

AGENDA

Committee on Equity, Diversity & Inclusion April 9, 2025 at 4:30 PM



Lansing City Hall, City Council Conference Room
124 W. Michigan Avenue, 10th Floor

To provide input or ask questions on any item that is listed on the agenda, members of the public may contact the City Council at city.council@lansingmi.gov or (517) 483-4177 prior to the meeting. To view the meeting live and participate in virtual public comment: <https://www.lansingmi.gov/1212/Council-Committee-Meetings>

Council Member Jackson, Chairperson
Council Member Spadafore, Vice Chairperson
Council Member Carter, Member

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Roll Call**
3. **Minutes**
 - A. March 12, 2025
4. **Public Comment on Agenda Items (Up to 3 Minutes)**
5. **Discussion/Action:**
 - B. ORDINANCE - Repeal Section 684.04 Restroom Use
 - C. DISCUSSION -Public Comment at Meetings
6. **Other**
7. **Adjourn**

Persons with disabilities who need an accommodation to fully participate in these meetings should contact the City Council Office at 517-483-4177 (TTY 711) 24 hour notice may be needed for certain accommodations. An attempt will be made to grant all reasonable accommodation requests.



Minutes
Committee on Equity, Diversity & Inclusion
Wednesday, March 12, 2025 @ 4:30 p.m.
City Council Conference Room

CALL TO ORDER

Council Member Jackson called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

PRESENT

Council Member Jackson, Chair
Council Member Spadafore, Vice-Chair
Council Member Carter, Member

OTHERS PRESENT

Sherie Boak, Council Office Manager
Matt Staples, OCA

MINUTES

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER CARTER TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM FEBRUARY 12, 2025, AS PRESENTED. MOTION CARRIED 3-0.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment.

DISCUSSION/ACTION

DISCUSSION – Ordinance Amendment/Repeal Chapter 684 Section 684.04

Council Member Jackson noted this is a follow up discussion from the last meeting, to consider as an amendment or repeal. He then read the 684.04 into the record, noting this is a crime if you enter a restroom of the opposite sex. It was brought to Committee attention, and at the last meeting it was asked for options. In the packet today is a draft ordinance to repeal, so the Committee can discuss repealing, amending or doing nothing. Council Member Jackson noted his interest in considering repealing all together without replacement. He cited examples of action that could be grounds to be criminally charged or removed from the building. He supported that anyone coming in to the building should be comfortable with their own bodies and own skin.

Council Member Spadafore stated he had no problem with the rationale, but would be interested in what the County has in their experience with this. This is a good attempt, without looking at other sources of guidance, but it is a conversation with merit for comparison to see other facilities in the County and East Lansing. Also to look at the way to write affirmative language.

Council Member Jackson inquired into what could be affirmative instead of stigmatize, noting he is open to comparing and contrasting. The sooner off the books better, but what is a couple more weeks.

Council Member Spadafore noted in 2019 Ingham County adopted an gender inclusive bathroom policy, looking at that might be a more means to be more inclusive.

Council Member Carter concurred with moving forward, but was also interested in doing the due diligence and doing comparisons across the board.

Council Member Jackson recalled discussions on council with discussions on having a “family bathroom” in the building.

Mr. Staples stated the reason OCA recommended the repeal compared to anything else is because the 684.04 is a criminal prohibition against anyone using a restroom in the City, public or private, that has a sign indicating is for use of opposite sex. OCA looked at it, no way to make inclusive without repealing the criminal aspect. This is just part of the criminal code, and best way to do that is to repeal, then there is no criminal position on using the opposite sex bathroom.

Council Member Spadafore stated that after hearing the reasoning from OCA, he has no problem repealing now.

Council Member Jackson asked if the Committee is interested in exploring something inclusive like the County did. Council Member Spadafore stated that would be another aspect of the law, so his earlier statement is a separate track. Council Member Jackson noted it is the Mayor’s and Councils role to look at this.

Council Member Jackson noted this will then be introduced March 24th with setting the hearing for April 7th.

Council Member Jackson noted a policy falls into the administration. Council Member Spadafore asked OCA to look into the Ingham County policy and see if there is something the City of Lansing can do in an ordinance. Mr. Staples

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER SPADAFORE TO INTRODUCE AND SET THE PUBLIC HEARING FOR APRIL 7TH, 2025 FOR REPEALING CHAPTER 684, SECTION 684.04.
MOTION CARRIED 3-0.

Other

Council Member Jackson asked about dropping the time limit from 4 hours to participate remotely. Ms. Boak stated she would speak to the Clerk’s office on the Charter Commission sign up and to see if there were any interested parties that missed the timeline.

Adjourn

Adjourned at 4:48 p.m.
Submitted, Sherrie Boak
Recording Secretary, Lansing City Council
Approved by the Committee on April 9, 2025

April 4, 2025

Hello Lansing City Councilors,

My name is Jason Sherman-Brown and I live in Lansing. I identify as LGBTQ+.

I am writing to you today about the importance of repealing ordinance 684.04.

Repealing this ordinance is important to me because It is our duty to accommodate all the diverse people in our community.

Thank you for your consideration.

Jason Sherman-Brown

April 4, 2025

Hello Lansing City Councilors,

My name is Melina Brann and I live in Lansing. I identify as LGBTQ+.

I am writing to you today about the importance of repealing ordinance 684.04.

Repealing this ordinance is important to me because Gender affirming options saves lives

Thank you for your consideration.

Melina Brann

April 4, 2025

Hello Lansing City Councilors,

My name is Tai Heitzeg and I live in Lansing. I identify as Trans.

I am writing to you today about the importance of repealing ordinance 684.04.

