

Larson, Miranda

From: Singh, Sandra
Sent: Monday, December 9, 2024 10:25 AM
To: Direct to Mayor and Council - DL
Cc: City Manager's Correspondence Group - DL; Wittgens, Margaret
Subject: Memo to Mayor and Council - Update on Renewal of TGD2S Safety and Inclusion Action Plan (RTS 16122)
Attachments: ACCS - GM - Memo (Council) - Update on Renewal of TGD2S Safety and Inclusion Action Plan - RTS 16122 (2024-12-09).pdf

Good morning Mayor and Council,

Please find attached a memo from Margaret Wittgens, GM, Arts Culture and Community Services regarding an update on the renewal of the TGD2S Safety and Inclusion Action Plan (RTS 16122). Key highlights:

- This Council Memo provides an update on recent staff work to advance the November 2023 Council Motion to renew the *Trans, Gender Diverse and Two-Spirit (TGD2S) Safety and Inclusion Action Plan*.
- Work completed to date includes internal and community engagement, assessment of progress on actions guided by the original TGD2S Inclusion Strategy, and the preliminary identification of new areas of focus. Ongoing and planned work includes broader community engagement, a jurisdictional scan, and the refinement of a draft TGD2S Safety and Inclusion Action Plan.
- The renewed Action Plan will incorporate near-term actions and mechanisms for regular annual updating of priorities.
- Staff anticipate bringing the draft Action Plan to Council in Q2 2025.

Should Council have any further questions please contact Margaret directly at margaret.wittgens@vancouver.ca and she will ensure questions are addressed through the weekly Q&As.

Thank you,
Sandra

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The City of Vancouver acknowledges the unceded homelands of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Selílwitlh (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

MEMORANDUM

December 9, 2024

TO: Mayor & Council

CC: Paul Mochrie, City Manager
Armin Amrolia, Deputy City Manager
Karen Levitt, Deputy City Manager
Sandra Singh, Deputy City Manager
Katrina Leckovic, City Clerk
Maria Pontikis, Chief Communications Officer, CEC
Teresa Jong, Administration Services Manager, City Manager's Office
Trevor Ford, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office
Mellisa Morphy, Director of Policy & Deputy Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office

FROM: Margaret Wittgens, General Manager, Arts, Culture and Community Services

SUBJECT: Update on Renewal of TGD2S Safety and Inclusion Action Plan

RTS #: 16122

PURPOSE

The purpose of this memo is to provide an interim update to Council's direction in a November 2023 motion for staff to renew the *Trans, Gender Diverse and Two-Spirit (TGD2S) Safety and Inclusion Action Plan*. Recent activities include internal and community engagement to assess work completed to date and identify actions for the next iteration of the Plan. This memo summarizes activities and preliminary findings informing the renewed Action Plan in progress.

BACKGROUND

In 2015, Council directed staff to consult with the LGBTQ2+ Advisory Committee and Members of the Park Board's Trans* and Gender-Variant Inclusion Steering Committee, and report back on how the City of Vancouver can make civic facilities, operations and programs safe and inclusive spaces for TGD2S communities. The [July 21, 2015 motion](#)

acknowledged that “gender identity and expression continue to lack explicit protection under the British Columbia Human Rights Code, Canadian Human Rights Act, and hate crime provisions of the Criminal Code of Canada; and, [that] This inequality allows for legal discrimination against Transgender and Gender-Variant Canadians, when many already face a much higher level of discrimination that affects their employment, housing, health, and access to community programs.”

Following extensive consultations, Council adopted the [TGD2S Inclusion Strategy](#) (July 13, 2016). The strategy included short term “quick starts” and a number of recommendations organized around the 5 pillars proposed in the 2015 Motion: Public Spaces, Facilities, Signage; Programming and Services; Human Resources (including training and staff policies); Communications and Data; and, Collaborative Public and Community Partnerships.

Since the strategy’s adoption, the City has implemented all of the early actions and engaged in ongoing work towards identifying and removing barriers experienced by trans, gender diverse and non-binary staff, and members of the public. As per Council updates in [2018](#) and [2020](#), work continues to evolve to reflect current needs and context; for example, TGD2S staff experiences of harassment and discrimination and the 2021 City Employee Benchmark Survey findings have informed ongoing action planning to ensure safety in the workplace for all staff.

On November 29, 2023, following Transgender Day of Remembrance, and in response to the rise in transphobia and Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) protests in Vancouver, [Council resolved to commit to the creation and implementation of a renewed TGD2S Action Plan](#) with a focus on inclusion and safety. Council’s motion in 2023 to renew the plan reinforces the City’s leadership and commitment to expand TGD2S communities’ right to inclusion and safety in housing, community services, and public spaces.

DISCUSSION

To undertake a renewal of the *2016 TGD2S Inclusion Strategy*, staff have structured the work into two phases:

- Phase I – Workplan, Progress Review, and Initial Community Engagement;
- Phase II – Broader Engagement, Jurisdictional Scan, and drafting of the Action Plan.

