



# MOTION REGARDING SSMU BUILDING UNIVERSALLY ACCESSIBLE GENDER NEUTRAL WASHROOMS

Submitted for: 2024-12-05

<b>Submitted to:</b>	SSMU Legislative Council	<b>Document no.:</b>	LEG-PUB-MOT-2024-12-05-002
<b>Moved by:</b>	<i>Abe Berglas</i> VP University Affairs	<b>Current Status:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> FOR APPROVAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> APPROVED <input type="checkbox"/> POSTPONED <input type="checkbox"/> COMMITTED <input type="checkbox"/> NOT APPROVED
<b>Seconded by:</b>	<i>Zainah Islam</i> Arts and Science Representative		

## Issue

Every multi-stall washroom in the SSMU Building is currently gendered. There is not a gender neutral washroom on every floor of the SSMU building. This motion seeks to mandate SSMU to implement gender-neutral washrooms in the University Centre.

## Background and Rationale

According to section 4.5.3 and 4.5.6 in the Transgender Advocacy Plan<sup>1</sup>, SSMU looks to increase the number of gender neutral and accessible washrooms per building on campus, and to advocate for the existence of multi-stall universally accessible gender neutral washrooms. The presence of universally accessible gender neutral washrooms is necessary for the safety and well-being of Transgender, Gender-Nonconforming, and Queer students. Transgender and Gender-Nonconforming individuals are frequently targeted and harassed in both female and male designated washrooms. At the moment there are only three gender neutral washrooms in the SSMU building despite there being a set of washrooms per floor. As a result, many students are not aware of the location of the gender neutral washrooms, and since the current gender neutral washrooms are also the only single stall washrooms in the University Centre, they are often occupied.

<sup>1</sup> <https://ssmu.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Trans-Advocacy-Plan-2023-05-11-to-2028-05-01-1.pdf?x74610>



Additionally, despite the fact that students are allowed to use the washroom that best fits their needs and identity, there are no menstrual disposal boxes in the ‘men’s’ washroom stalls on the third floor, which excludes menstruating individuals from using these washrooms. Likewise, the only baby changing stations in the University Centre are in the ‘women’s’ washrooms and one of the single stall gender neutral washrooms. The presence of gender neutral washrooms would be beneficial to parents who are not comfortable accessing these washrooms.

Finally, this motion acts in alignment with McGill Building Design Standards<sup>2</sup> as stated in section 1.2.3, all washroom renovations must “ensure that there is at least one multi-stall gender-inclusive washroom per building, and at least one gender-inclusive washroom (either single-stall or multi-stall) per floor, on floors where there is a washroom”.

For the Legislative Council to sign the motion enables SSMU to follow through with the Transgender Advocacy Plan, and to act as an example for the rest of McGill University.

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### Alignment with Mission

SSMU's mission is "To represent and advance the diverse needs of McGill Undergraduate students by improving the quality and accessibility of education, providing outstanding services, and promoting social, cultural, and personal opportunities". By implementing sections 4.5.3 and 4.5.6 of the Transgender Advocacy Plan, SSMU ensures that the University Centre and by extension SSMU's services are accessible to a wider range of McGill Undergraduate students.

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### Consultations Completed

Gender and Sexuality Advocacy Committee, the Union for Gender Empowerment, VP Sustainability and Operations, VP Internal Affairs, Building Director, the SSMU Legal Team

This motion is in accordance with <https://drive.google.com/file/d/17HqVTIY3AevETCtS2z4aqWNeWZUR8o6w/view>

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.mcgill.ca/buildings/files/buildings/washrooms.pdf>



## Risk Factors and Resource Implications

Renovations will need to be made to the washrooms in order to convert them to Universally Accessible Gender Neutral washrooms.

The changes would likely include:

- Menstrual product disposal boxes in all stalls
- Privacy screens for urinals
- Updated signs depicting (i) accessibility of washroom, (ii) presence of urinals, (iii) presence of baby changing station
- Universally Accessible floor to ceiling privacy design
- Universally Accessible washrooms similar to McGill University's Universally Accessible washroom design. Ex. The Universally Accessible Washroom at Burnside

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## Sustainability Considerations

By passing this motion, future Transgender, Gender-Nonconforming, disabled, and Queer students will be protected and accommodated. Additionally, the updated gender neutral washrooms will improve access to facilities for parents. This motion is a concrete way for SSMU to acknowledge and accommodate the diverse student body of McGill.

Additionally, the minor changes necessary to create universally accessible gender neutral washrooms will increase the lifespan of the physical washrooms, reducing the need for major renovations.

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## Impact of Decision and Next Steps

Phase 1:

The Gender and Sexuality Commissioner will work with the Operations Department and the Building and Operations Management Committee, and the Union for Gender Empowerment to determine what changes are mandated by McGill or the City of Montreal to convert the SSMU washrooms to universally accessible gender neutral washrooms.

Phase 2:

The Gender and Sexuality Commissioner will work with the Operations Department and the Building and Operations Management Committee to implement the changes decided upon during Phase 1.

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**Motion or  
Resolution for  
Approval**

Be it resolved that the amendments to section 03-1 of Sustainability and Operations as outlined in Appendix A are approved.

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**Results of the  
Vote**

In favour	(18)
Opposed	(5)
Abstain	(1)

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APPROVED



## Appendix A : Relevant Appendix

### **Context:**

Internal Regulations of Sustainability and Operations-03: Sustainability<sup>3</sup>

Part I: Accessibility:

#### 1. Accessibility of Physical Spaces

The Vice-President (Sustainability and Operations) shall be responsible for overseeing, maintaining, and updating the accessibility of physical spaces managed by the Society. The Building and Operations Committee, the General Manager, the Accessibility Coordinator, and the Building Director are responsible for providing regular consultations on the accessibility and continued sustainability of SSMU-run spaces.

### **Amendment:**

Universally Accessible Gender Neutral Washrooms

There may be at most one designated “men’s washroom” and one designated “women’s washroom” in any building operated by SSMU.

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<sup>3</sup><https://ssmu.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/Internal-Regulations-of-Sustainability-and-Operations-2024-04-11.pdf?x74610>