



Investigating
**Queer-Inclusive
Spaces**
in
**The Halifax
Regional
Municipality**

A Research Project for PLAN 6000

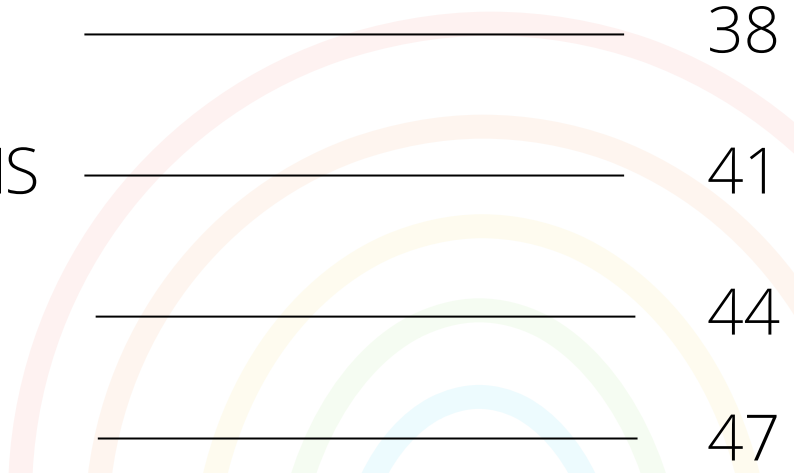
By: Jane Rideout

December 12 2022



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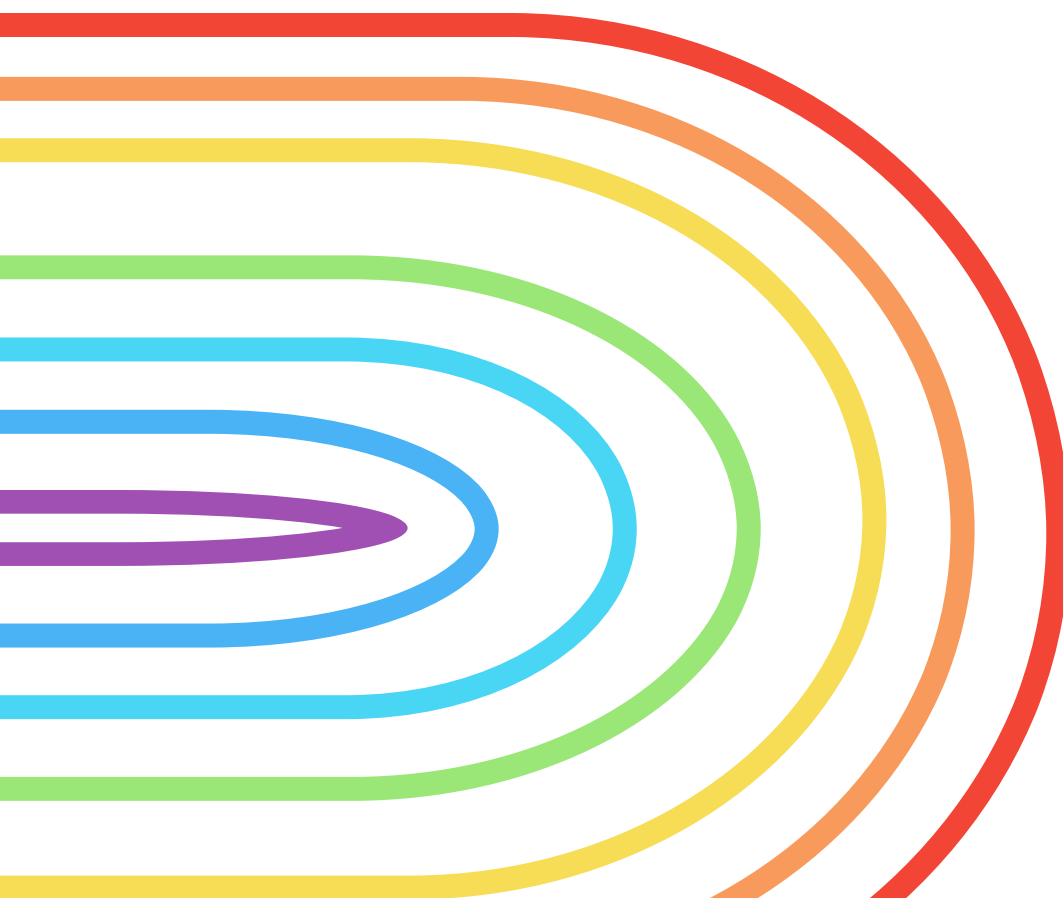


Executive Summary



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This study researched queer-inclusive spaces and opportunities to improve queer inclusion in the Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM). The HRM is a growing mid-sized Canadian city, with a growing queer community. Queer individuals deserve to feel safe and included within the urban environment. Currently, there are no guiding policies or plans to support queer inclusion by the municipality. This research study sought to understand the queer-inclusive spaces that currently exist in the HRM and how they may be better supported through municipal policy. An online survey of queer-inclusive spaces in HRM was facilitated. The data collected included the locations of queer-inclusive spaces, the factors that contribute to their inclusivity, the importance of queer-inclusive spaces, and the current satisfaction with the number and quality of queer-inclusive spaces. In addition to the online survey, a policy review of international municipalities was conducted to identify queer-inclusive interventions. Results show that while there are queer-inclusive spaces in the HRM, they are concentrated on the Halifax Peninsula. A total of 120 individual map points were created through the survey, which corresponds to 65 identified queer-inclusive locations. The online survey found that respondents are dissatisfied with the number and quality of queer-inclusive spaces in the municipality. Recommendations for the municipality to improve its queer inclusion are based on findings from the international policy review and ideas provided by online survey respondents. This research contributes to a growing body of research on queer spaces in mid-sized cities and offers a map of the queer-inclusive spaces in the region.





Introduction



INTRODUCTION

As a marginalized and minority group within society, the queer¹ community depends on queer-inclusive spaces in cities to feel safe and accepted within the public sphere (Doan, 2015). Queer-inclusive spaces are places where queer people can feel comfortable expressing their whole, true identities without fear of discrimination or violence (Bernberg, 2021). Queer individuals have a right to feel safe, included, and accepted within their city, and this research offers a starting point to ensure those needs are met in the Halifax Regional Municipality. While significant research has been done on queer geographies in Canada, there is a limited understanding of queer spaces in the Atlantic region. The Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) is the provincial capital and largest city in Nova Scotia (Statistics Canada, 2021). This municipality is growing rapidly in population density which has attracted many large new developments and investments (Hollingsworth, 2022). As the city grows, attention must be given to the queer community and their needs during this transformational time. The HRM has indicated that equity, diversity, and inclusion are priorities in their planning strategies, but have not directly addressed the queer community (Halifax Regional Municipality, 2017; Halifax Regional Municipality, 2014). Without an understanding of the current state of queer inclusion in Halifax, the municipality is unable to know what policies or programs to include to address queer inclusion. This research aims to evaluate Halifax's status of queer inclusion by identifying queer-inclusive spaces in the HRM and the factors that contribute to their inclusiveness. This information can be used by the municipality better to address the needs of the local queer community, using internationally tested municipal policy interventions. This research study informs a series of policy recommendations and ideas for the HRM to encourage and support queer inclusion. There is a growing body of academic literature on queer inclusive spaces and their impact on the queer community, local economies, and municipalities as a whole (Nusser, 2010; Keller, 2022; Badgett et al., 2014). Queer-inclusive policies have become a focus of many municipalities worldwide, from major cities like Paris and Berlin to smaller cities like Cork and Bern (Vázquez, 2022). Queer inclusion is becoming more important for cities to address, and this scholarship represents the first step to HRM achieving a more queer-inclusive environment.

1. For the purposes of this research study, *Queer* is used as an umbrella term referring to a full spectrum of different sexual orientations and gender identities that are not heterosexual or cisgender (Planned Parenthood, 2022). This includes but is not limited to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Pansexual, Transgender, Non-Binary, Gender-fluid, Intersex, Agender, Asexual/Aromantic, and Two-Spirit. However, historically *Gay* has been used to denote the queer community (Gorman-Murray & Nash, 2021). The queer community is incredibly diverse and has evolved over the years, and thus, throughout this research both *gay* and *queer* will be used, the former representing historical configurations of the queer community and the latter representing the modern community.



Literature Review



LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review describes the role of queer spaces in cities and why they are essential for understanding the dynamics of urban environments. Firstly, the connection between personal identity and physical space will be identified. Next, the importance of cities to the unique queer experience, specifically how urban environments have both liberated and oppressed queer people will be emphasized. The following section delves further into the emergence of gay villages and how their presence has been both celebrated and contested by dominant patriarchal power structures and by the queer community itself. The benefits of queer-inclusive cities to the broader community are highlighted and the factors that may contribute to queer inclusion are discussed. Finally, this review concludes by acknowledging the areas of queer scholarship in urban environments that have not been sufficiently addressed. This literature review provides a basis for the importance of the proposed research study.

The creation of space, its design, and its function is a dynamic and contested practice. Space and personal identity are deeply tied to one another (Hunt & Zacharias, 2008). Individuals with personal identities, political motives, and social assumptions create spaces, which in turn shape the identities of people who live there (Hunt & Zacharias, 2008). Spaces have the ability, in their form and function, to be inclusive, safe, and supportive of diverse identities, or to be exclusive, limiting, and threatening to identities outside of the social norm (Hunt & Zacharias, 2008). For members of the queer community, whose sexualities and gender identities are outside of the social norm, public space and urban environments are particularly contentious (Bell & Valentine, 1995; Gorman-Murray & Nash, 2021).

Queer identity is inherently tied to the urban environment, as this is where queer people have historically been able to connect, express themselves, and build community (Nash, 2011). Frisch (2002) argues that modern understandings of homosexuality only emerged in the late 19th century as a direct connection to capitalist urban development. The ability to earn higher wages, emancipate oneself from family ties and enter the urban environment offered an opportunity for queer individuals to explore and embrace their sexual and gender identities (Frisch, 2002). Since the late 19th century, cities have been essential to the development and organization of gay rights movements, including the decriminalization of homosexuality and the legalization of gay marriage (Nash, 2006). City centres are necessary for the distribution of health resources and social services for queer individuals, especially queer youth (Goh, 2018). Queer identity, in many ways, has relied on the city to be formed, to be viewed, to be sustained, and to be fully realized (Frisch, 2002).

In contrast, urban centres have also been spaces of disinvestment, trauma, marginalization, and social contestation for the queer community (Goh, 2018). From the daily micro-aggressions of being forced to choose a bathroom that does not

match one's gender identity, to being physically attacked in the streets, the city can be violent towards queer people (Nash, 2013; Goh, 2018). In Canada, laws for 'gross indecency' and 'buggery' criminalized gay sex and other acts of 'indecent' between same-sex partners (Warner, 2002). These laws were interpreted very loosely to restrict the activities and criminalize queer people, especially in public spaces (Warner, 2002). These laws were decriminalized in 1969, but queer activities were still heavily surveilled and policed in both public and private spaces (Warner, 2002). Gay establishments including queer bars, clubs, and bathhouses were subject to police harassment, raids, and violence (Warner, 2002). In modern cities, queer people are still subject to harassment, discrimination, and prejudice in public spaces, which impacts their ability to feel safe in expressing their full identities (Goh, 2018; Rosenberg, 2020). Queer people are vulnerable to social inequities in the city, and queer youth are particularly vulnerable to experiencing homelessness (Goh, 2018). Scholars have shown how cities have been designed to uphold and enforce heterosexuality (Frisch, 2002; Bell & Valentine, 1995; Nash, 2011). Through zoning laws, policy choices, and policing, cities have controlled the types of behaviours that are acceptable in public spaces, often restricting queer families and activities (Frisch, 2002; Gorman-Murray & Nash, 2021; Warner, 2002). The many pathways in which the city, its design, its policies, and its concentration of social issues make it a contentious environment for queer people (Nash, 2011). While access to the city helped to build and evolve the queer community, there are still many ways in which it fails queer people.

Urban environments have created the possibility for the development of uniquely queer enclaves that give a physical space for the community to interact and engage with each other. These neighbourhoods are often referred to as gaybourhoods or gay villages and were developed in many major urban centres post-WW2 and throughout the later 20th century (Gorman-Murray & Nash, 2021). The origins of these neighbourhoods are myriad and their current status within the city and the queer community remains in flux (Lewis, 2013; Nash, 2013). These communities were essential to gay liberation, gay rights, and the survival of the LGBTQ+ community (Gorman-Murray & Nash, 2021; Lewis, 2013). Gay villages offered concrete spaces for queer individuals to organize, distribute resources, and provide services to other queer individuals (Hunt, 2008; Nash, 2013). These enclaves solidified the gay community, allowing people to feel safer 'coming out' and accepting their true identities (Gorman-Murray & Nash, 2021; Hunt & Zacharias, 2008). Moreover, gay villages offered a clear representation of queer history within the city. Acknowledging and representing queer spaces in cities is often difficult as much of the history was coded and hidden to allow the community to survive (Bernberg, 2021). Queer spaces are often understood as ephemeral and dependent on social contexts, which means queer neighbourhoods may migrate throughout the city (Bernberg, 2021; Nash & Gorman-Murray, 2014). As these types of spacial patterns have had such a

significant impact on queer people in the urban environment, it is essential to understand how they may be replicating or transforming cities in the modern context.

While gay villages have been very beneficial for some members of the queer community, their creation is not linear and full of contestation within the queer community (Lewis, 2013; Nash, 2006). These enclaves were historically established by white, middle-class, cis-gendered gay men (Bain, Payne, & Isen, 2015; Podmore, 2006). Other members of the queer community – especially Black, Indigenous, People of colour (BIPOC) and transgender people – have felt excluded in these environments (Lewis, 2013; Bain, Payne, & Isen, 2015; Rosenberg, 2020). Other issues with gay villages include their tendency to foster gentrification and push out lower-income queer households (Nash & Gorman-Murray, 2014; Lewis, 2013). The importance of gay villages has been argued to be diminishing due to the rise of the internet and social media. Nash & Gorman-Murray (2014) identify that queer youth have less of a desire for distinctly queer neighbourhoods as dating apps and social media have made it possible to meet other queer youth without going to a public place. The authors also acknowledge that queer identity is now more accepted in mainstream spaces, which disincentivizes the need for uniquely queer neighbourhoods (Nash & Gorman-Murray, 2014). While there is still some contention over gay villages– their place in the city, and their role in the community– it is largely accepted that queer-inclusive public spaces are necessary, whether in a distinct neighbourhood or dispersed throughout a city (Goh, 2018; Bain, Payne, & Isen, 2015).