Phase I Work – Completed (January – October 2023)

- *Internal Engagement:* Staff convened an interdepartmental working group to guide the creation of a workplan. Participants included staff from: Social Policy & Projects, Housing & Homelessness, Arts & Culture, Equity Office, and the Trans, Gender Diverse and Non-Binary Employee Resource Group. The working group developed a phased workplan, conducted an interdepartmental progress review for 2016-

2024, facilitated preliminary community engagement to obtain further feedback and updates, and began work on a literature review to learn from examples and practices in other areas.

- *Progress Review:* The interdepartmental progress review highlighted key factors that contributed to success of the initial strategy, such as building relationships with community, consistent language and communication across departments, having support from leadership, alignment with related City equity initiatives and recommendations, and appropriate resourcing. Key advancements included washroom signage, gender identity as protected grounds in workplace policies, creation of the Housing and Services TGD2S Roundtable, and a trans-focused housing program. Areas for improvement identified so far include ongoing resourcing for trans-focused programs in housing and community services, and trans-inclusion efforts such as staff training and an implementation toolkit (see Appendix A – Status Updates on Implementation of TGD2S Inclusion Strategy).
- *Community Engagement:* Initial community engagement included sessions with six advisory committees, two workshops with community organizations and grassroots leaders, four key informant interviews, and an anonymous follow-up survey with multilingual options. The equity-oriented engagement process was grounded in an intersectional, trauma-informed approach that recognizes the diverse identities of TGD2S communities, barriers to participation, and harms caused by exclusion. Preliminary findings provide valuable guidance on future activities, including applying an intersectional lens across City programs and services, and ensuring ongoing TGD2S representation in engagement and decision-making, and related accountability measures. Long-term resourcing for work and projects, and incorporation of Indigenous cultural safety have also been identified as themes. There is also recognition of areas where the City may have a role for local advocacy and innovation. Evolving draft action areas include Housing & Homelessness, Community Spaces & Services, Community Safety, Public Awareness, and Human Resources.

Phase II Work – Planned and In Progress (Ongoing)

- *Broader Community Engagement:* Staff are developing a plan for a second phase, in the early new year, including more robust multi-lingual public engagement, and targeted consultation with specific TGD2S groups, to gain input to potential action areas.
- *Jurisdictional Scan:* Staff are undertaking a scan of other municipalities and levels of government to understand their TGD2S action plans, policies and strategies, identify prospective areas to include in the Action Plan, and ensure recommendations are in line with evolving best practices.

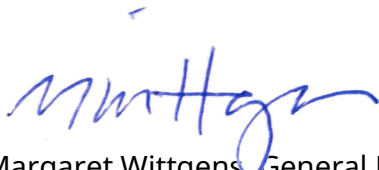
- *Draft Action Plan:* Staff are in the process of incorporating input from the various engagement activities and interdepartmental discussions, and have begun developing a draft Action Plan that will ensure strategic alignment with City strategic objectives, as described in [Vibrant Vancouver: City Council's Strategic Priorities 2023-2026](#), in particular *Objective 7 – healthy, inclusive and equitable*. Similar to previous updates to the original TGD2S Inclusion Strategy, the renewed Action Plan will incorporate near-term (i.e., 1-3 year) actions, and mechanisms for regular annual updating of priorities.

NEXT STEPS

A draft Action Plan is anticipated to be brought to Council for consideration in Q2, 2025. In the meantime, the internal and external engagement activities, such as with the Housing and Services TGD2S Roundtable, continue to inform current and emerging priorities.

FINAL REMARKS

If Council requires further information, please feel free to contact me directly at margaret.wittgens@vancouver.ca and we will provide response through the weekly Council Q&A.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'margaret.wittgens'.

Margaret Wittgens, General Manager
Arts, Culture, and Community Services
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Appendix A – Status Updates on Implementation of TGD2S Inclusion Strategy

The following table is a preliminary summary of the status of actions specified in the TGD2S Inclusion Strategy (2016). The summary is structured according to the Strategy's original "5 pillars" of focus.

This information was collected during the Internal Working Group's Phase I review process across City departments. Status updates will inform recommendations in the renewed TGD2S Safety and Inclusion Action Plan.

As engagement and consultation activities continue in Phase II, additional information continues to be collected from City departments, as well as from related public partners, including Vancouver Public Library, and Vancouver Board of Parks & Recreation. As such, this table is a work in progress.

