) approved by Council on March 5, 2025, directed Children's and Community Services staff report back to the Emergency and Community Services Committee on the creation of a Community Liaison Group (CLG) to replace the LGBTQ Advisory Committee.
- 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 and group discussions 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 serve Hamilton's 2SLGBTQIA+ population.

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 LGBTQ Advisory Committee. As part of this review, engagement was conducted by the Hamilton Social Planning and Research Council (SPRC) with former members, identifying several need-for-change arguments that became the basis of the Community Liaison Group transition recommendation in CM23025(b).

Beginning in 2024, City staff undertook an extensive review of Hamilton's Community Safety and Well-Being (CSWB) Plan, reaffirming community engagement and diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility as core guiding principles. Aligning the Community Liaison Group's community-driven perspectives with the Community Safety and Well-Being framework strengthens the plan's responsiveness, ensures lived-experience voices continue to inform priorities, and enhances the City's ability to advance shared outcomes.

Community Liaison Groups are an engagement model designed for ongoing feedback according to the needs of a priority community. Safety and belonging are common concerns among member of the 2SLGBTQIA+ population, and there has been a rising rate of hate crimes, especially targeting this community. Hearing the voice of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community and promoting ongoing engagement remains a critical priority.

Analysis

The recommendations in this report reflect feedback from community on the preferred way forward to eliminate barriers experienced by 2SLGBTQIA+ communities by giving voice to the perspectives of 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals and inform City policies and its related efforts.

Community Engagement

Staff spoke with groups of community members and conducted one-on-one interviews to generate feedback for the proposed Community Liaison Group. The flexibility of the new model received a positive response, as community members found the former model was bureaucratic and had some limitations to meaningful engagement.

Community members also identified that there's a degree of vulnerability in being livestreamed or recorded for the public during meetings. This poses a risk, especially for 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals, in the current culture and climate – moving away from this requirement of Voluntary Advisory Committees was also seen as a positive aspect of the Community Liaison Group model.

While community members generally were supportive of the new Community Liaison Group model, there were some concerns expressed including the time delay establishing the group, the extended pause of the former Volunteer Advisory Committee, and general concerns that the 2SLGBTQIA+ community is not a focus area for the City. These concerns speak to the need to establish greater trust with the City, and with decision makers. Individuals offering this feedback did express hope for the new model, especially as it pertains to getting support from City staff in appropriate departments.

Recruitment

The new 2SLGBTQIA+ Community Liaison Group will begin recruitment once approved, with support from the Children's and Community Services Division and will integrate principles of inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility (IDEA) into the initial selection strategy. The intention is to cast a wide net, working with community partners to bring in

a variety of reflective and representative members for an initial group. Once the initial group is formed, the Community Liaison Group will strike a working group to help manage ongoing and dynamic recruitment.

Moving away from specific terms tied to Council is another advantage of the Community Liaison Group format identified by engagement with community members. Flexibility was considered a strength, both in format and recruitment method.

The proposed approach of initial staff-supported recruitment, followed by member-led recruitment, is recommended to address this. Community feedback about this approach was positive, citing access and familiarity with the process as barriers to the previous Volunteer Advisory Committee model.

Transparency and Engagement with Council

The new 2SLGBTQIA+ Community Liaison Group will hold an annual engagement event, open to the general public as well as members of Council, where they'll share feedback about the work throughout the year. Community members consulted felt it was as important to have an opportunity for Councillors to come to them as it was to go to Council.

The 2SLGBTQIA+ Community Liaison Group will also be empowered to produce Community Consultation Reports (CCR) and/or delegate to any committee of Council.

Alignment with the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan

The revised Community Safety and Well-Being (CSWB) Plan for 2025–2029 is guided by several principles, including community engagement and diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility. Moving the Community Liaison Group into Children's and Community Services division creates an opportunity to align this community-based engagement model with the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan.

Implementing the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan requires ongoing input from residents, and the Community Liaison Groups offer another structured way for community members to participate. Feedback from the Community Liaison Groups can

help shape future actions under the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan and strengthen the connection between community priorities and City initiatives.

Aligning the Community Liaison Group with the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan also supports the principle of system collaboration. Integrating existing City strategies with the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan promotes a more coordinated and strategic approach to community safety and well-being.

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:

- City Departments and Divisions:
 - Healthy and Safe Communities: Children’s and Community Services
 - City Managers Office: Communications and Engagement
 - Corporate Services: Office of the City Clerk
- External Partners:
 - Sex Workers Action Program (SWAP) Hamilton
 - Hamilton Community Legal Clinic

Appendices and Schedules Attached

Not Applicable.

Prepared by:

Rachelle Ihekwoaba, Manager, Community Strategies, Healthy and Safe Communities Department, Children's and Community Services Division

Mohammad Al Khateb, Senior Project Manager, Community Safety and Well-Being, Healthy and Safe Communities Department, Children's and Community Services Division

Submitted and recommended by:

Jessica Chase, Director, Healthy and Safe Communities Department, Children's and Community Services