Developing queer inclusion within a municipality can benefit queer people by allowing them to feel safe, comfortable, and supported in the city. However, the benefits to a city do not end there, as queer-inclusive cities can benefit the local economy and population more broadly. Data from the 2022 Open for Business City Rankings has shown that more inclusive cities are positively correlated with overall levels of economic development in cities (Keller, 2022). While this data does not directly show a causation effect between inclusivity and higher GDP, it does show a strong positive relationship between the two trends (Keller, 2022). In contrast, a lack of queer inclusivity has been shown to reduce the economic output of a city on micro-level and macro-level scales (Badgett et al., 2014; Badgett et al., 2019). Badgett et al. (2014) identify four main drawbacks to the exclusionary and discriminatory treatment of queer people. Lost labour time, underinvestment in human capital, lost productivity, and inefficient allocation of human resources through discriminatory education and hiring practices are all pathways that exclusionary social environments can impact the general economy (Badgett et al., 2014). On the macro-level, additional rights for queer people have been shown to increase overall GDP per capita, and have higher levels of well-being (Badgett et al., 2019; Badgett et al., 2014). The tourism sector specifically, has been shown to benefit from queer-inclusive policies and programs. Ram et al.

(2019) found that gay-friendly circumstances were palpable and valuable assets among both queer and non-queer tourists. Furthermore, a significant link between the gay-friendliness of a city (Tel-Aviv) and a sense of safety was found for all tourists, both queer and non-queer (Ram et al., 2019). This research indicates the positive benefits that come from queer inclusion, beyond protecting and supporting the queer community. By supporting queer-inclusive spaces, and queer inclusion more broadly, cities can maximize the benefits for the entire community.

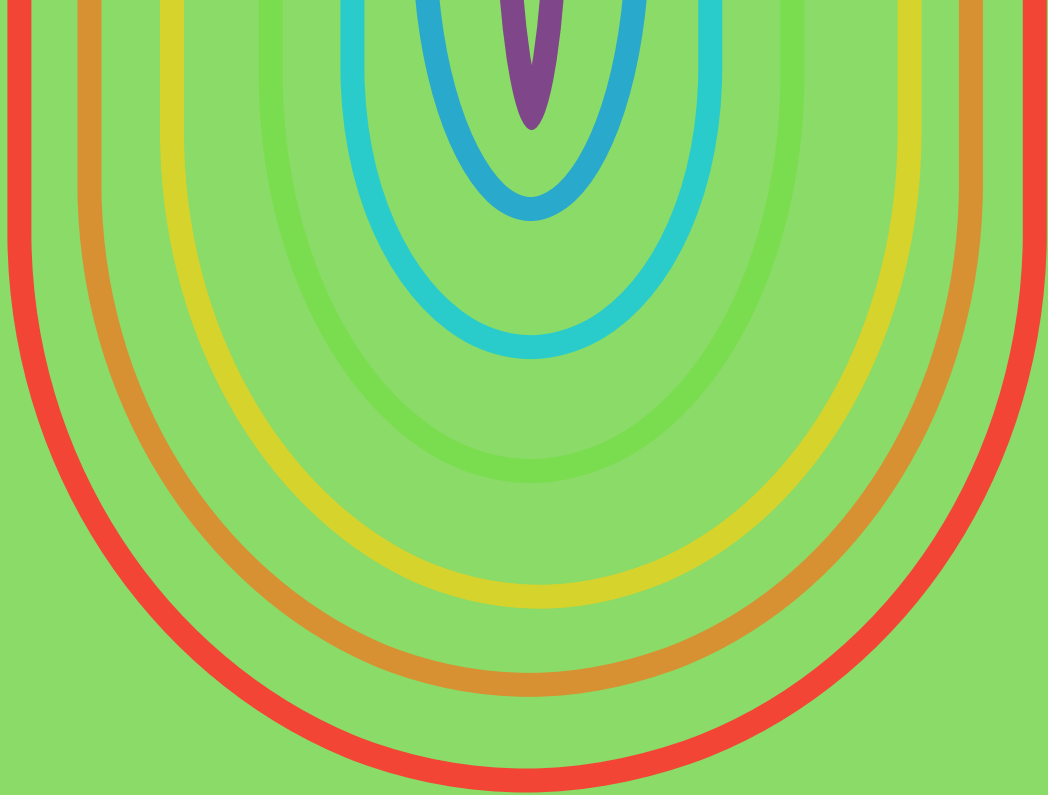
There has been some emerging scholarship on the factors that contribute to the 'queering' of space. Bernberg (2021) contends that it is the presence and performance of queerness that renders the space queer. Similarly, Nusser (2010) found that the presence of queer people was the biggest factor in the 'queering' of an establishment or neighbourhood. Bain, Payne & Isen (2015) reiterate these themes and emphasize that as queerness evolves, so too do queer spaces. Bernberg (2021) includes design elements like lighting, urban design, and architecture as factors that can create an atmosphere that encourages queer people to feel safe in that environment. For example, different forms of lighting in public spaces like neon lights, string lights and smaller bulbs can retain the safety of a well-lit public space while also encouraging a fun and creative atmosphere (Bernberg, 2021). Furthermore, place-making projects, especially those that focus on queer history of spaces, can help render a public space queer (Bernberg, 2021). Additionally, the form and function of space can contribute to its perception of being queer-inclusive. Nusser (2010) found that the creation of semi-private public spaces was important for queer-inclusive establishments. The ability to have some privacy or flexibility in the use of the space may give queer individuals a sense of security while being with their partners in public areas (Nusser, 2010). Similarly, the flexibility and fluidity of a space, including different types of seating (chairs, couches, hammocks), indoor/outdoor building arrangements, and mixed-use spaces contributed to the queering of an establishment (Nusser, 2010).

These factors represent initial findings on what contributes to a queer space, and how queer inclusion could be improved in public spaces and businesses. However, there is still much more research required to understand what components might render a space queer-inclusive.

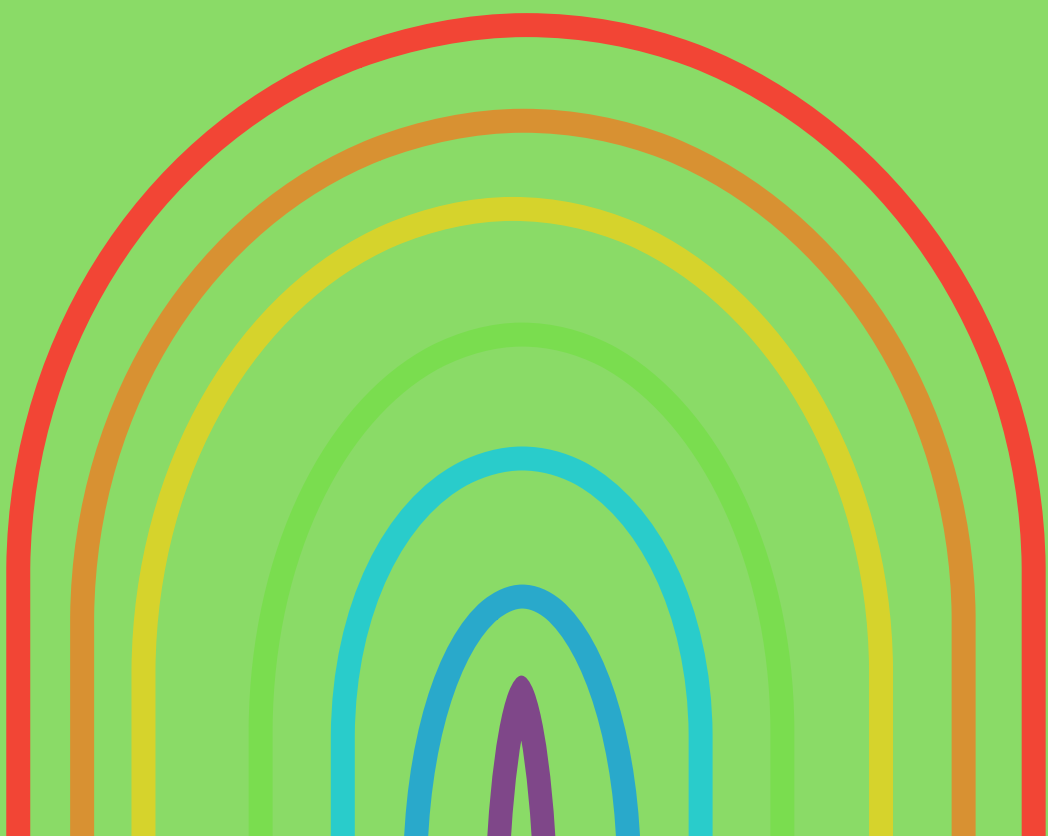
The studies of queer geography, queer planning, and gender studies have documented and established the queer community's long struggle to be recognized and appreciated by cities, but there are still many areas where additional study is required. A lot of queer geography centres around gay and lesbian groups while neglecting other less visible members of the queer community like trans, gender fluid people, and queer people of colour (Goh, 2018; Nash, 2006). There is a broad range of diverse identities in the queer community that are underrepresented and must continue to be explored. Additionally, most

of the literature on this subject focuses on major city centres, while neglecting queer experiences in small and mid-size cities, suburban, and rural communities (Podmore & Bain, 2020; Lewis, 2012). As identifying as queer has become more normalized and accepted in mainstream society, being queer is no longer limited to major cities but can be seen across different geographies and environments (Podmore & Bain, 2020; Lewis, 2012). It is essential to know more about the queer experience outside of major urban centres.





Background



BACKGROUND

The Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) is the largest city centre in the province of Nova Scotia. It has a population of over 430,000 people and is one of the fastest-growing municipalities in Canada (Statistics Canada, 2022a; Statistics Canada, 2022b; Draus, 2021). Nova Scotia has the highest proportion of gender-diverse people in the country, and HRM specifically is the second-most gender-diverse city (Douglas, 2022). There are approximately 4,800 people in the HRM that identify as transgender or non-binary (Douglas, 2022). The HRM purports that Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) are core values for the municipality but does not sufficiently address the concerns of queer individuals in their planning policies (Halifax Regional Municipality, 2014). The HRM Regional plan does not specifically include the topic of inclusion or directly address 2SLGBTQ+ or queer communities.

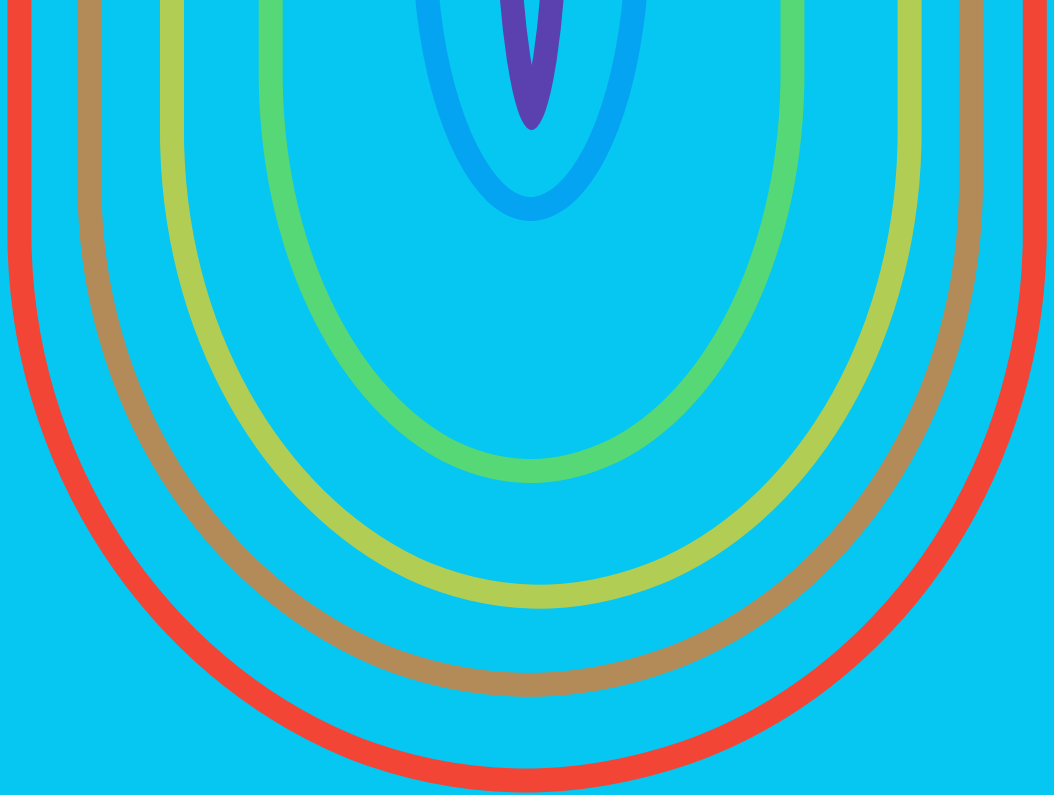
The newly released Centre Plan does include a commitment to diversity and inclusion that references sexuality and gender, but this plan is only valid for the Halifax peninsula and downtown Dartmouth region (Halifax Regional Municipality, 2021a). The municipality also has a Diversity & Inclusion Framework but again, does not specifically target the queer community (Halifax Regional Municipality, 2017). In comparison, the framework does include explicit reference to the support the municipality has given to the African Nova-Scotian community, the Acadian & Francophone communities, and the Mi'kmaw & urban Indigenous community (Halifax Regional Municipality, 2017). Furthermore, the framework includes definitions for Racism and Race Relations but does not clearly define homophobia or transphobia in the document (Halifax Regional Municipality, 2017). This report does not intend to diminish the resources or attention given to the other communities acknowledged by the Diversity & Inclusion framework, but rather to add the importance of supporting the queer community in this document. Outside of the municipality, Halifax does have organizations that are specifically supporting the queer community including, The Youth Project, HalifaxPride, Nova Scotia Rainbow Action Project, and GayHalifax (Discover Halifax, n.d.). These organizations work to support and uplift queer rights and provide resources for queer individuals.

