

Dear

I am writing to urge you to demonstrate your support in creating a 2SLGBTQIA+ safe emergency shelter.

There have been many appeals to the City of Ottawa for more intentional action in supporting the 2SLGBTQIA+ community. Wisdom2Action created a call to action in 2023 speaking to the unique challenges the 2SLGBTQIA+ community is facing in Ottawa. The City of Ottawa's community safety and well-being research also raised the critical need for a 2SLGBTQIA+ shelter, accessible housing programs, and protection against discrimination. The Daybreak Non-Profit Housing also found in 2017 that the community struggled to access safe emergency shelters and lacked the feeling of safety from both shelter staff and other shelter residents.

The City of Ottawa has created a 10-year plan for tackling Housing and Homelessness. One of the key themes outlined is creating a dedicated shelter space for people who identify as 2SLGBTQIA+. It speaks to the importance of creating a safer community for all. It also notes that despite experiencing a high prevalence of homelessness, the 2SLGBTQIA+ community are less likely to access emergency shelters due to fears for safety and not feeling supported. Despite this, there has not been any action on the part of the city to make this happen.

I urge you to voice your support for the Ottawa Queer Haven Project's position, including the following call to action:

1. Include in the 10-year Ottawa Housing Plan an effort to address the unique needs of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community by funding a 2SLGBTQIA+ emergency shelter
2. Create a mandatory standard for emergency shelters that employees must be trained in supporting 2SLGBTQIA+ community
3. Increase presence of 2SLGBTQIA+ persons in conversations about their needs by funding a leadership coalition in Ottawa
4. Improve data collection on 2SLGBTQIA+ communities
5. Address the continuation of discrimination against 2SLGBTQIA+ community regarding housing and shelter access

These actions speak to the urgency of creating safer housing options for our 2SLGBTQIA+ community. The City of Ottawa has shown that it recognizes the unique barriers and vulnerabilities of our community, however, has not made any tangible steps to change this reality for us.

We are pleading that you take your own research to heart, as well as the calls from the community, and start making a change.

Sincerely,