

SAFE AND INCLUSIVE PUBLIC SPACES

Recommendation

That the March 18, 2024, Community Services report CS01972, be received for information.

Requested Action	Information Only		
ConnectEdmonton's Guiding Principle	ConnectEdmonton Strategic Goals		
CONNECTED This unifies our work to achieve our strategic goals.	Healthy City		
City Plan Values	BELONG. LIVE. THRIVE. ACCESS.		
City Plan Big City Move(s)	Inclusive and compassionate	Relationship to Council's Strategic Priorities	Community safety and well-being
Corporate Business Plan	Serving Edmontonians		
Council Policy, Program or Project Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anti-Racism Strategy • Art of Inclusion: Our Diversity and Inclusion Framework • Community Safety and Well-being Strategy • Corporate Accessibility Plan • Indigenous Framework 		
Related Council Discussions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • March 14, 2018, Citizen Services report CR_5392, Establishment of LGBTQ2+ Committee • August 28, 2023, Community Services report CS01919, Community Safety and Well-Being Strategy Implementation Update 		

Previous Council/Committee Action

At the July 4/5, 2023, City Council meeting, the following motion was passed:

That Administration take the following action:

- Draft a report on what would be needed to work with 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals, groups, employees, and organizations to develop a 2SLGBTQIA+ community advisory committee and a 2SLGBTQIA+ Action Plan for the City to enhance support and services for the 2SLGBTQIA+ community, address rising hate, and create safe and inclusive public spaces.

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Executive Summary

- The 2SLGBTQIA+ community reports an increase in hate and anti-2SLGBTQIA+ sentiment both locally and nationally. This presents an opportunity for the City to reinforce safety and foster inclusion within its policies and services to benefit all community members.
- Based on an initial jurisdictional scan, Administration developed an approach that utilizes a working group of community representatives and an external consultant to provide recommendations on the governance structure of the advisory committee and key considerations for the action plan to enhance 2SLGBTQIA+ safety and inclusion. These findings would be compiled into a 'What We Heard' report that would assist Administration to determine next steps.
- The estimated total cost to support this work ranges between \$170,000 and \$410,000, of which up to \$75,000 is one-time, depending on whether the advisory committee is led by Council or Administration. Any recommendations of the advisory committee with financial or resource implications would require evaluation in the context of other City funding priorities.
- There is currently no funding available to allocate to this work.

REPORT

In recent years, Administration implemented various strategies, action plans and frameworks to support marginalized and equity-deserving communities. Notable initiatives include:

- the integration of Gender Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) in 2017,
- the establishment of the Art of Inclusion: Our Diversity and Inclusion Framework in 2019
- the introduction of the Indigenous Framework in 2020
- the revision of, the revised Public Engagement Policy C593A in 2021, and,
- the publication of the Anti-Racism Strategy in 2022.

In 2018, CR_5392 - Establishment of LGBTQ2+ Committee outlined existing programs, policies and practices that support the 2SLGBTQIA+¹ community, while also identifying service gaps within the City's processes in providing adequate and inclusive services. Funding to establish this committee was not approved at the time.

Context

Based on Edmonton Municipal Census data from 2019, approximately 2,000 individuals in Edmonton identify as a trans woman, trans man, Two-Spirit, non-binary or another gender².

The 2SLGBTQIA+ community has reported an increase in hate and anti-2SLGBTQIA+ sentiment both locally and nationally. Recent reports in Edmonton and surrounding areas highlight public

¹ Terminology for sexual orientation and gender identity evolves continuously to encompass diverse identities and experiences. In this report, the 2SLGBTQIA+ acronym represents gender, sexual and/or romantic minority identities, with the (+) symbolizing all identities, expressions and experiences not explicitly named. For more information, please refer to the 2SLGBTQIA+ [glossary](#) by the Government of Canada.

²

<https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/city.of.edmonton/viz/2019EdmontonMunicipalCensus/2019EdmontonMunicipalCensus>

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safety concerns such as the vandalism of rainbow flags³⁴, crosswalks⁵⁶ and murals⁷, targeted protests at public libraries⁸, schools and 2SLGBTQIA+ community events⁹.

The number of 2SLGBTQIA+-related hate-motivated crimes and incidents reported to the Edmonton Police Service (EPS) has demonstrated an increase between 2019 and 2023, with 23 cases of hate crimes and 18 cases of hate instances in 2023, compared to 9 and 4 respectively in 2019¹⁰.

Municipal Scan

As reviewed in Attachment 1, major Canadian municipalities, including Vancouver, Victoria, Toronto, Ottawa and Montreal, have developed, or are developing, comprehensive equity strategies. However, many initiatives specifically targeting the advancement of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community across various jurisdictions are at the initial stages of implementation. These efforts vary, ranging from developing resource toolkits designed for community members to action plans that enable 2SLGBTQIA+ inclusion.

Moving Forward

The success of initiatives undertaken by Administration is contingent upon forming strong relationships and validation from the 2SLGBTQIA+ community. Additionally, all aspects of this work, from conceptualization to implementation, would benefit from the application of intersectionality. Intersectionality is utilized to understand how various forms of oppression can intersect, leading to disproportionate impacts on individuals or groups due to factors such as race, age, ability, socioeconomic status, etc. shaped by power dynamics and privilege within society. Related to the direction of this motion, incorporating intersectionality involves the diverse and inclusive representation of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community to acknowledge and address the significant disparities in community safety experiences across overlapping identities. Furthermore, it underscores the importance of ensuring that any programs or services implemented are responsive and promote equal access for all community members with diverse identities.