Diversity & Inclusion Framework

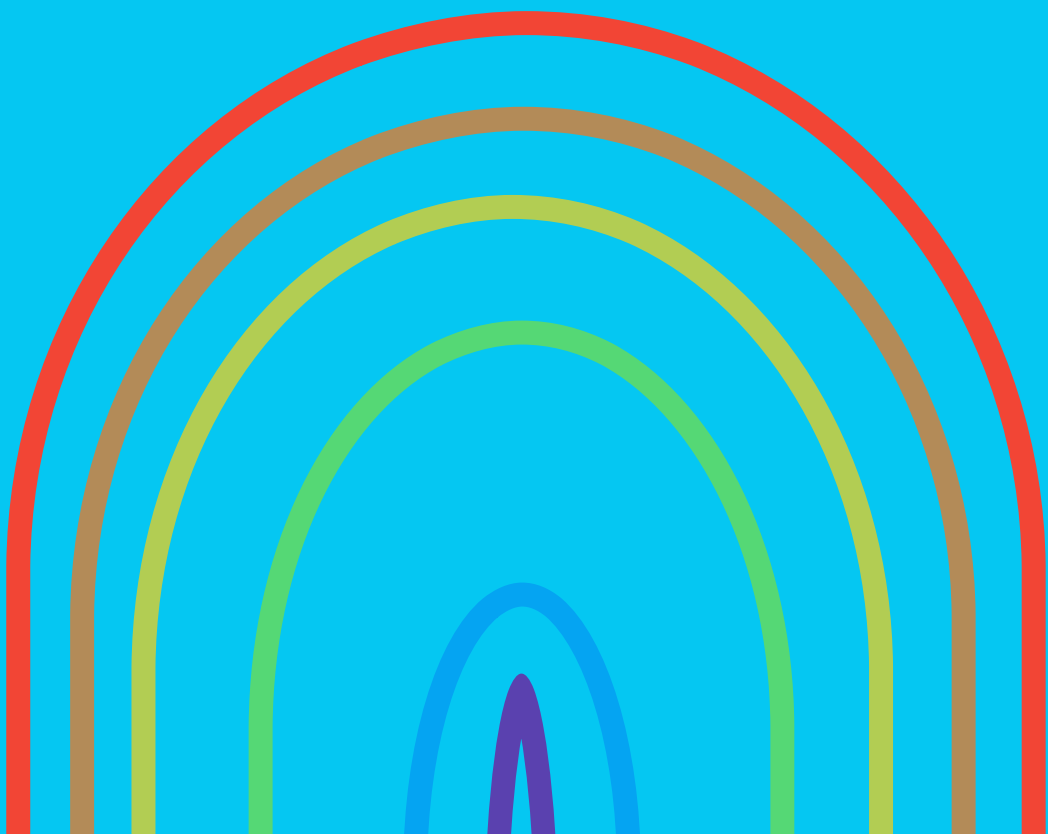
Recognizing diversity and inclusion in our organization and our communities



The Cover of HRM's Diversity & Inclusion Framework



Research Questions & Objectives



RESEARCH QUESTIONS

To better understand queer inclusion in the Halifax Regional Municipality, and areas to improve queer inclusion, the following research questions were explored:

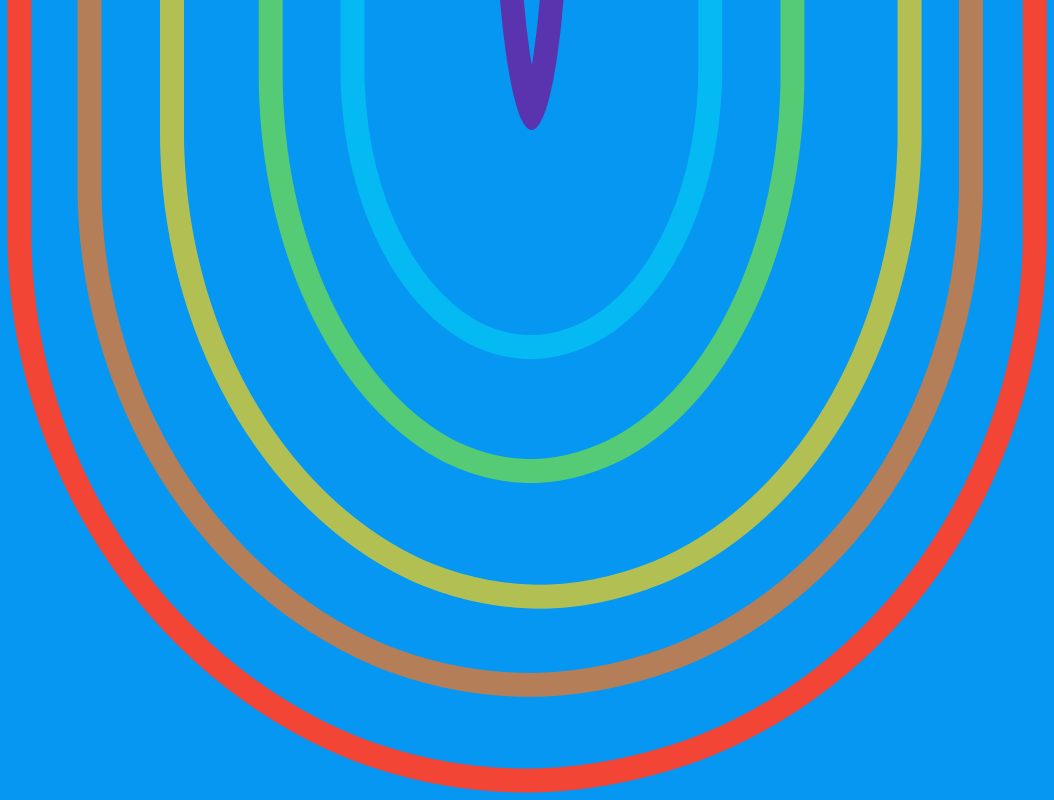
- What are queer-inclusive spaces in the HRM and where are they located?
- What contributes to these spaces being considered queer-inclusive?
- What policies or programs are currently being implemented to support queer inclusion elsewhere in the world?
- What opportunities are there to improve HRM's queer inclusion?

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

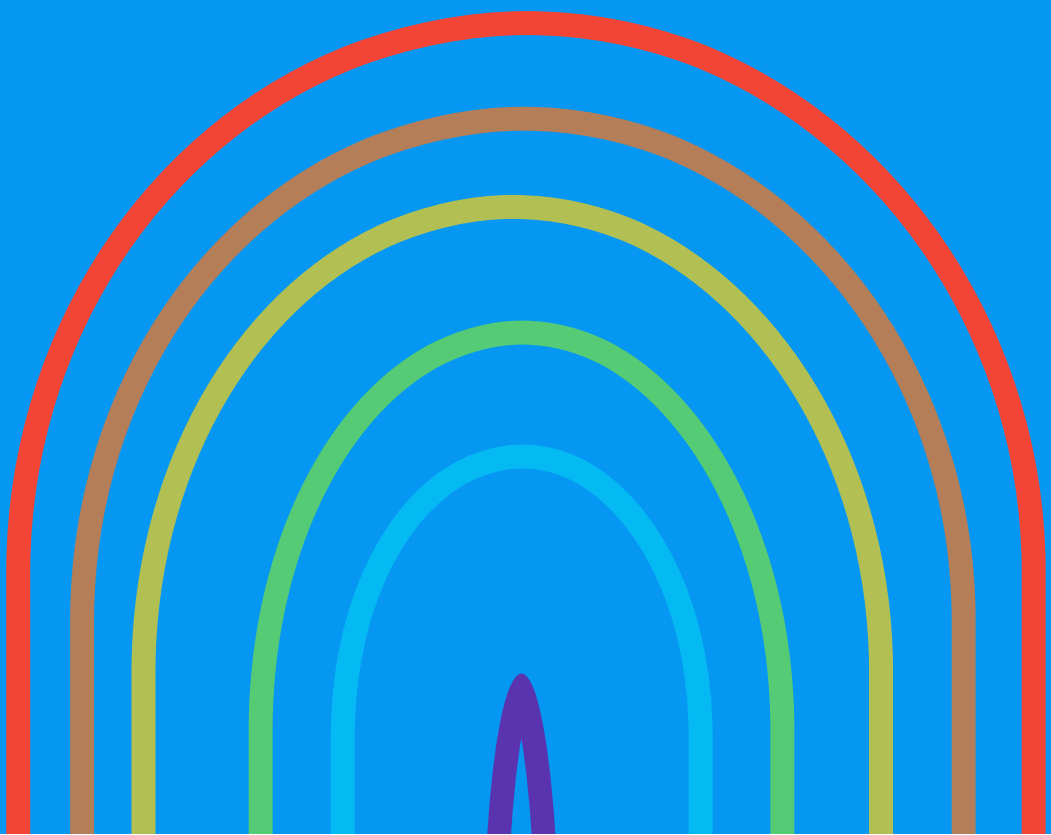
From these research questions, five research objectives were identified:

- Create a map that displays queer-inclusive spaces in HRM
- Conduct a spatial analysis of queer-inclusive spaces in HRM to understand how queer-inclusive spaces are dispersed across the region.
- Conduct a content analysis of survey responses to understand why these spaces are considered queer-inclusive.
- Conduct a search and analysis of relevant policies and programs that promote queer-inclusive spaces and their applicability to HRM.
- Develop recommendations for HRM to improve queer inclusion.





Methodology



METHODOLOGY

To effectively complete the objectives of this research, a mixed-methods study design was used. This approach allowed spatial data, personal qualitative data, and policy-oriented qualitative data to be collected. Combining these methods has added perspectives and layers to the study results, which one method alone could not achieve. Data was collected from individual survey participants on their perceptions of queer inclusion in the HRM, as well as policies and programs for queer inclusion that the municipality lacks. These methods allow for both a bottom-up perspective (as defined by the members of the queer community) and a top-down perspective (offered by the policies and programs in other municipalities and organizations).

To determine queer-inclusive spaces in the HRM, an online survey facilitated through ArcGIS Survey123 was disseminated to gather specific locations of establishments, public spaces, and environments from local queer individuals. The survey was short, anonymous, and used targeted questions to increase the likelihood of responses (See Appendix D). The survey platform allowed for spatial data to be collected alongside demographic and short-answer text-based responses. Survey respondents were gathered via social media and communication channels of Queer community groups, physical posters around HRM, word of mouth, and emergent practices. The survey was initially disseminated to targeted queer organizations within the HRM, including HalifaxPride, DalOUT (the Dalhousie Pride student association), and GayHalifax. Other organizations, social media accounts, and 2SLGBTQ+ online support groups were discovered from the initial sharing of the project.

The text-based responses were analyzed through conventional content analysis. Conventional content analysis refers to extracting keywords and themes directly from the responses rather than analyzing them with a pre-determined set of themes/keywords (Hsieh, 2005). Responses were read thoroughly to identify common words and themes. Once emergent themes were identified, responses were reviewed again to confirm these findings. Similar themes and responses were cross-referenced with the demographics of respondents to identify any patterns with certain populations within the queer community.

These survey responses were then used to construct a GIS map depicting the spaces of queer inclusion in Halifax. Analysis of these spaces was performed to identify patterns of queer-inclusive spaces in the HRM. A map detailing the population density for each census tract was overlaid with the survey response points. This step is to demonstrate the relative density of queer-inclusive spaces as compared to the population density of an area. The data used was sourced from HRM open data for the 2021 census (Halifax Regional Municipality, 2021b).

A secondary component of this research project was a content search and analysis for queer-inclusive policies and programs. This began with an initial internet and library review of municipalities with queer-focused programs and policies. The Rainbow Cities Network was identified as a resource for municipalities seeking to become more queer-inclusive. The Rainbow Cities Network releases a comprehensive yearly report that succinctly shares the policies and programs of each of their member cities into an annual report. To maintain membership in the network, each city must release a one-page report on what the government has done to improve queer inclusion. All of the policies from the 2022 report and some of the policies from the 2021 and 2020 reports were reviewed. In total, 125 municipal policies were reviewed and categorized. The categories of policies and programs included Research, Event, Public Administration, Social Services, Training, and Urban Design. Information regarding the municipality that implemented the policy and its suitability to the Halifax Regional Municipality was also included in this review. Suitability included whether the policy was culturally relevant or appropriate, actionable through the governance power of HRM and whether the municipality was a similar size and could absorb the costs of the policy or program. Some policies and programs fell into multiple categories and were labelled as such.

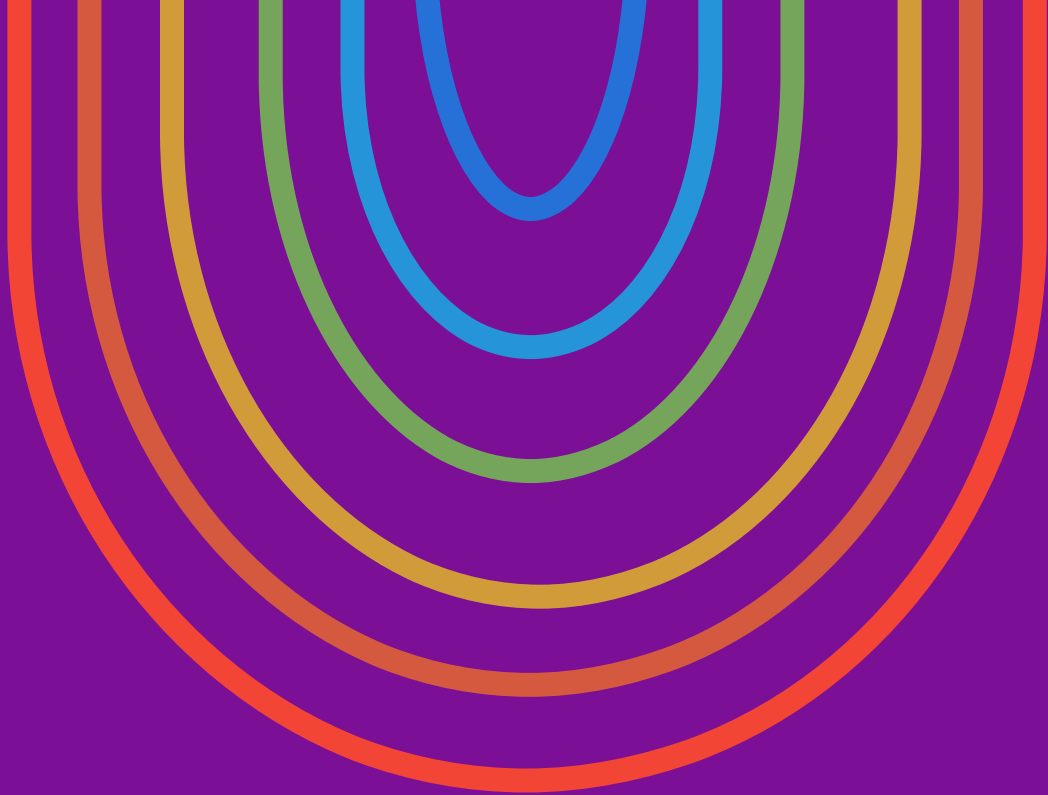


APPROACH

The methods selected for this research were chosen to gather qualitative data from the queer community itself. The notion of what is 'queer-inclusive' is very subjective and therefore it was important to select a research method that accounts for individuals' subjective feelings and opinions. This study also takes the mixed-methods approach by including spatial analysis of the queer spaces. Mapping has been used throughout social sciences to effectively communicate discrepancies and injustices in marginalized communities (Krupar, 2015). The visualization of this mapping against population density in the HRM communicates areas where there is a gap in queer-inclusive spaces. Finally, including a content analysis of queer-inclusive policies allowed me to better understand the municipality's role in protecting, supporting, and encouraging queer inclusion. The policy review was crucial for developing recommendations for HRM staff. These methods combined have allowed for a well-rounded scope of queer space in the HRM, from both the queer community and from governance and policy structures.

ETHICS STATEMENT

This research survey was reviewed and approved by staff at the Dalhousie School of Planning and complies with National Research Ethics Board Standards.



