

# Designing an inclusive public engagement process for LGBTQ2S+ Yukoners

## What We Heard Report

### Background

We want to conduct a territory-wide public engagement process so that we can strengthen our legislation, policies, programs, services and practices to ensure we are meeting the needs and priorities of LGBTQ2S+ Yukoners. However, we recognize that there have been challenges in addressing issues that affect LGBTQ2S+ Yukoners. In order to design a safe and inclusive public engagement process, we decided to undertake a pre-engagement initiative to learn more.

To conduct this pre-engagement, we worked with a consultant from the non-profit organization QMUNITY, which is based in British Columbia. QMUNITY focuses on improving the lives of LGBTQ2S+ individuals and has expertise in working with LGBTQ2S+ communities.

QMUNITY reached out to Yukon LGBTQ2S+ community members and equality-seeking organizations, including youth, First Nations and women's groups. A primary consideration was on how to ensure participants feel respected and safe when providing input.

### Engagement Process

**Purpose** – We asked how we could design a public engagement process so that people feel safe to tell us what issues and priorities are most important to them. This input will help us engage LGBTQ2S+ Yukoners in a way that is accessible, confidential and inclusive. We also asked what priorities they would like to discuss in the next phase of public engagement.

**Process** – Feedback from this pre-engagement helped design a public engagement process that will identify actions that will ensure our legislation, policies, programs and services are as non-discriminatory and inclusive of LGBTQ2S+ Yukoners as possible. We anticipate the next phase of public engagement will take place in stages over this winter.



## What We Asked

- What are your priorities for LGBTQ2S+ inclusion in government services?
- How can we engage LGBTQ2S+ Yukoners in a way that is inclusive, respectful, confidential, accessible and meaningful?

## What We Heard

Pre-engagement helped us learn more about what areas of government services to prioritize and how to best engage LGBTQ2S+ Yukoners in the future. Community members and allies identified seven priority areas for further discussion in the next phase of engagement:

- Health care delivery
- Education
- Creation of an LGBTQ2S+ advisor position
- Employment
- Identification and registration documents
- Business development
- Social isolation and connectedness.

Feedback also identified that a successful public engagement would include these features:

- A number of ways and formats to engage that are both accessible and safe, such as support to attend in-person dialogues with a travel subsidy, or to design the engagement to allow for more communities to participate in person through focus groups;
- Counselling and mental health supports at in-person engagement events;
- Ways to build local capacity to support LGBTQ2S+ inclusion and equity; and
- A discussion about gaps, barriers and inconsistencies in our services, policies and practices.

## **Analysis**

QMUNITY recommended that in order to offer a safe and inclusive public engagement, we should provide a variety of opportunities to participate: written and in-person events.

QMUNITY also recommended that we could help meet the request to build capacity in the LGBTQ2S+ community by offering training opportunities for people to co-facilitate focus group discussions and act as note-takers. This will also help to ensure the focus groups are inclusive of northern LGBTQ2S+ Yukoners.

## **What's next?**

We will conduct a full public engagement this winter using the advice we received from this pre-engagement. The public engagement will explore priorities for LGBTQ2S+ inclusion in government services and help inform an action plan. Participation will be safe, dignified and inclusive. We will provide several ways for people to participate.

## **Participation**

### **Engagement Methods**

QMUNITY received feedback from individual discussions with representatives from Dawson Pride, the Public Service Alliance of Canada North Yukon Regional Pride Committee, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Youth Drop-In, Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre, Yukon Human Rights Commission and the Yukon Women's Transition Home.

### **Participation by the numbers:**

- In-depth discussions with representatives from seven organizations
- Two comments and three shares on the Facebook post
- Four retweets and nine likes on Twitter

## **Notification**

QMUNITY sent emails to identified stakeholders, who were encouraged to share the invitation with other interested organizations and individuals.

A news release and Facebook and Twitter announcements directed people to Engage Yukon, with information about how to get involved.