³ Postmedia News. "Police seek suspects after Pride flag torn down at Edmonton protest clash." (2023). [https://edmontonjournal.com/news/crime/police-seek-suspects-after-pride-flag-torn-down-at-edmonton-protest-clash]

⁴ Ellingston, C. "Edmonton police hate crimes unit investigating series of targeted anti-Pride incidents on west-end." (2023). [https://edmonton.ctvnews.ca/edmonton-police-hate-crimes-unit-investigating-series-of-targeted-anti-pride-incidents-on-west-end-1.6488271]

⁵ Amato, S. "Pride crosswalk vandalized again in hate-motivated crime: RCMP." (2023). [https://edmonton.ctvnews.ca/educ-pride-crosswalk-vandalized-again-in-hate-motivated-crime-rcmp-1.6493777]

⁶ City News. "Pride crosswalk vandalized in Okotoks; RCMP release suspect photos." (2023). [https://edmonton.citynews.ca/2023/06/21/pride-crosswalk-vandalized-okotoks/]

⁷ Mitchell, L. "Sidewalk vandalized in central Alberta on first day of Pride Month." (2023). [https://dailyhive.com/calgary/pride-sidewalk-vandalized-alberta-ponoka]

⁸ Frew, N. "Protests from outside Edmonton Library over drag queen reading to children." (2022). [https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/edmonton/edmonton-protest-library-lgbt-drag-reading-1.6543883]

⁹ Markus, J. "Vandalized crosswalks, library protests - Alberta police track more hate crimes against LGBTQ communities." (2023). [https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/calgary-hate-crimes-lgbt-1.6919250].

¹⁰ As provided by the EPS' Hate Crime Unit. The number of hate crimes and hate incidents may not accurately reflect the perceptions and experiences of safety within the 2SLGBTQIA+ community due to under-reporting for a variety of reasons.

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Drawing inspiration from the City of Vancouver's "Supporting Trans* Equality and an Inclusive Vancouver" (2016)¹¹ and the City of Victoria's "Transgender, Non-Binary and Two-Spirit + Inclusion Action Plan" (2019)¹² recommendations, Administration developed a phased engagement plan (Attachment 2), focusing on gathering insights to inform the City regarding the needs of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community and how they align with municipal scope and service.

Subject to Council direction and funding, this approach involves establishing a 2SLGBTQIA+ working group led by community members, facilitated by a consultant to lead the engagement process. The goal is to develop recommendations that could guide the creation of an advisory committee and action plan to improve 2SLGBTQIA+ safety in alignment with community needs.

The working group would strive to represent an intersectional cross-section of the community, with participants selected through a recruitment process based on specific criteria, such as lived and living experience and previous experience supporting 2SLGBTQIA+ community/social development. Their perspectives would inform a safe and inclusive engagement process, serving as advisors to validate insights and propose next steps toward developing a proposed action plan and advisory committee.

To build trust and promote constructive dialogue, Administration suggests involving an external consultant to facilitate and guide the community engagement process with the working group. This approach considers how to create a safe space for participants to share their perspectives and experiences and address any perceived imbalances of power between the 2SLGBTQIA+ community and the City as an institution. Concluding the engagement, the external consultant would produce a 'What We Heard' report, which would be brought forward in an Administration-led report to City Council for consideration of next steps.

Budget/Financial Implications

Currently, there is no funding in the budget for this initiative. Attachment 3 provides the total potential costs based on current information and projected requirements.

To proceed with the Engagement Plan, funding requirements could be up to \$75,000, based on previous engagement work conducted with marginalized communities in the Community Services department. This funding would cover the consultant's role in leading the community engagement process, creating a 'What We Heard' Report, providing honorariums to compensate volunteers in the working group and other expenses. An additional \$80,000 in ongoing funding to support one full-time equivalent (FTE) position would also be needed to lead this initiative.

Depending on the outcomes of the engagement, the total ongoing budgetary needs are estimated to be between \$170,000 and \$410,000, with a one-time expense for the engagement contract work. Subject to the outcomes of the engagement, there is potential for additional program resources, including a social planner and program materials to oversee the implementation of a 2SLGBTQIA+ action plan.

¹¹ City of Vancouver. "Supporting Trans* Equality and an Inclusive Vancouver." (2016).
[<https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/trans-gender-variant-and-two-spirit-inclusion-at-the-city-of-vancouver.pdf>]

¹² City of Victoria. "Transgender, Non-Binary and Two-Spirit + Inclusion Action Plan." (2019).
[<https://www.victoria.ca/media/file/transgender-non-binary-and-two-spirit-inclusion-plan#:~:text=The%20City%20of%20Victoria's%20Transgender,meetings%20with%20TNB2S%2B%20serving%20organizations>]

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Once the engagement concludes, a comprehensive update on outcomes and potential budgetary impacts will be provided to City Council before proceeding with next steps.

Once formed, if the advisory committee has recommendations, their financial implications would require evaluation in the context of other City funding priorities.

Community Insight

This report is informed by community feedback presented to City Council representatives from the 2SLGBTQIA+ community, specifically addressing concerns regarding community safety in Edmonton.

GBA+

Given the substantial diversity within the 2SLGBTQIA+ community, there is a recognition that the need for safety and inclusion can vary significantly across distinct sexual orientations, gender identities, expressions and intersecting identities. To effectively address the multifaceted challenges faced by the 2SLGBTQIA+ community, the City recognizes the importance of developing a nuanced understanding of their unique needs. This serves as a crucial foundation for creating comprehensive strategies and initiatives tailored to the local context, ensuring that the City is well-equipped to provide targeted support and foster an inclusive and equitable environment for all.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Cross-Jurisdictional Scan of Existing 2SLGBTQIA+ Policies/Strategies/Committees
2. Engagement Plan Overview
3. Potential Resource Requirements for 2SLGBTQIA+ Advisory Committee and Action Plan