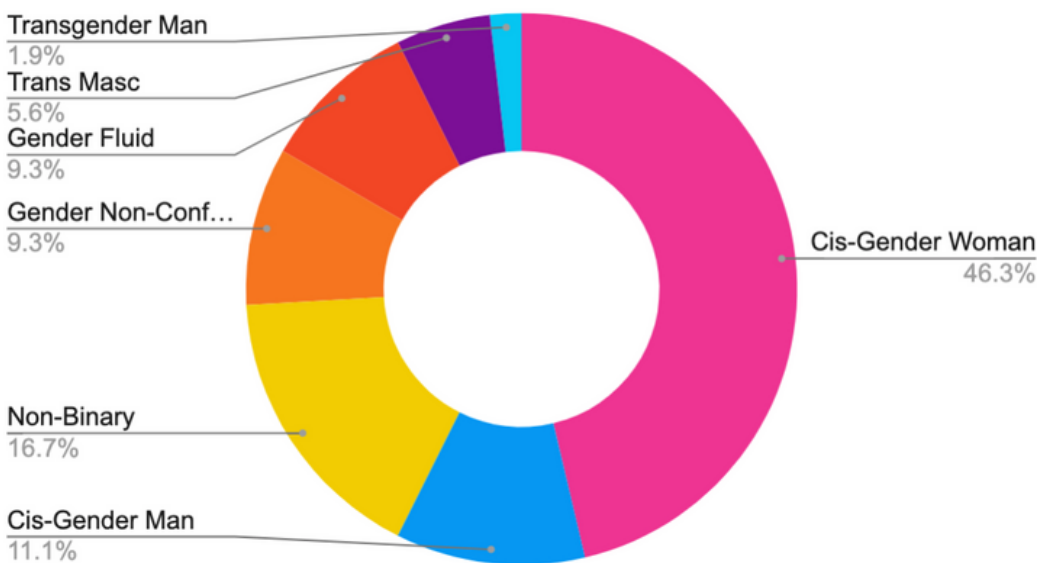
Survey Results



SURVEY RESULTS

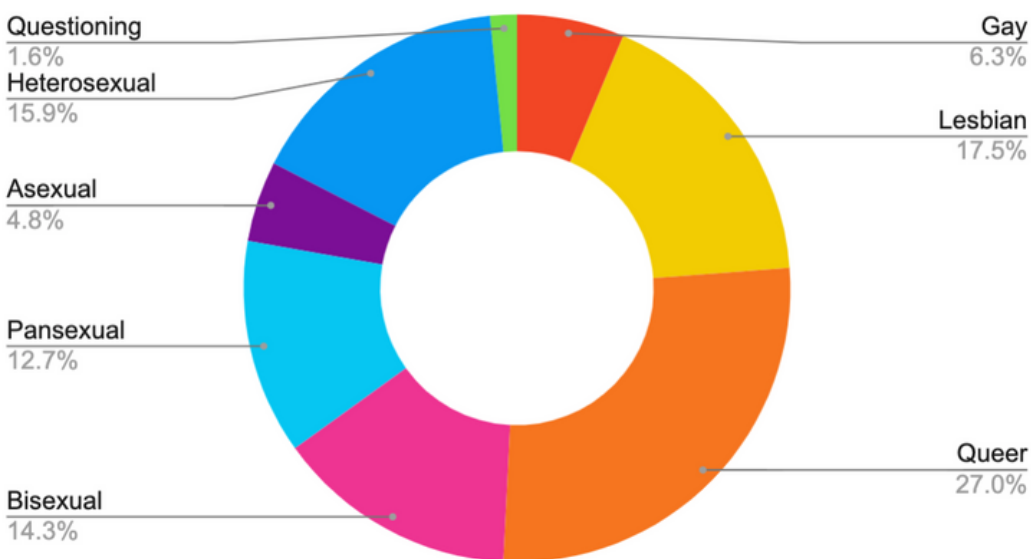
The online survey yielded a total of 51 responses. Of those 51 responses, two were deemed invalid as they did not indicate points on the survey map and had suspicious responses to the multiple choice and short answer questions. That leaves an overall response rate of 49. The following graphs demonstrate the demographics that participated in the survey.

Gender Identities



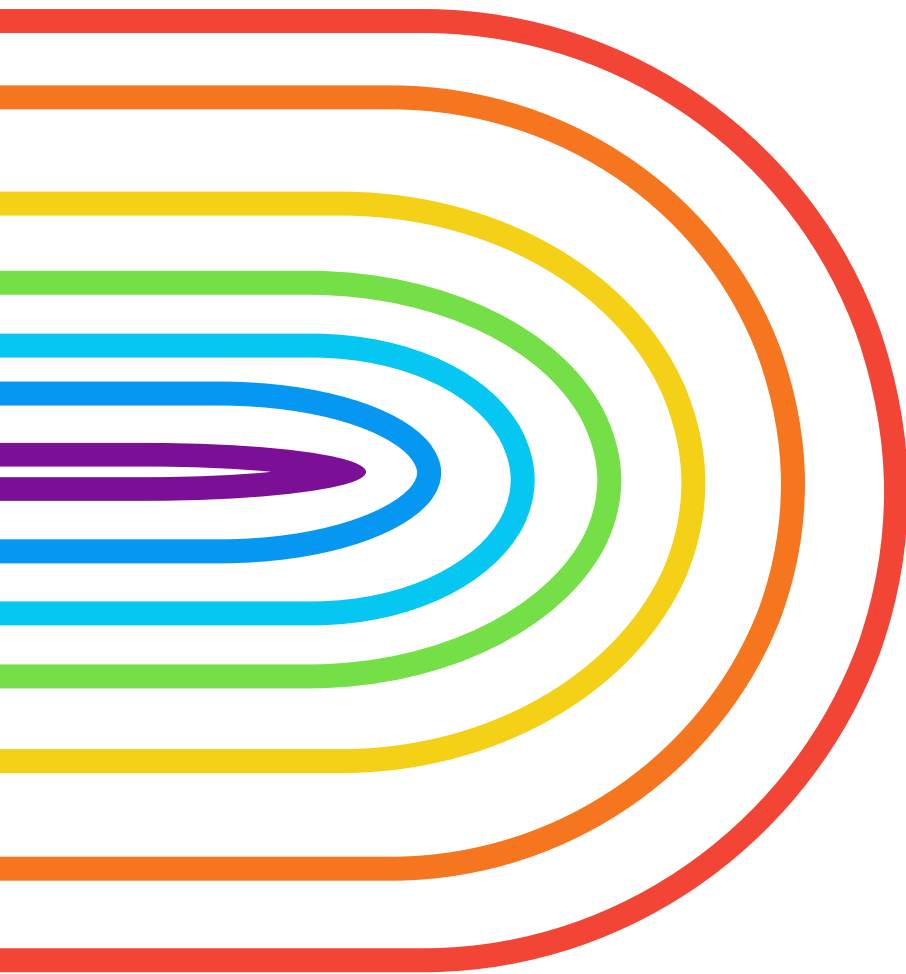
Graph 1: The Gender Identities represented by the online survey respondents; Participants were able to select multiple choices.

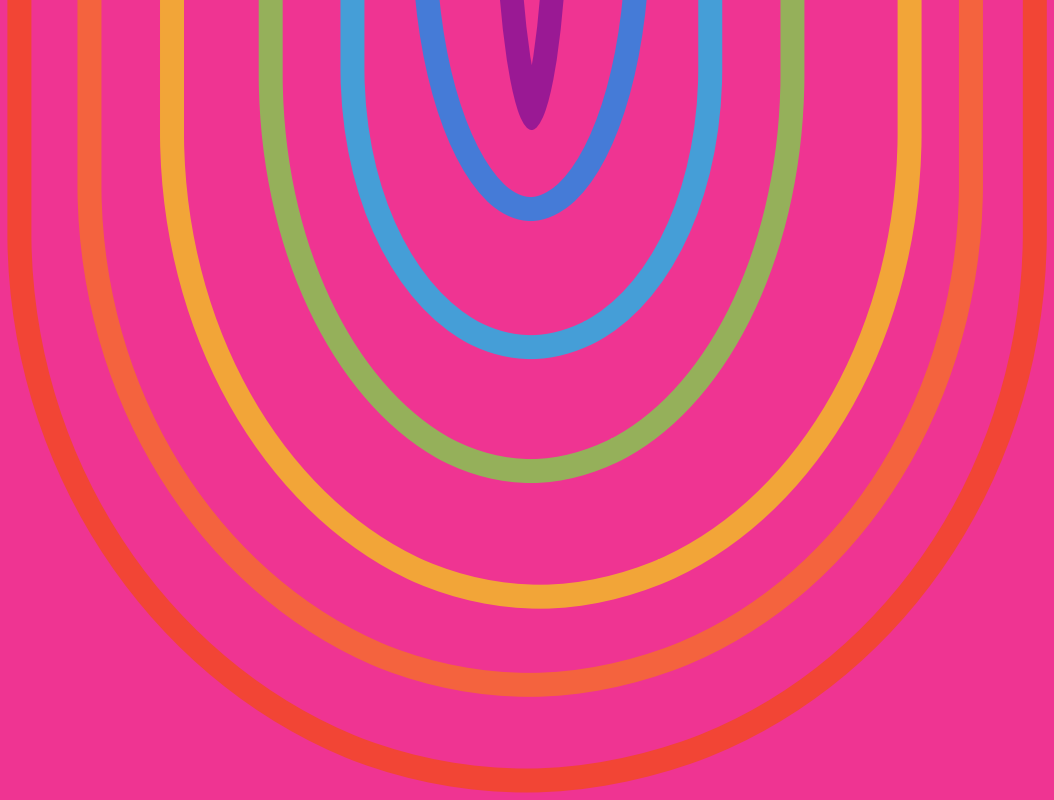
Sexual Orientations



Graph 2: The Sexual Orientations represented by the online survey respondents. Participants could select more than one option,

The most popular age range was between 18-25. Many different genders and sexualities were represented by this population but there was stronger representation from people identifying as cis-gender women who identify as lesbian and queer. There are more data points than survey respondents for this question as participants were permitted to choose more than one gender identity or sexual orientation. Queer individuals may find difficulty labelling themselves and their identity and the study design aimed to alleviate that difficulty. It should be noted that 9 of the survey participants did not self-identify as part of the queer community, i.e. indicating they were cis-gender and heterosexual. These participants were not excluded from the study as valuable information can be gained from the differences in perspectives from inside and outside the community. There were also two responses from people who were not residents of the Halifax Regional Municipality. These responses were also not excluded as they may be frequent visitors of the HRM, thinking of moving to the HRM, or have lived in HRM in the past.





Study Findings



FINDINGS

The findings of this research study are organized by the four guiding research questions. The online survey, spatial analysis, and policy review are all included in the findings and their implications are discussed as a whole in the following section.

What are the Queer-Inclusive Spaces and where are they located?

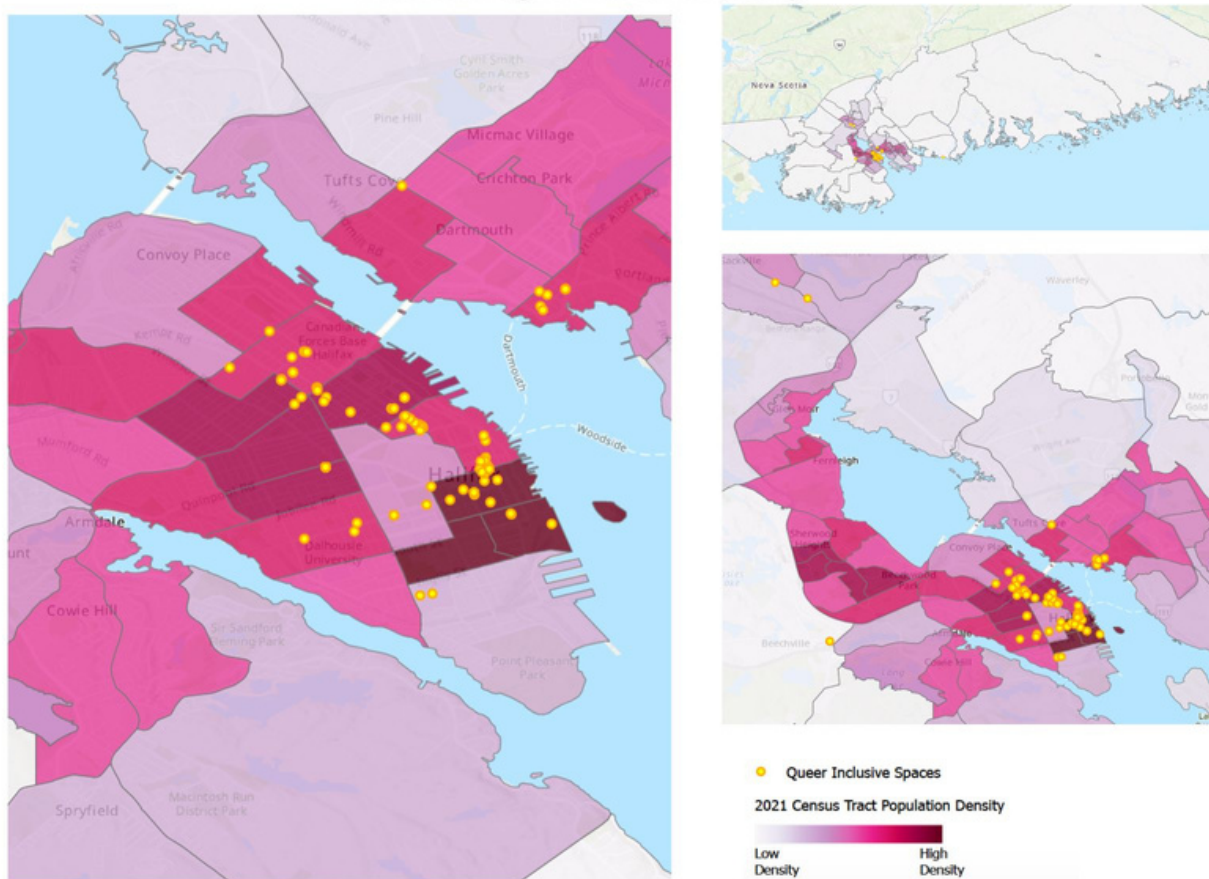
The survey map had 120 individual points that indicated queer-inclusive spaces. 110 of these points were located on the Halifax Peninsula. It should be noted that individual points do not correspond with the number of spaces, as some spaces were identified by multiple respondents. A total of 65 unique spaces were located. ArcGIS Survey123 allows the geographic coordinates and street addresses to be gathered, but unfortunately does not allow points to be labelled with descriptions, i.e. business names. Therefore, upon the closing of the survey each of the points was cross-referenced with google maps to determine what establishment each point was indicating. The matching of points from the survey to actual establishments was aided by the short answer responses of participants who may have written the names of establishments or indicated *why* those points were chosen. Table 1.0 depicts the types of spaces that were identified by participants.

