



Committee of the Whole

Meeting Date: November 7, 2023

Submitted by: Cara A. Finn, Director of Economic Development

Subject: CGLCC – Rainbow Registered Program

BACKGROUND:

[CGLCC](#), Canada's 2SLGBTQI+ Chamber of Commerce, is the only chamber of commerce uniting and advocating for the over 100,000 2SLGBTQI+ owned and operated businesses in Canada. This group generates over \$22 billion in economic activity and employs over 435,000 Canadians. The impact of CGLCC on the economy is significant, but there are still barriers to accessing resources and partnerships to make Canada's economy more inclusive. The goal of CGLCC is to '*Diversify Canadian Business, One Connection at a Time*'.

The [Rainbow Registered Program](#), established by CGLCC, is a Canadian initiative that certifies organizations, businesses, and local governments as 2SLGBTQI+ friendly. This program aims to ensure that LGBT+ customers and employees feel welcome, respected, and included. Over the past few years, this accreditation has gained traction with Ontario-based tourism organizations and local governments. As of now, almost 300 organizations from across Canada have joined, demonstrating their commitment to inclusivity and acceptance.

ANALYSIS:

The Rainbow Registered Program helps businesses, organizations and communities certify their status as LGBT+ friendly. Accredited members benefit from guidelines that provide information, advice and resources on ensuring that LGBT+ customers feel welcome and accepted, and will be able to demonstrate and market themselves as safe destinations for the LGBT+.

By becoming Rainbow Registered, Middlesex County would identify itself as an inclusive workplace and a community partner that supports 2SLGBTQI+ rights and inclusivity.

Registration with the Rainbow Registered Program holds specific significance for the Middlesex County Economic Development and Tourism Department, especially when approaching community organizations to promote similar registration. This registration would serve as an embodiment of leading by example. Promoting an inclusive environment is pivotal for tourism, as it appeals to a wider spectrum of tourists, especially the 2SLGBTQI+ community seeking safe and welcoming destinations.

The Department's advocacy for Rainbow Registration among local businesses, as the region's Destination Marketing Organization (DMO), underpins its dedication to fostering an inclusive environment. Having the County itself obtain this registration sends a message of support and aligns with the core strategic priorities of Middlesex County.




Nationally, Canada is steering towards more 2SLGBTQI+ inclusive spaces. By aligning with the Rainbow Registered initiative, Middlesex County positions itself as a leader, emphasizing the strategic importance of inclusivity.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

The cost of registration for organizations with 101+ employees is \$525/year for a three-year tenure, alongside a one-time sign-up fee of \$274. The Economic Development & Tourism Budget can accommodate this expense.

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC FOCUS:

This report aligns with the following Strategic Focus, Goals, or Objectives:

Strategic Focus	Goals	Objectives
Cultivating Community Vitality 	Advance a diverse, healthy, and engaged community across Middlesex County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote and support community wellness • Innovate social and community services • Attract, retain, and engage youth in our community
Strengthening Our Economy 	Encourage a diverse and robust economic base throughout the county	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create an environment that enables the attraction and retention of businesses, talent, and investments • Attract visitors to Middlesex County • Support the development and prosperity of downtown core areas in Middlesex County
Promoting Service Excellence 	Innovate and transform municipal service delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage, educate and inform residents, businesses, and visitors of county services and community activities • Collaborate with strategic partners to leverage available resources and opportunities

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the CGLCC – Rainbow Registered Program Report be received for information;
 AND THAT staff be directed to register Middlesex County in the CGLCC – Rainbow Registered Program.