Repealing this ordinance is important to me because I work for this city, I live in this city, I love and serve this city because this city has given me opportunities I would not be given in less accepting places. This law gives anyone in Lansing the opportunity to threaten me with the police simply for using the bathroom, any inappropriate behavior I could get up to in the bathroom is already against the law. This law helps no one and hurts people like me, please repeal it.

Thank you for your consideration.

Tai Heitzeg

April 4, 2025

Hello Lansing City Councilors,

My name is Alex Perez and I live in Lansing. I identify as LGBTQ+.

I am writing to you today about the importance of repealing ordinance 684.04.

Repealing this ordinance is important to me because It would be showing growth and acceptance within our city

Thank you for your consideration.

Alex Perez

April 4, 2025

Hello Lansing City Councilors,

My name is Alyssa Turcsak and I live in Lansing. I identify as Queer,.

I am writing to you today about the importance of repealing ordinance 684.04.

Repealing this ordinance is important to me because Accessible government is something we all deserve. When our trans and gender-expansive neighbors can't show up to city hall because there isn't a restroom for them to use, it feels like we could do better. And I know we will because we're Lansing.

Thank you for your consideration.

Alyssa Turcsak

April 4, 2025

Hello Lansing City Councilors,

My name is Carla Ahlschwede and I live in Lansing. I identify as Queer, Ally.

I am writing to you today about the importance of repealing ordinance 684.04.

Repealing this ordinance is important to me because We all need and deserve safe places to do essential human things... and we need public toilets to protect public health. Thank you to the council for working to enable basic human needs in a political environment that is hostile to human existence.

Thank you for your consideration.

Carla Ahlschwede

April 4, 2025

Hello Lansing City Councilors,

My name is Colton Hughes and I live in Lansing. I identify as LGBTQ+.

I am writing to you today about the importance of repealing ordinance 684.04.

Repealing this ordinance is important to me because trans people in bathrooms is a non issue. People need to mind their business while doing their business.

Thank you for your consideration.

Colton Hughes

April 4, 2025

Hello Lansing City Councilors,

My name is Corey Rivera and I live in Lansing. I identify as Queer.

I am writing to you today about the importance of repealing ordinance 684.04.

Repealing this ordinance is important to me because There's nothing protective about gendered bathrooms- signs only stop people who care about rules. Additionally, a lot of people have health issues regarding bathrooms or care for people of the opposite gender who need help. Deciding some bathrooms are off limits causes traffic problems. Also, there's the problem of turning bathrooms into hostile places.

Thank you for your consideration.

Corey Rivera

April 4, 2025

Hello Lansing City Councilors,

My name is Emery and I live in Lansing. I identify as LGBTQ+, Queer, Trans.

I am writing to you today about the importance of repealing ordinance 684.04.

Repealing this ordinance is important to me because It is important to take direct action to reduce harms against the trans community, in addition to expressing various forms of support like flying a pride flag during pride month.

Also, gender and sex are so much more complicated than bathroom signage can comprehend. This bathroom entry fearmongering is outdated and we should spend our time and legislative energy on meaningful things.

Thank you for your consideration.

Emery

April 4, 2025

Hello Lansing City Councilors,

My name is Elizabeth Vickers and I live in Lansing. I identify as decline to answer.

I am writing to you today about the importance of repealing ordinance 684.04.

Repealing this ordinance is important to me because Repealing this law protects people who are dear to me. This law is rooted in fear and doesn't make any sense.

Thank you for your consideration.

Elizabeth Vickers

April 4, 2025

Hello Lansing City Councilors,

My name is Frankie Shingleton and I live in Lansing. I identify as LGBTQ+, Queer, Trans.

I am writing to you today about the importance of repealing ordinance 684.04.

Repealing this ordinance is important to me because I am someone who is very much a man who would be forced into women's restrooms and don't wish to make myself or women feel unsafe by being in the wrong restroom.

Thank you for your consideration.

Frankie Shingleton

Resolution #2024-037

By the Committee on City Operations
Resolved by the City Council of the City of Lansing

WHEREAS, pursuant to Rule 41 of the Lansing City Council Rules, a proposed rule revision shall be placed on the Council Agenda for Council receipt and review, but “shall not be considered for adoption sooner than the next council meeting;”

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the City Council hereby amends the City Council Rules to add Rule 48:

LANSING CITY COUNCIL RULES

Rule 48. Electronic Participation in Public Comment at Meetings of Council, Committees. Electronic participation by members of the public, for the purpose of making public comment on legislative matters (as that term is defined above), is permitted at Meetings of City Council, Committee of the Whole, and all other Committees of City Council.

To register to speak electronically on legislative matters at a regularly scheduled or special meeting of the City Council or Committee of the Whole, a member of the public may send a request to the City Clerk no later than four (4) hours prior to the meeting in a form and manner determined by the City Clerk. Prior to the meeting, the City Clerk will email the member of the public instructions to participate.

City Council office staff will post, with agendas of all other Committees of City Council, instructions on how members of the public may attend and speak electronically on legislative matters.

The City Clerk will establish and maintain procedures and protocols for electronic participants, consistent with this rule and technologies being utilized for electronic participation. The procedures and protocols will be available for viewing by any person wishing to register for electronic participation.

The Presiding Officer of City Council, Committee of the Whole, or any other Committee of City Council may reduce the amount of time allowed for each speaker if he or she has determined that the number of registered speakers is so numerous that the meeting cannot be timely concluded without a reduction in the time allocated for each speaker.

The Rules of Decorum for Meetings, at Rule 18, apply to members of the public participating electronically. The Presiding Officer reserves the right to mute and end the comment of anyone who violates this rule.