Type of Space	Number of Spaces
Restaurants	11
Bars/Breweries	11
Cafés/Coffee Shops	10
Education	9
Retail	7
Recreation	6
Health Services	4
Personal Services	3
Green Spaces	2
Other	2

Table 1.0: Showing the different types of queer-inclusive spaces identified. A full list of the spaces is included in Appendix B.

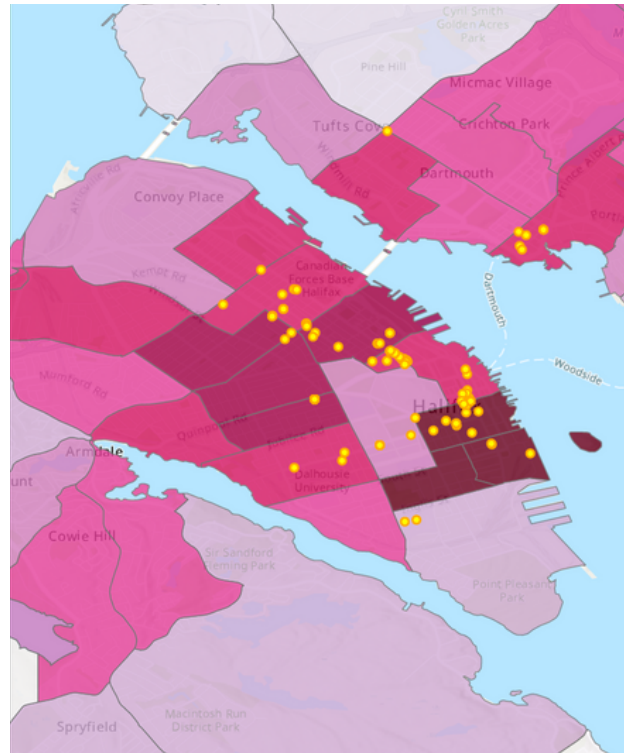
The most popular type of space were restaurants, bars/breweries, and coffee shops. The least popular type of space was green spaces. A list of the names of the establishments is attached as Appendix B. These spaces were then mapped alongside the 2021 census tract population density data to show the population relative to the number of queer spaces.

Queer Inclusive Spaces Relative to Population Density in Halifax Regional Municipality



Graph 1.0: Queer-Inclusive Spaces Relative to Population Density in HRM

As the map shows, the peninsula has the highest population density and the highest density of queer-inclusive spaces. More specifically, there is a high concentration on the North End of the peninsula and along Gottingen street. 15 of the 65 distinct spaces were identified along Gottingen street (23%), many of which were identified multiple times. However, this map also indicates the many other areas of HRM with medium-density populations, but no queer-inclusive spaces were identified in these areas. Western Halifax, Bedford, and Dartmouth had significantly fewer queer inclusive points relative to the population density of these communities. These points were identified using the short answer responses cross-referenced on Google Maps data to identify each establishment that was being identified.



The image on the left depicts a piece of the Queer Mapping Project, an art installation by Renée Brazeau organized during the Nocturne Arts Festival. The project collaboratively created the art piece with the artist and identified queer spaces in HRM. This artistic piece was not affiliated with this research project but coincided with the time that the survey was open. Despite not formally being a part of the research study, it is interesting to note that the points indicated on the community art piece are similar to the results found in the research study (Image on the right). There is a concentration of queer-inclusive spaces identified in the North End, particularly along Gottingen Street. The Queer Mapping Project organized by Renée Brazeau highlights that other members of the queer community are interested in exploring how the community relates to space in Halifax. Further, their work reiterates the spatial concentration of queer-inclusive spaces in the North End. Renée's work could represent an opportunity to do more community-based research and engagement on queer-inclusive spaces.

What contributes to these spaces being queer-inclusive?

The first short answer question on the online survey followed the mapping question, and asked “What makes this space/these spaces queer-inclusive to you?” Table 2.0 shows the most popular words used in answering this question.

Word	Number of occurrences
Staff	12
Events	12
Safe/Safety	9
Flags	8
Queer-Owned	5
Community	5
Employees	3
Support	3
Artists	3
Openly	3
Welcoming	2
Expression	2
Language	2

Table 2.0: A table of words that were used to describe what makes spaces queer-inclusive, and how many times the word appeared in the short-answer responses.

There were four main themes of what made a space queer-inclusive. These themes are design choices, ownership & staffing, use of the space, and safety.

Design Choices

The first theme, design choices, was marked by physical elements in the space to indicate it was queer-inclusive. Design choices included the presence of gender-neutral washrooms, pride flags and other symbols in the space, and art by queer artists. The presence of signs and symbols of inclusion (like the pride flag) was more likely to be identified by non-queer respondents than queer participants. While this study did not have enough participants to generalize this finding, this was an interesting pattern in this data set that should be highlighted for future research. For example, a non-queer participant responded:

"I'm not really aware of many places but I have noticed some establishments hanging up LGBTQ flags in their windows"

In contrast, a queer woman noted that pride symbols were helpful, but not sufficient to create a queer space:

"These are openly queer spaces. It is more than a banner it's the essence of the place. I appreciate when businesses put a flag in the window but I need more than that for a space to feel queer inclusive."

The inclusion of queer-inclusive design elements can help to make its inclusivity visible to queer and non-queer people in the community.



Photo from Glitter Bean Café displaying a cork board titled Queer Businesses: A History. The café is queer-owned and this board gives patrons a brief overview of Halifax's Queer History. The board focuses on historic queer spaces but does provide a website link to learn more.

L: Photo from Glitter Bean Café displaying a cartoon of a person at Pride.

R: Photo of Seven Bays Café and Boulderling. with a pride flag visible. Seven Bays also displays art from queer artists for sale in the café.

These images are examples of design choices that may impact a space's perception of inclusivity.

Staff

The second major theme for why spaces are queer-inclusive is the presence of queer staff or ownership by queer people. Participants commented that queer staff were more likely to create a welcoming atmosphere and serve customers without judgement. One respondent said:

"queer owned spaces and spaces with lots of queer staff make me feel comfortable to experience the space authentically."

The use of pronoun pins and gender-neutral language by staff were also listed as ways the staff increased inclusivity. For non-queer staff, this may be how to be an ally and make the space inclusive.

Events

The third theme from the responses to this question was the space being used by queer people or holding distinctly queer events. This use included selling queer products or services, hosting drag shows or queer event nights, or allowing the space to be used by community organizations that work with queer people. Two drag performers responded to the survey:

"As a drag performer, all of these spaces have welcomed me with open arms and have inclusivity in their staffing."

As a very visible form of queer expression, ensuring drag performers have spaces where they feel safe and empowered to perform their art was emphasized. Spaces that allowed these events and promoted these performers made the spaces inclusive to all queer people expressing themselves.



Photos promoting Julep Drag Brunch and a Drag Performer lip-synching in the space.

Safety

The final theme in many of the short answer responses was safety. The locations chosen were perceived as safe by queer people or spaces queer people felt comfortable being authentic. It is difficult to define or understand what particular elements of a space contribute to the feeling of safety. Safety is a personal, unique, and highly subjective feeling, making it difficult to replicate across different environments and contexts. Further, an individual's previous history and experience in a space will greatly impact their feelings of safety. As the queer community is very diverse, the elements that make a space safe for one queer person or cohort may not be the same for others. However, this study did find that the presence of queer people was cited repeatedly as reinforcing a space's inclusivity and perceived safety. One respondent noted that the presence of other queer people allowed them to feel safer and more confident existing authentically.

"They are spaces where I feel relatively safe and occasionally celebrated. I can go there and see other queer people around me. I can exist without using all of my energy to assimilate to heteronorm standards. They aren't queer spaces but we make them so."

One participant noted the difficulty of pinpointing what elements exactly allow them to express themselves comfortably:

"Some of them are specifically carved out as "queer spaces." Others are just places I notice myself feeling more authentic. It's hard to describe."

This survey was not robust enough to investigate these ideas further, as more detailed questions or in-depth interviews would be required to understand how the form, atmosphere, or use of a space might impact its safety and inclusivity. However, these initial findings highlight the importance of queer spaces scholarship and understanding how these spaces are created. Ensuring that queer people feel safe within their city is integral to their ability to freely express their identities and be included in their community.



*Queer Mapping Art Installation
By Renée Brazeau facilitated
with community members
during the Nocturne Arts
Festival 2022*

What policies or programs are currently being implemented to support queer inclusion elsewhere in the world?

A total of 125 municipal policies were reviewed from the Rainbow Cities Network's 1-page reports over their 2022, 2021, and 2020 reports. These policies were categorized into six types of interventions, including urban design, public events, inclusivity training, research, public administration, and social services. The most popular type of intervention was implementing queer-inclusive public administrative municipal policies and programs and the least popular intervention was developing specific social services for the queer community. The complete excel sheet of this analysis is attached in Appendix D. Table 3.0 depicts the type of intervention and the number of times that kind of strategy appeared in the policy review. Appendix C contains a complete list of the policies reviewed.

Type of Policy	Number of Policies
Public Administration	49
Public Event	25
Research	16
Urban Design	9
Training	8
Social Services	8

Table 3.0 depicts the type of policies that were implemented and the number of policies within that category.

Public Administration

This category was the most popular and broadest of the themes emerging from the content analysis. However, this designation primarily emphasized the policies and programs that were targeted towards municipal staff, the governance structure of the municipality, and changes to municipal operations. Of the 125 policies that were included in this study, 39% were a change to public administration. Programs that targeted municipal staff included gender-inclusive hiring practices, support groups and consultation with queer staff, and inclusivity training for municipal workers. Policies to change the governance structure of municipalities included developing action plans targeted at queer inclusion, creating queer advisory committees or municipal departments, or developing partnerships with non-governmental organizations to address queer inclusion. For example, seven different municipalities (Aarhus, Berlin, Cologne, Hamburg, Nuremberg, Lille, & Geneva) have created distinct action plans to address queer issues in their respective jurisdictions (Vázquez, 2022). Berlin's action plan included 92 different policies in 9 different fields to address queer inclusion (Vázquez, 2022). The Public Administration category also included changes to municipal operations like updating language in policies to be gender-neutral, developing tools for accessing queer-inclusive services within the municipality, and adding policies for gender-based analysis before implementation (Vázquez, 2022). For example, Leuven created a Toolbox for Safer Spaces for LGBTQI+, which "includes guidelines, training material and awareness raising tools which enable local governments and front line services to evaluate their policy and services and to build their capacity on this topic" (Vázquez, 2022). This toolbox can be used by their municipality but also other municipalities and other organizations operating in the city. Another policy implementation that is similar to this research project was a queer tour guide and a map of Hanover (Vázquez, 2021). The City of Hanover publishes an interactive map of queer spaces and an associated queer business guide every two years for the queer community, tourists, and new residents to enjoy (Vázquez, 2021). While this category of policy interventions is very broad, they all involve internal changes by the municipality itself and how it functions as an organization, rather than at the queer community or the general public.

Public Event

The second most popular type of intervention was public events, which had a 20% popularity within this sample. There were three main types of events, those that were artistic expression-based, public awareness campaigns, and pride festivals. Artistic events included unveiling new public monuments to commemorate queer history, hosting queer artists in a prominent city location, and queer arts festivals. For example, Vienna unveiled a monument to memorialize the persecution faced by LGBTQ people during the Nazi era (Vázquez, 2022). While this example may not be transferrable to the Halifax context, it was a large investment into displaying queer history on a permanent and public scale. Another type of event was public awareness campaigns, which took a unique queer issue, such as lesbian visibility or intersex visibility and created art, resources, and public education to disseminate to the general public.

For example, Reykjavik employed a “What is Non-Binary campaign?” that created resources and advertising to educate the public on the non-binary gender identity (Vázquez, 2022). Finally, many cities hosted pride festivals after being on hiatus during the COVID-19 pandemic and had other extra pride festivals and queer events throughout the year (Vázquez, 2022). Pride festivals often included a pride parade, concerts with queer performers, and other smaller events throughout the city (Vázquez, 2022).

Research

The third most popular type of intervention was research into queer inclusion and queer issues. The study topics ranged from monitoring homophobia and transphobia to sending out regular surveys monitoring queer inclusion. As an example, Geneva developed a mobile app for tourism to help people navigate the city and explore more of the area (Vázquez, 2022). The app also included a tab that could report harassment and hate crimes directly to the police (Vázquez, 2022). This service was designed to gather more data on these types of crimes and to improve how the police patrolled/monitored the city (Vázquez, 2022). There were also research events and programs that allowed queer scholars to share their work and discuss queer issues. Mannheim hosted a Queer LABS at the Urban Thinkers Campus which brought together urban thinkers, professionals, and decision-makers to discuss queer issues (Vázquez, 2022). Research into issues like queer inclusion in older adults and homelessness in the queer community was also conducted by municipalities (Vázquez, 2022). Many of the policies in this category were culturally specific and pertained to specific problems faced by the local queer community. As such, not all of the research-based policies would apply to HRM.

Training

The fourth most popular type of intervention was training programs to improve queer inclusion. This category was often co-cited with a public administrative policy for the training of municipal staff. However, these policies also expanded the populations intervened with, including police forces trained on spotting and responding to hate crimes, school teachers interacting with children that are questioning their sexualities and identities, and healthcare workers caring for queer patients (Vázquez, 2022). Some of these programs included offering businesses to facilitate inclusion and diversity training to their staff to receive a special queer-inclusive designation. The ‘Great Agreement’ policy was developed by Mexico City to ensure that private businesses build a culture of non-discrimination and equal treatment (Vázquez, 2021).

Urban Design

The next type of intervention identified was policies that implemented changes to urban design. These ranged from small symbolic changes like flag raising or painting rainbow crosswalks to larger projects like queer community centres. It also included policies that provided standards, guidelines or requirements for gender-neutral

bathrooms. For example, in New Taipei City there was a policy introduced to have at least one public gender-neutral washroom in each of their 9 district's bathrooms (Vázquez, 2021). HRM has implemented some urban design interventions already, including painting rainbow crosswalks and the installation of a public art piece. There is a gender-neutral washroom in the City Hall but more gender-neutral washroom infrastructure has not yet been implemented across all municipal facilities.



Photos of the New Taipei City gender-neutral washrooms. The stalls are completely enclosed with a communal sink and mirror.

