

# NEWS

## Gender-neutral signs to be added to family washrooms in Town-owned facilities

By Kathryn Boyle  
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An issue brought forward by Acton High School (AHS) students at a recent mock council meeting at the school had Halton Hills Council acting quickly at last week's council meeting.

In January, Council held a meeting at AHS to hear issues students had on local and national scales. One was the lack of gender-neutral washrooms in Halton Hills: a bathroom designated to people of any gender, age, sexual orientation, family status, disability and gender identity and expression.

Ward 1 Councillor Jon Hurst said as a result of the high school meeting, Council was able to understand what issues are important to a portion of their constituents— young people.

"I think we all agree this was a great learning experience, not only for the students of Acton High School, but also for us as council members," he said.

Following the presentation from the students about the issue, Ward 3 Councillor Moya Johnson asked if renaming existing family washrooms would suffice, and the students agreed.

"We quickly realized, especially staff, a quick

and inexpensive solution was at hand, requiring only a name change for each existing washroom," Hurst said. "The approval of this motion before us tonight will certainly make this request a reality."

Hurst's motion called for the re-designation of existing family washrooms in the Civic Centre and Town-owned Community Centres as Family/All Genders Washrooms. The designation in all other Town-owned facilities would be referred to staff for review and implementation if possible. All future Town facilities would include a Family/All Genders Washroom. Staff would report back to council only if there was a substantive operational or cost issue.

"I totally support this," Johnson said, who seconded the motion. "We hadn't been asked this question before and when it came up it was well, 'of course, we can do that.'"

Council passed the motion unanimously, and sent a copy of the resolution to the Acton High School, and to Halton Region, Burlington, Oakville and Milton.

Wards 3 & 4 Regional Councillor Jane Fogal said the students should be proud for their work in the matter.

"This resolution is a tangible result that they can take and say yes, we've certainly listened."

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