



ERA Architects Inc.  
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Toronto ON, M4Y 2G1

MM14.8.1

Toronto City Council  
100 Queen Street West  
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2  
councilmeeting@toronto.ca

January 28, 2020

Dear Mayor Tory and members of Council,

**RE: MM14.8 Protecting LGBTQ2S+ Small Businesses and Cultural Space**

I am writing to express my support for Member Motion 14.8 by Kristyn Wong-Tam (Protecting LGBTQ2S+ Small Businesses and Cultural Space) and to urge Council to support the recommendations outlined in the Motion.

Last November, ERA Architects was approached by stakeholders concerned about the potential closure of Glad Day Bookshop, located at 499 Church Street in the Church-Wellesley Village. Founded in 1970, Glad Day is the oldest surviving LGBTQ bookstore in the world, and remains one of the oldest independent bookstores in Toronto, in addition to operating as a bar, restaurant, café and event space. Like many small businesses, Glad Day is struggling to stay afloat in the City's climate of high commercial rents.

As a friend and supporter of Glad Day and the Church-Wellesley Village, ERA agreed to review various local and international policy approaches for sustaining small business which provide broader social and community benefits. Through this study we found several examples of public policy approaches to providing financial relief through tax incentives, grants, and other measures, such as the Legacy Business initiative which has been rolled out in San Francisco and is under consideration in other jurisdictions, such as Seattle.

In San Francisco, Legacy Businesses are described as businesses that “achieve a longevity of 40 years or more, possess distinctive architecture or interior design, and/or contribute to a sense of history in the surrounding neighbourhood” (<https://sfosb.org/legacy-business>). As an iconic and longstanding institution in Toronto's Church-Wellesley Village, Glad Day clearly fits within this definition.

ERA also reached out to Ward 13 Councillor Kristyn Wong-Tam, who kindly agreed to meet with Glad Day stakeholders and representatives from my office to discuss the challenges facing Glad Day and the Church-Wellesley Village, more broadly. At this meeting, ideas were exchanged and Councillor Wong-Tam undertook to consult with City staff to explore potential tools available to the City to protect vulnerable but culturally significant businesses like Glad Day. So, I was excited to see this motion brought forward to Council and I thank Councillor Wong-Tam for her effort and support in bringing attention to this important issue.



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Glad Day contributes to the vitality and sense of community in the Church-Wellesley Village, in addition to being a tourist destination that draws visitors from around the world. It would be a significant loss to Toronto if it were to close. I wholeheartedly support this Motion and hope that the recommendations contained therein can be successfully implemented.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael McClelland', written over a horizontal line.

Michael McClelland  
Principal, ERA Architects Inc.

c.c.

Peter Pantalone, Ray Lister

Alex McClelland

Terence Lowe

Mikiki

Catherine Nasmith