Social Services

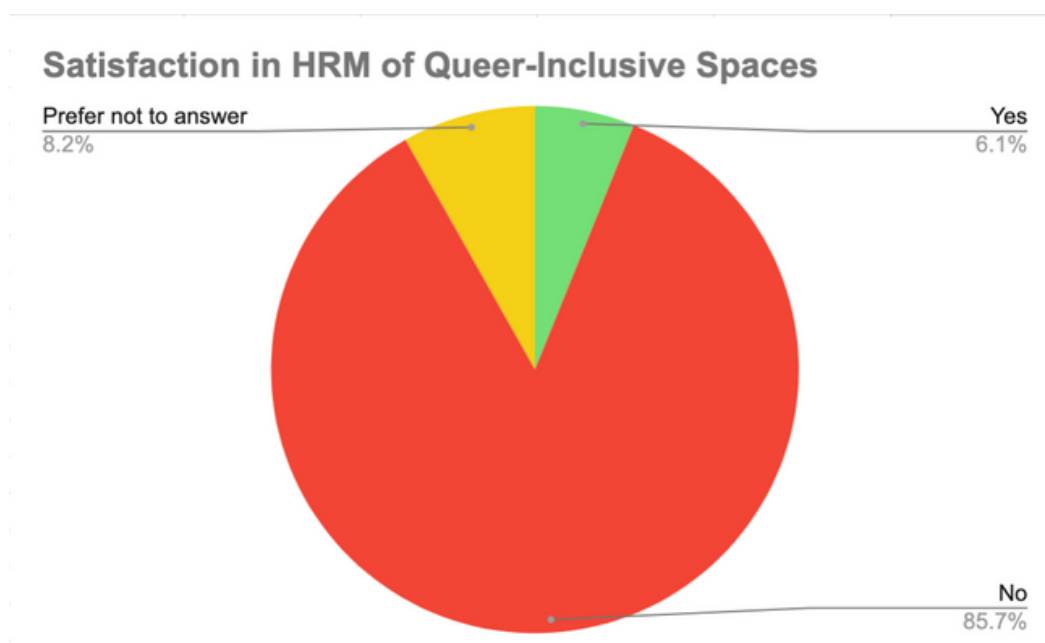
Lastly, the final and least popular type of intervention was policies that provide social services specifically for queer individuals. Policies in this category often had substantial human and financial resources including developing emergency homeless shelters, care centres, or counselling programs for queer individuals (Vázquez, 2022). Some of these projects targeted specific subsets of the queer community, such as refugees, older adults, or young people in sports (Vázquez, 2022). For example, Leuven created a care centre for people who have experienced sexual violence, with a distinct area for people that identify as queer (Vázquez, 2022). Another municipality, Aarhus, has created programs for queer refugees from Ukraine that have settled in their region (Vázquez, 2022). Many of these policies were deemed (M) for might be suitable to Halifax because they require significant resources to implement and may not meet the needs of the local community. Without significantly more research it is difficult to discern whether this type of policy would be beneficial in the HRM context.

What opportunities are there to improve HRM's queer inclusion?

This research question addresses whether there is a need to improve queer inclusivity in HRM by understanding the community satisfaction with queer-inclusive spaces in HRM, the importance of these spaces, and suggestions for improvement of these spaces. This research question was answered using the online survey results in combination with the review of international policy options. The recommendations section at the end of the report aims to give HRM options to make improvements to their queer-inclusive policies.

The first question on the survey that looked at the respondents' satisfaction with the number and quality of queer-inclusive spaces was a choice option with a short-answer follow-up. The graph below shows that the majority of respondents were unsatisfied with the number and quality of queer-inclusive spaces in HRM.

Are you satisfied with the number/quality of queer-inclusive spaces in the HRM? Please explain.



Graph 3: Depicts the dissatisfaction with the number/quality of queer-inclusive spaces in the HRM.

While the choice-based selection showed clear dissatisfaction, the short-answer follow-up responses were varied and nuanced. The most consistent response called for a distinctly queer bar or club, the last of which closed during the COVID-19 pandemic. Participants were particularly dissatisfied as the size of Halifax as a city, and the number of other bars, nightclubs, and lounges in the region (the highest per capita in Canada) should warrant at least one nightclub that caters to the queer community. Furthermore, as the population has grown over the past few years, and will continue to grow, the queer population in Halifax is also growing. Despite this growth, the number of queer-inclusive spaces has not also grown.

Another dissatisfaction across responses was that many establishments may signal to be queer-inclusive, such as hanging pride flags but do little to train staff or protect queer individuals from harassment or violence within that space. Lastly, a major dissatisfaction was that whatever existing queer community and queer spaces in Halifax did exist, are inaccessible for many Haligonians. Some of the responses came from people new to Halifax and reported that finding queer-inclusive spaces and connecting with other queer people in the community was a challenge. Furthermore, the cost of participating in queer spaces was also cited as a reason for inaccessibility. For example, one response read:

"I wish there were more queer bars and free spaces. I don't have a ton of money and it's hard to always have to buy something to be in a queer space."

This response highlights that many queer-inclusive spaces in the region are conditional, and the city as a whole or public spaces are not necessarily perceived as queer-inclusive.

The second short-answer question that attempted to understand what HRM may be lacking in their queer inclusion was focused on whether it was important for them to have queer-inclusive spaces. These results highlight why queer people need inclusion in their communities.

Why is it important to you to have queer-inclusive spaces in the HRM?

This short answer question was a follow-up to a choice-based selection that allowed survey participants to indicate whether it was important to have queer spaces. Only one participant of 49 respondents indicated it was not important to them to have queer-inclusive spaces. That participant was not a member of the queer community and indicated this choice was because all spaces should be inclusive and there is no need for distinctively queer inclusive spaces. This one participant is an outlier to the remaining 48 participants who indicated queer inclusive spaces are important.



Photo from Renée Brazeau's Queer Mapping Project from Nocturne 2022. This art project reiterates the community need for queer spaces.

Table 4.0 depicts the most prominent and significant words used in the survey responses to answer this question:

Word	Number of Occurrences
Safe	24
Community	11
Ourselves/Themselves/Myself	8
Express	4
Meet	4
Comfortable	4
Exist	3
Connect	3
Visibility	2

The most prominent answer in the responses was the need for safe spaces and places for the community to gather. For example, one participant reported:

"We currently have nowhere to go, nowhere to foster community and to meet one another safely. It's a huge problem. Communities need spaces to exist within in order to be in community with one another."

Other dominant themes from the survey responses were the need for self-expression, dissemination of queer education and resources, and visibility of the queer community within the city. Another notable theme amongst responses was specifically for queer youth needing a space to feel comfortable to discover themselves and develop their queer identities.

Finally, the online survey provided an opportunity for respondents to offer suggestions on how HRM can improve its queer inclusivity. While generating ideas may be the first step to policy improvements, more extensive and formal engagement should be undertaken before the formulation or implementation of new policies and programs.

Do you have any suggestions for improving queer inclusivity in HRM?

This question, while not required, generated many ideas, policies, and programs for HRM to improve its inclusivity. The first and most popular response was for HRM to provide or mandate diversity and sensitivity training to businesses and community organizations, to ensure that staff are accepting and welcoming of queer people. This theme can be found in this response:

"Feels like there are very few queer spaces here, given the size of the population. Some places that advertise themselves as "queer friendly" are owned by people who are repeatedly hostile to queer folks. HRM needs more diversity and sensitivity training."

The second major theme in these responses was for the municipality to support queer owned and operated businesses. Support was described in many forms including funding and grants, dedicated spaces in the city for queer establishments, or more advertising and awareness of existing queer spaces. Along the same theme were requests for more queer-centred events outside of pride season, throughout the year. Finally, there were some design elements included in the suggestions, like increasing and normalizing gender-neutral washrooms throughout the city. These suggestions will be discussed further in the recommendation section alongside international municipal queer-inclusive policy findings.





Discussion



DISCUSSION

The results indicate that as a whole, the queer community feels under-served for inclusive spaces in the region. There are a significant number of points on the Halifax Peninsula, but in other communities that have a medium population density, no queer-inclusive spaces were indicated. The highest density of spaces identified on the map was in the North End along the beginning of Gottingen Street. This could represent the start of a 'gaybourhood' developing in this area. Gottingen Street was historically a low-income neighbourhood that has recently been criticized for undergoing a process of gentrification (Taddese, Mattar, & Buiza, 2018). This trajectory is similar to other gay villages that have been established in Montreal, Toronto, and Vancouver (Nash & Gorman-Murray, 2014; Lewis, 2013). It was also interesting to analyze points that were not included as queer-inclusive. For example, the waterfront is a major development and investment for the city of Halifax and aims to be vibrant and inclusive. Despite this goal, there were no points on the map along the waterfront. In general, there was an underrepresentation of green spaces and public spaces in the survey. It is notable that the site of a queer monument, the Halifax Commons, was also not included on the map. There are several university campuses in the HRM, and almost all of these locations were mapped, except for Dalhousie's main campus. Despite being the largest campus and home to most students in Halifax, it is notable that this location was also not recognized in the survey. While the feeling of queer inclusion is subjective to each queer person and thus this survey cannot be comprehensive of all spaces in HRM that are queer-inclusive. However, it does provide some indication of HRM's queer inclusivity and its dispersion across the city.

Results indicated that queer inclusive spaces do exist but they can be challenging to know about and access. A major theme across the short answer responses was respondents calling for physical spaces to connect the queer community in Halifax. For new Haligonians and queer youth, this is particularly important. Being aware of what spaces are inclusive and safe can prevent stress, and possibly violence for queer people. While some scholars have indicated that the need for queer spaces is waning in response to the rise of social media apps and online forms of connection, this survey shows that the need for physical spaces to gather is still very important to young queer people (Nash & Gorman-Murray, 2014). Another concern of access was the cost of accessing queer inclusive spaces. The results of the online survey found that most queer-inclusive spaces in the HRM are commercial spaces. Of the 65 uniquely identified spaces, 50 of them required a transactional experience to participate in that space. The majority of these commercial spaces were restaurants, bars/breweries, and coffee shops which may not be conducive to creating a consistent community gathering space. Furthermore, by only having commercial queer-inclusive spaces, it limits the accessibility of lower-income people to feel involved in the queer community. It should also be noted that for queer people who do not drink alcohol or are sober, there are even fewer queer-inclusive spaces.

These findings represent very preliminary insights into the spatial distribution of the queer community in the HRM. There is much more to learn about the queer community in HRM to understand how the municipality can be involved and chart a path towards queer inclusion.

An interesting finding from the online survey short-answer questions was discovered when comparing the responses from non-queer participants to responses from the queer community. Specifically, non-queer participants were more likely to use visual cues like pride flags and posters to identify queer spaces, whereas queer people focused more on atmosphere, interactions with staff and other members of the public, and physical design like gender-neutral washrooms. These results may not be generalizable due to the sample size of this study but represent an interesting pattern in the survey results.

With regards to the policy review, the majority of member cities in the Rainbow Cities Network (RCN) are in Europe, with a high concentration of German, Dutch, and Scandinavian cities. The only representation in the network from North American cities was from Montreal and Mexico City. As such, not all of the policies can be translated into the North American culture, social priorities, and governance structure. However, the cities in the RCN are at the forefront of policy-making for queer inclusion. The annual reporting of each city provides accountability and transparency to municipal governments and their commitment to queer inclusion. It is also important to note that there is a wide range in the size of cities that are participating in the network. Some cities such as Paris, Berlin, and New Taipei City have millions of inhabitants and global importance. Other cities like Cork, Leuven, and Oostende are significantly smaller than the HRM. This proves that no matter the size of a city, it is possible to take steps towards queer inclusion through municipal policies and planning.

The findings also show a wide variety of types of interventions that cities are implementing. Queer inclusion can become a priority through many different pathways. Despite budget constraints, human resource limitations, and governance structure there are options for improving the experience of queer people in HRM. Many of the policies implemented such as training, gender-neutral washrooms, and community gathering spaces that were suggested by the local HRM queer community have already been implemented in other cities. This corroboration shows the potential for HRM to address the needs of the local queer community with internationally successful policies.



Recommendations



RECOMMENDATIONS

The policies presented in the policy review and the responses from the survey offer insight into what steps the HRM community can take to improve their queer inclusivity.

Research & Reporting

The first step that many cities have established is a better reporting system for hate crimes, homophobia, transphobia, and violence. In 2021, the HRM police identified that hate crimes are significantly *underreported* in the region (Berman, 2021). Without knowing the level of violence and discrimination that queer people are facing, it is difficult to understand what areas of intervention would be the most impactful for improving queer inclusion. Furthermore, an improved reporting system can help other vulnerable groups in the city including ethnic minorities and women experiencing sexual assault. There were many examples of new reporting systems implemented in other countries, including the police teaming up with local NGOs for reporting or a phone application that could report attacks in real time. While police may not be able to respond and prevent every situation, having better statistics on the safety of queer people in the city is important to understanding what the municipality can do to improve queer inclusivity.

Inclusion Training

The second recommendation from this study is to offer inclusivity and sensitivity training to municipal staff, the police force, and local businesses. Both the online survey and the policy literature review had training as a priority for improving queer inclusion. There has been significant evolution in the understanding of gender and sexuality in the past 25 years. The queer community itself has evolved significantly to incorporate more voices and perspectives. It is important to educate the community on these changes, especially those working in law enforcement, healthcare workers, and school teachers. Changing how public staff interact with queer people can greatly improve their sense of comfort and safety in the public sphere. Awareness campaigns can also be a useful tool to spread information about the queer community to the general public and may be less intensive than a complete training program. This type of intervention could be a positive first step for the region.

Community Space

Another intervention that was highlighted in the survey responses and the policy literature review was the need for physical community gathering spaces. The city can support this through two pathways. Firstly, by designating a publicly-owned space, such as a community centre, for queer events. The alternative is to support the private sector in providing those spaces by offering grants or opportunities to queer businesses. The municipality could also do more to promote the queer-owned

businesses that are currently operating. The city of Wiesbaden creates a Queer in Wiesbaden brochure every two years that highlights queer-owned or queer-inclusive businesses (Vázquez, 2022). They have also developed an interactive map of queer spaces on their website. Using the results from this research study, the city could develop a similar interactive map (Vázquez, 2022). This type of resource is especially useful for tourists and newcomers to HRM. Businesses could apply to be part of the map or undergo specific inclusion training to be accepted. HRM could do more to showcase its queer history in the city, including queer art, historic monuments, or maps of historic queer places. As described by the survey respondents, a lot of the queer community in HRM is unseen, which makes it difficult for new residents to find and access it.

Joining the Rainbow Cities Network

Another step that the city could implement fairly quickly and reasonably would be to join the Rainbow Cities Network. This would allow the municipality to share resources with other countries, and keep its goal toward queer inclusion transparent and accountable. The rainbow Cities Network has low barriers to joining but signals HRM's commitment to diversity and inclusion in the region. It will also put Halifax's name on an international platform as a place of welcoming queer people.

Developing an Action Plan

Lastly, the most intense of the recommendations is to create an action plan for queer inclusion in Halifax. Creating a specific plan to address the needs of queer people is a step that many cities in the RCN have taken. The process of developing a plan can identify areas of strength and weakness, understand what resources are available, and realize what constraints there are to implementation. HRM does not have a benchmark for its current queer inclusion and its goals for the future. Developing an action plan, with significant community engagement, can show HRM's commitment to diversity and inclusion, and its priority as the city grows. This research study was the first step to understanding whether HRM was meeting the needs of the community. Further relationship-building between the municipality and the queer community is needed to allow queer people to feel safe in the HRM.