Pillar 1: Public Space Facilities and Signage	
Action:	Status:
1-A: Continue constructions and retrofits underway by increasing Universal washrooms and function-based signage within City owned buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City-owned and leased buildings have updated both single and multi-stall washrooms for more inclusive signage. • Continued transitioning of language from "trans people welcome" to "gender diverse people welcome."
1-B: Identify and implement additional opportunities for aligning all City-owned building with TGV2S ¹ Inclusion Guidelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TGD2S guidelines are now applied to planning all new City-owned facilities and renovation. • Accessibility prioritization tool was developed through REFM to integrate universal design priorities and trans-inclusion. • Current prioritization tool requires update to ensure trans-inclusion elements are updated within new Rick Hansen standards model.
1-C: Leverage City's role and influence over entities not owned or operated by the City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Vancouver Building By-Law has been updated to require at least one universal toilet room and gender-neutral washrooms in business, mercantile, and industrial occupancies.

¹ Note that "TGV2S" (Trans, Gender Variant, and Two Spirited) has been used in the Actions, per the original 2016 Inclusion Strategy)

Pillar 2: Programs and Services	
Action:	Status:
2-A: Create TGV2S-specific programs and services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing supported the development and funding of dedicated trans-focused Ross Aoki House to provide inclusive, safe, culturally appropriate housing for TGD2S people. • Non-Market Housing Operations has delivered TGD2S competency training to frontline staff.
2-B: Integrate TGV2S inclusion into all existing programs and services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporated TGD2S inclusion priorities in the Housing Vancouver Strategy Action and Culture Shift. • Updated City grant priorities to reflect TGD2S inclusion. • Referrals to Non-Market Housing Operations for TGD2S community members shifted to honour and respect TGD2S chosen family systems.
Pillar 3: Human Resources	
Action:	Status:
3-A: Dedicate staff resources to lead implementation team and coordinate TGV2S inclusion work across departments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff resources were assigned in all relevant departments, with overall coordination initially managed by the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Office within the Department of Human Resources. • With the creation of the Equity Office, the responsibility for coordination and reporting transitioned from the EDI Office to the Equity Office, who in their 2020 annual report to Council identified a need to revisit and update the TGD2S Inclusion Strategy. • The current TGD2S plan renewal process is interdepartmental, led by Social Policy & Projects with the support of an internal working group.
3-B: Create city-wide TGV2S inclusive policy and ongoing and iterative competency training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial (pre-2020) training was provided at the management level. • All staff can now access CityLearn offerings for TGD2S awareness training in various formats, including standalone sessions, respectful workplace workshops, and crew talks. Over 2,500 staff across the City have participated in these training sessions.

<p>3-C: Promote TGV2S inclusive employment practices in recruitment, hiring and workplace relations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Previous policies were revised to include gender expression and identity. The new Respect in the Workplace Policy also includes these as protected grounds. • It is common practice across the City to include pronouns in email signatures and staff are now able to add pronouns to MS Teams profiles, although they still do not show on screen during meetings next to names unless specifically added. • The Trans, Gender Diverse, and Non-Binary Employee Resource Group was created in 2021. • Job postings include inclusive language, and the City is a Proud Partner with PrideAtWork Canada.
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Pillar 4: Communications & Data

Action:	Status:
<p>4-A: Create and conduct TGV2S inclusive data collection methods</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Public Engagement Team is in the process of standardizing demographic questions related to gender. Analysis protocols vary by project, but information is generally reported in aggregate to ensure confidentiality. However, the sample size is often too small to disaggregate data effectively.
<p>4-B: Develop ongoing, internally- focused communications to promote TGV2S inclusion throughout the City of Vancouver</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An ongoing survey was conducted for all staff to meet Pay Transparency Act reporting requirements by November 1, 2024. Staff were encouraged to self-identify their gender. Internal communications supported this project. • The “Hosting Accessible Public Events Checklist and Resources” includes guidelines on transgender inclusion and is widely circulated and posted on both internal and public websites. Teams organizing events are encouraged to review this checklist, which includes provisions for all-gender washrooms. However, it is noted that the checklist's focus on trans inclusion might be limited.
<p>4-C: Develop ongoing, externally- focused communications to promote TGV2S inclusion more broadly throughout the City</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The City Writing Guide has been updated to include gender-neutral language and provides guidance on email signatures. • Gender-neutral language is used in the City's public communications.

Pillar 5: Community Consultation & Public Partnership	
Action:	Status:
5-A: Conduct intentional and ongoing TGV2S-specific consultation and outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Diversity on Advisory Bodies Policy mandates that at least 50% of advisory body members represent equity-seeking groups. • There is ongoing engagement with the City's 2SLGBTQ+ Advisory Committee and TGD2S Housing & Services Roundtable.
5-B: Integrate TGV2S inclusion into all City public consultation sessions and initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal procedures for public engagement have been updated for gender-neutral language and Communications reviews language used in surveys.
5-C: Establish partnerships with TGV2S service providers and organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Board of Parks & Recreation and the Vancouver Public Library provide TGD2S-specific programming. The TGD2S Housing & Services Roundtable is currently funded in partnership with BC Housing.