Limitations



LIMITATIONS

The main limitation of this study is the sample size. While 50 participants were my initial target goal, it still represents a fraction of the queer population in HRM. Further, the survey participants skewed heavily towards queer cis-women, so other gender identities may be underrepresented by this survey. Another limitation has been the length of time the survey was open. The survey ran from October 6th until November 6th, for a total time of 1 month. Towards the closure of the survey, on October 22nd, a new gay bar was opened on Gottingen Street. Many of the early participants in the survey specifically noted the lack of queer-inclusive nightclubs in their survey responses. This survey was unable to capture new or emerging queer inclusive spaces. Lastly, a limitation of the survey was connecting the geographic points on the GIS map to businesses or establishments. The application unfortunately does not allow survey participants to label each point. Further, the survey did not ask participants to name the establishments they offered addresses for as it may have deterred public space and green spaces from being considered. As such, there were addresses to locations with multiple businesses and establishments in the same building. The names of businesses/establishments were determined through cross-reference with survey participants' answers (which sometimes alluded to or named particular businesses) and an online search of the business which typically had community guidelines or advertised events specifically for the queer community. Regardless, there may have been some misidentified establishments on the map.

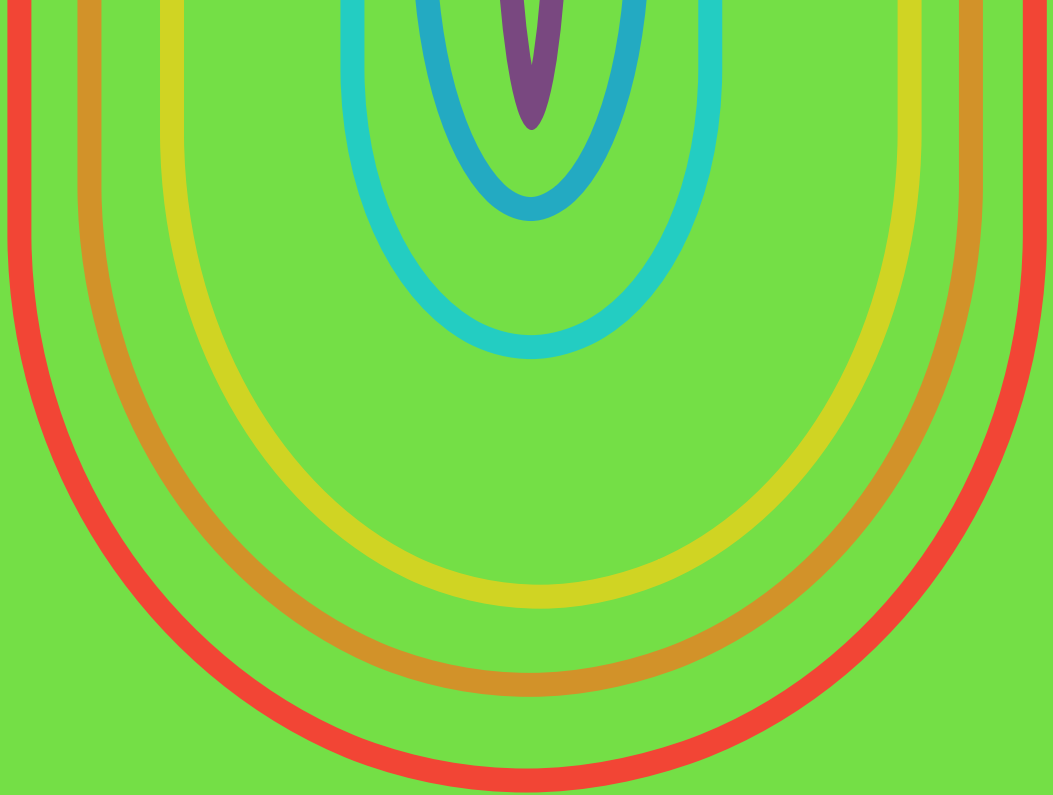
In addition to the limitations of the online survey, there were some limitations to the policy review. Firstly, only policies in the Rainbow Cities Network were reviewed. Therefore, other cities that may also have queer-inclusive policies were not considered. Secondly, the composition of the Rainbow Cities Network is heavily European. There may be cultural differences between European policy and North American policies that prevent replication in HRM. Finally, the policies from the 2019 and 2018 Rainbow Cities Network report were not considered.

AREAS OF FUTURE RESEARCH

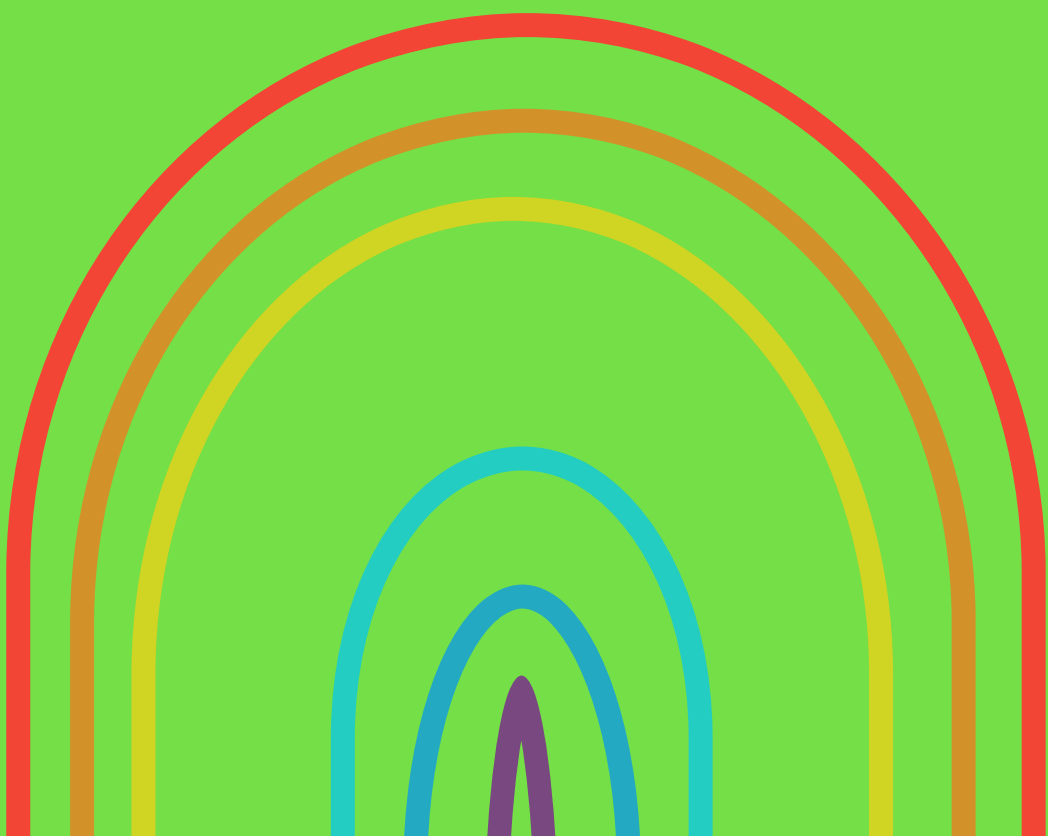
This research study is only the first step to understanding queer inclusion in the Halifax Regional Municipality. More research should be conducted to understand the elements that contribute to a sense of safety in queer-inclusive spaces so that they might be replicated in other spaces across the city. Research into the types of problems faced by queer people such as discrimination, hate crimes, and homophobic/transphobic violence should be further researched and understood. Further research into the North End/Gottingen specifically could be conducted to understand the concentration of queer-inclusive spaces in this neighbourhood and whether it could be considered a historic or future gay village.

Lastly, if the HRM begins implementing queer-inclusive policies and programs, research should be conducted to determine the effectiveness of these policies on the perceptions and dispersion of queer-inclusive spaces across the municipality.





Conclusion



CONCLUSION

This study contributes to a growing body of research to understand queer inclusion in urban cities. This research specifically focuses on Halifax Regional Municipality because it is a growing mid-sized city that will have to adapt to the growing needs of the queer community. Creating safe, inclusive, and welcoming spaces is essential for queer people and this research study represents the first step to identifying those spaces and what factors contribute to their inclusivity. This study offers a map that can be used by queer people and organizations to know where other queer people are connecting, developing relationships, and feeling safe expressing themselves. This deliverable is also useful for the municipality, provincial government, and tourism organizations as they would give clear indications of the queer spaces in the HRM to be advertised and supported. This survey has given the municipality a clear indication that the queer community feels underserved and excluded from public life in the HRM. This could be a useful tool for incorporating the queer community into the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion framework developed by the city and enacting queer-inclusive municipal policies. Overall, this research can be seen as a small start on the HRM becoming a more welcoming, inclusive and diverse place to live.



APPENDIX A: REFERENCES

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APPENDIX B: LIST OF QUEER-INCLUSIVE SPACES IN HRM

Queer-Inclusive Spaces in HRM

Green Spaces

- Lawrencetown Beach (Lawrencetown)
- Halifax Public Gardens

Bars/Clubs

- Battery Park Brewing (Dartmouth)
- Economy Shoe Shop & Basement
- The Carleton
- Propeller Brewing
- The Local
- The Seahorse*
- The Hopyard
- Gus' Pub*
- Good Robot*
- Chainyard
- Brightyard Brewery (Dartmouth)

Restaurants

- Ori (Dartmouth)
- The Canteen (Dartmouth)
- La Frasca
- 2 Doors Down Eatery
- Obladee
- Fawn
- Julep*
- Dee Dee's Ice Cream
- Almonak Halifax
- The Ostrich Club
- Bianca's

Recreation

- Urban Rustic DIY Studio (Lower Sackville)
- Seven Bays Bouldering* (Bayers Lake & Peninsula)
- The Board Room*
- Neptune Theatre
- Radstorm

Health

- Canadian Mental Health Association
- Hospice Halifax
- Quantum Sport Therapy
- North End Community Health Centre

*Space was identified multiple times

Café/Coffee Shops

- Café Goodluck (Dartmouth)
- Coburg Café
- Glitterbean Café*
- Alteregos
- Luke's Baked goods
- The Osney
- Café Aroma Latino ~Site visit~
- Java Blend
- Creative Cup
- LF Bakery

Retail

- Elsie's
- Black Market
- The Loot
- My Mother's Bloomers
- Local Source Market
- The Has Bin
- Venus Envy

Personal Services

- Pride Beauty Lounge (Lower Sackville)
- Outlaw Tattoo*
- One Block Barbershop

Education

- MacPhee Centre for Creative Learning (Dartmouth)
- Khyber Centre for the Arts
- Saint Mary's University
- NSCAD Port Campus
- South House (Dalhousie Campus)
- King's College
- Dalhousie (Sexton Campus)
- Public Libraries
- NSCAD Downtown Campus

Other

- Nova Centre
- The Youth Project

*Space was identified multiple times

APPENDIX C: LIST OF INTERNATIONAL POLICIES INCLUDED IN THE POLICY REVIEW

Name of Policy	City	Type of Policy	Suitability for Halifax
Pride	Aarhus	Event	Y
Campaign for Lesbian visibility	Berlin	Event	Y
Visibility of non-binary identities	Frankfurt	Event	Y
Panel on services to elderly and disabled LGBTIQ	Helsinki	Event	M
LGBTQI+ Archives and memoirs	Bordeaux	Event	Y
LGBT role models and allies at work	Paris	Event	N
Shedding light on hate crimes	Aarhus	Event (Art)	Y
Queer Arts festival	Bruges	Event (Art)	M
Mascheefest	Hannover	Event (Art)	Y
Maze of Expressions	Ljubljana	Event (Art)	N
Rainbow Spectrum Film Festival	New Taipei City	Event (Art)	Y
Awareness Shows at City Hall	Paris	Event (Art)	Y
Memorial to LGBTQ persecution in Nazi era	Vienna	Event (Art)	N
Share the Color	Brussels	Event (Campaign)	Y
Billboard campaign of LGBTQI migrants	Cologne	Event (Campaign)	M
Wellbeing & Resilience of LGBTI	Ghent	Event (Campaign)	M
Welcoming Out	Hamburg	Event (Campaign)	M
Got your back bystander campaign	Leuven	Event (Campaign)	M
What is non-binary	Reykjavik	Event (Campaign)	M
Home of the Rainbow	Taipei	Event (Campaign)	N
Lebe Deine Liebe	Vienna	Event (Campaign)	Y
Lesbian History	Heidelberg	Event (Campaign)	Y
Increasing Lesbian visibility	Berlin	Event (Campaign)	Y
Like Everyone	Bern	Event (Campaign)	Y
Public visibility (flag) campaign	Bern	Event (Campaign)	Y
Intersex visibility campaign	Hanover	Event (Campaign)	M
Plan for Sexual & Gender Diversity	Bergen	Policy	Y
Aarhus Compass (Collaborative Policy-making)	Aarhus	Policy	N
Further Development of the Berlin Action Plan	Berlin	Policy	M
Transition guidelines, rainbow employee network, gender-i	Berlin	Policy	Y
Equality Impact tool	Brussels	Policy	Y
Colognes LGBTI action plan	Cologne	Policy	Y

Gender Inclusive Language	Copenhagen	Policy	Y
Mobile App to report harassment	Geneva	Policy	Y
Inclusive gender representation	Ghent	Policy	Y
Action Plan for acceptance of gender and sexual diversity	Hamburg	Policy	Y
Specialist Commission in sports	Hamburg	Policy	M
Equality & non-discrimination plan	Helsinki	policy	Y
Gender Inclusive Language	Leuven	Policy	Y
Action plan to fight discrimination	Lille	Policy	Y
Gender-Based Analysis	Montreal	Policy	Y
Public Consultation- Revitalization	Montreal	Policy	Y
Protection of child's welfare for intersex children	Munich	Policy	M
Lifting school uniform restrictions	New Taipei City	Policy	N
Queer Nuremberg Action Plan	Nuremberg	Policy	Y
Queer Aging in Nuremberg	Nuremberg	Policy	M
Trans-inclusive services	Taipei	Policy	M
Queer Centre	Wiebaden	Policy	M
New language guides	Zurich	Policy	Y
LGBTI instructors in care	Zurich	Policy	Y
LGBT policy and Action plan	Aarhus	Policy	Y
IGSV Action Plan	Berlin	Policy	Y
Funding opportunities for LGBT history and Pride weeks	Berlin	Policy	Y
LGBTIQ+ municipal strategy 2030	Geneva	Policy	Y
Queer guide/map to Hanover	Hanover	Policy	Y
LGBTIQ+ coordination office	Heidelberg	Policy	Y
QueerStadi Network	Helsinki	Policy	Y
Safe spaces and community building	Bruges	Policy	Y
LGBTIQ employees network	Munich	Policy	Y
Queer Youth Club	Mannheim	Policy & Program	Y
Personal Change Lab	Rotterdam	Policy & Program	M
Transcidadania	Sao Paolo	Policy & Program	N
New language guides	Bern	Policy & Training	Y
Swiss LGBTI label (for employers)	Bern	Policy & Training	Y
LGBTQI+ Committee	Bordeaux	Policy & Training	Y

Police Training on Hate crimes	Bruges	Policy & Training	Y
Civil service registration training	Geneva	Policy & Training	Y
Working with LGBTQI elders	Geneva	Policy & Training	Y
Project Hate Town (Police)	Hamburg	Policy & Training	Y
Certificate LGBT friendly	Ljubljana	Policy & Training	Y
The Great Agreement	Mexico City	Policy & Training	Y
LGBTIQ Glossary	Munich	Policy & Training	Y
Administrative training	Nuremberg	Policy & Training	Y
Rainbow Certification	Reykjavik	Policy & Training	Y
Respect has a name	Sao Paolo	Policy & Training	Y
New system for reporting hate crimes	Ghent	Policy & Training	Y
Safety Alliance	Rotterdam	Policy & Training	Y
Jezelf op Zuid	Rotterdam	Urban Design	Y
Monitoring report on homo&transphobia	Berlin	Research	M
Montioring hate crimes	Brussels	Research	Y
International Exchange Program	Cologne	Research	N
Community_Inclusive	Frankfurt	Research	N
Integration of LGBT youth into the workforce	Ljubljana	Research	M
LGBT+ inclusive surveys	Reykjavik	Research	M
Queer In Wiesbaden	Wiesbaden	Research	Y
Conversion Therapy Research	Heidelberg	Research	N
Monitoring homo/transphobia	Berlin	Research	Y
Media Research and Training	Geneva	Research	Y
LGBTI Homelessness research	Berlin	Research	N
Gendercoaching local Schools	Oostende	Research	Y
Portal SP - reporting tool	Sao Paolo	Research	Y
Queer LABs at Urban Thinkers	Mannheim	Research & Design	Y
Information session LGBTI/migration	Oostende	Research & Event	M
Support for trans teens (and training)	Barcelona	Research & Training	M
queer Diversity in old age	Mannheim	Research & Training	Y
Support for local communities	Aarhus	Social	Y
Transgender Awareness Week	Bergen	Event	Y
Support for Ukrainian Refugees	Aarhus	Social Services	M

Sports Training	Barcelona	Social Services	Y
LGBTI+ inter-agency group	Cork	Social Services	Y
Care centre after sexual violence	Leuven	Social Services	M
Emergency Accomodation	Lille	Social Services	M
DiMe Project against discrimination	Oslo	Social Services	Y
Tour d'Amour- for older LGBTQ adults	Rotterdam	Social Services	M
Prevention Counselling	Heidelberg	Social Services	M
Psychosocial care centre for LGBTI refugees	Berlin	Social Services	Y
Implicit Bias	Copenhagen	Training	Y
Guidebook for inclusive language	Esch sur alzette	Training	Y
Training for kindergarten	Hannover	Training	Y
Employee training on LGBTI+	Helsinki	Training	Y
Municipal Staff training	Montreal	Training	Y
The Violet training	Oostende	Training	Y
Municipal Staff training	Oslo	training	Y
Training for youth workers	Bern	Training	Y
Toolbox Safer Spaces	Leuven	Training	Y
Safe Toilets	Bern	Urban Design	Y
LGBTI+ Visibility	Cork	Urban Design	Y
House of Diversity	Esch Sur Alzette	Urban Design	N
Gender inclusive toilets	Ghent	Urban Design	Y
Zebra Crosswalk	Mexico City	Urban Design	Y
Police & Fire raised flags	Montreal	Urban Design	Y
A Place-Tribute	Montreal	Urban Design	Y
All Gender Washrooms	New Taipei City	Urban Design	Y
Youth Centre	Vienna	Urban Design	M
All Gender Washrooms (schools)	Zurich	Urban Design	M

APPENDIX E: QUEER INCLUSIVE SPACES SURVEY

Queer Spaces in Halifax Regional Municipality



This survey has been reviewed and approved by staff at the Dalhousie School of Planning and complies with National Research Ethics Board Standards.



You are invited to take part in a research study being conducted by, Jane Rideout, a graduate student in the School of Planning at Dalhousie University. The purpose of this research is to identify queer-inclusive spaces in HRM, factors that influence queer-inclusivity, and whether there are opportunities for the municipality to support queer-inclusive spaces. The study is open to members who identify with the LGBTQ2SIA+ community and allies in the Halifax Region.



If you choose to participate in this research you will be asked to answer 9 questions in an anonymous online survey on your perceptions of queer inclusivity in HRM. The survey should take between 10-15 minutes.

Your participation in this research is entirely your choice. You do not have to answer questions that you do not want to answer (by selecting prefer not to answer), and you are welcome to stop the survey at any time if you no longer want to participate. All you need to do is close your browser. I will not include any incomplete surveys in my analyses. **If you do complete your survey and you change your mind later, I will not be able to remove the information you provided as I will not know which response is yours.**

Your responses to the survey will be **anonymous**. This means that there are no questions in the survey that ask for identifying details such as your name or email address. All responses will be saved on a secure Dalhousie server. Only Dr. Lisa Berglund and I (Jane Rideout) will have access to the survey results.

I will describe and share general findings of this research in Dalhousie planning classes and conferences. Members of Halifax Regional Municipality staff and council will also receive summaries of my findings. I will destroy all information 1 year after completing/reporting the results.

The risks associated with this study are no greater than those you encounter in your everyday life.

There will be no direct benefit to you in participating in this research. The research, however, might contribute to new knowledge on queer inclusivity in HRM. If you would like to see how your information is used, please feel free to contact me (jrideout@dal.ca) in December 2022.

You should discuss any questions you have about this study with Jane Rideout and Dr. Lisa Berglund. Please ask as many questions as you like before or after participating. My contact information is jrideout@dal.ca or lisa.berglund@dal.ca

This project was approved by the School of Planning internal ethics review in accordance with the Dalhousie Ethics Review Policy.

This project was approved by the School of Planning internal ethics review in accordance with the Dalhousie Ethics Review Policy.



Do you consent to participating in this study?*

By checking this box you agree to having read the above information and consent to participate in this study.

I consent to participating in this research



Are you a resident of the Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM)?*

Yes

No

What is your age?*

Under 18 years

18-25

26-44

45-64

65 or older

Prefer not to answer

How do you define your Gender Identity*

Feel free to choose more than one answer.



Cis-Gender Woman

Cis-Gender Man

Transgender Woman

Transgender Man

Non-Binary

Gender Fluid

Gender Non-Conforming

Agender

Two-Spirit

Intersex

Gender Queer

Trans Femme

Trans Masc

<input type="checkbox"/> Trans Masc
<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to answer
<input type="checkbox"/> Other



What is your Sexual Orientation*

Feel free to choose more than one option.

<input type="checkbox"/> Gay
<input type="checkbox"/> Lesbian
<input type="checkbox"/> Bisexual
<input type="checkbox"/> Pansexual
<input type="checkbox"/> Asexual
<input type="checkbox"/> Queer
<input type="checkbox"/> Heterosexual
<input type="checkbox"/> Questioning
<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to answer
<input type="checkbox"/> Other

Please share any spaces in the Halifax Regional Municipality that you feel are Queer-Inclusive.*

Note: These may be bars, cafes, parks, businesses, etc. And you can submit more than one location.

What makes this space/these spaces queer-inclusive to you?

There are no wrong answers!

Is it important to you to have Queer-inclusive spaces in the HRM?*

Yes

No

Prefer not to answer

Please explain your answer to the previous question.

If yes, why is it important to have queer-inclusive spaces? If no, why not?



Are you satisfied with the number/quality of queer-inclusive spaces in the HRM?*

Yes

No

Prefer not to answer

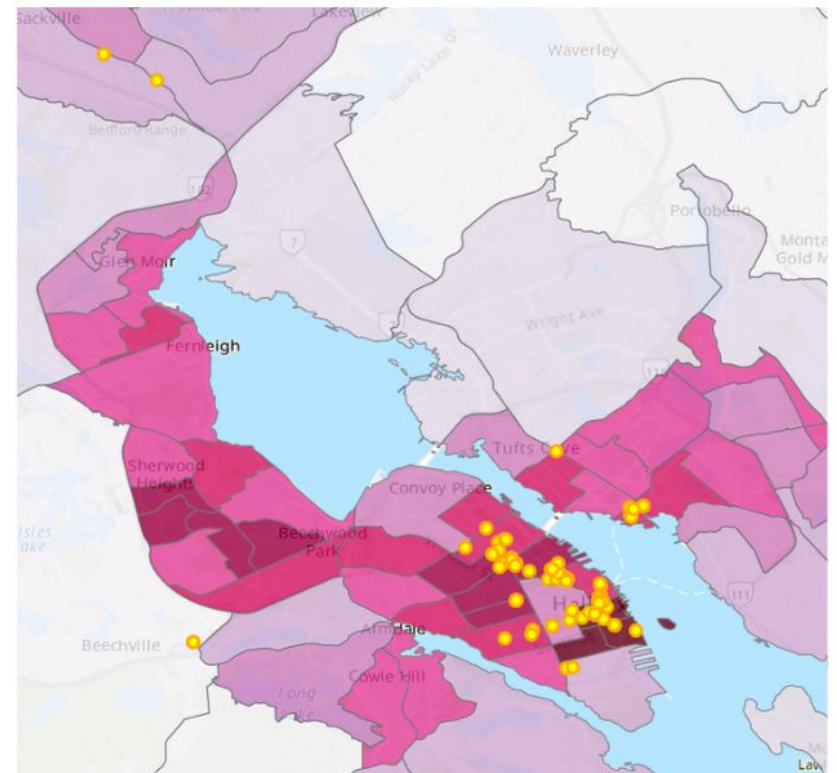
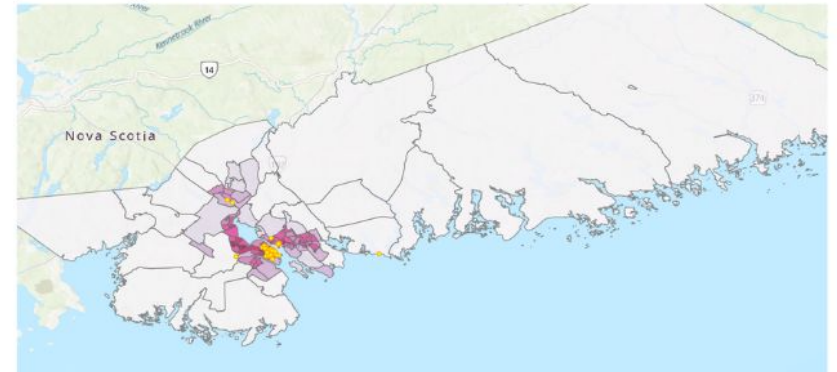
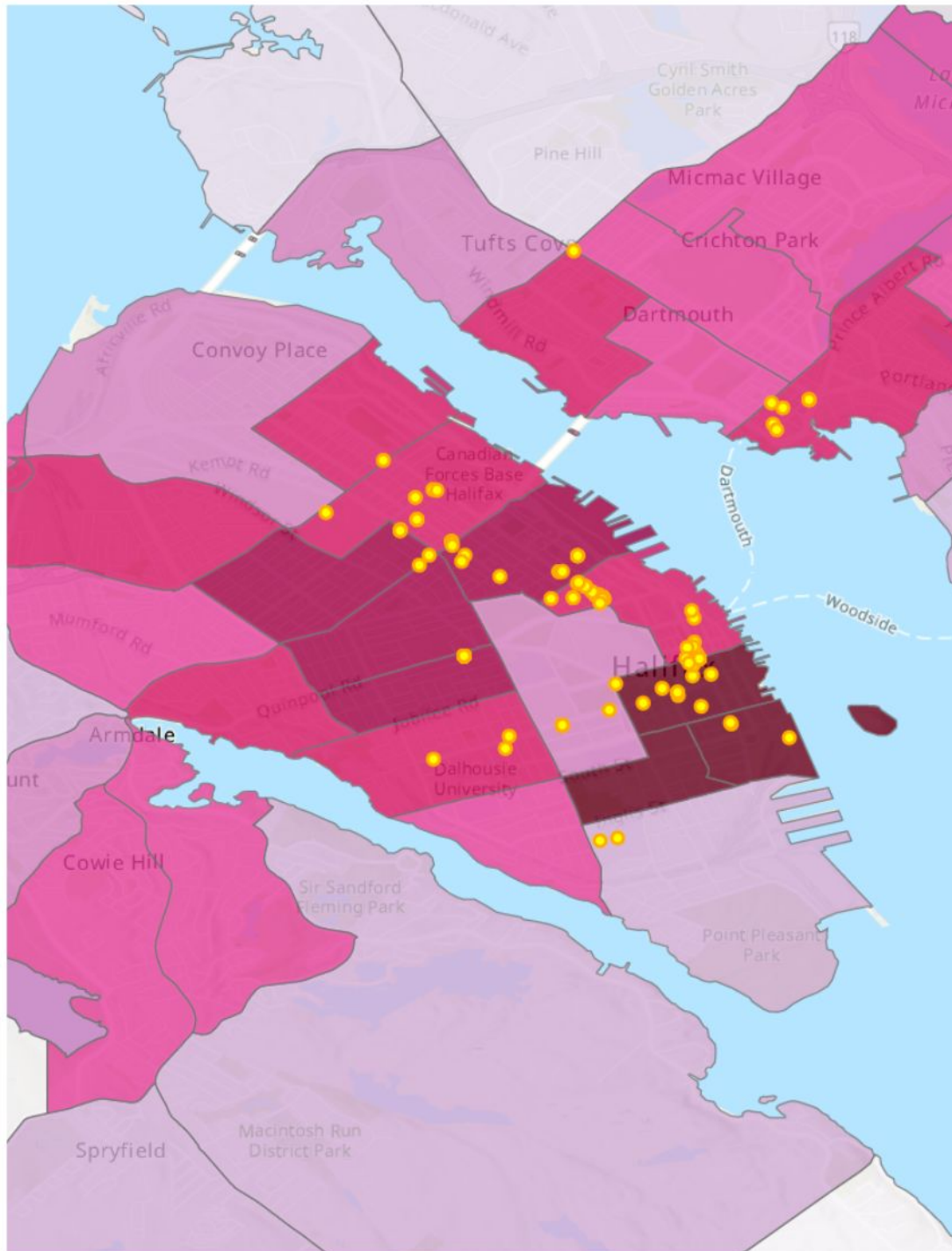
If no, why are you dissatisfied with the queer spaces in the HRM?

Do you have any suggestions for how to improve queer-inclusivity in the HRM?

Submit

APPENDIX F: MAP OF QUEER-INCLUSIVE SPACES

Queer Inclusive Spaces Relative to Population Density in Halifax Regional Municipality



● Queer Inclusive Spaces

2021 Census Tract Population Density

