

OutRights®

THE CALGARY BLUEPRINT



Share Knowledge • Create Action • Raise Awareness
Unify human rights for all.



OutRights

This document is dedicated to those who have, through their convictions and undeniable spirits have been unafraid to stand up for who they are and what they believe in. It is indeed, the Delwin Vriends, and the Darren Lunds, and Matthew Sheppards, in our world whose shoulders we all stand upon. It is to them and to the countless others whose lives have been profoundly affected by discrimination and hatred that we dedicate the Calgary BluePrint for Action.

THE CALGARY BLUEPRINT FOR ACTION

“Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world” - Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948

Introduction

On April 2 and 3, 2007, an unprecedented and historical conference on the human rights facing GLBT communities occurred in Calgary, Alberta. The 1st Annual OutRights Conference brought together over 350 delegates from diverse spectrums of influence including community leaders, politicians, businesspersons, activists from GLBT communities and their allies.

OutRights inspired many of us to move ourselves towards greater vigilance and equality in our respective communities, and yet there remains a great deal of work to be done.

While some areas have realized greater freedom and justice for GLBT individuals and communities, many others, particularly those in smaller urban and rural centres still face threats to their inherent rights to human dignity, justice and equality.

In the pages that follow, we outline a broad framework –*The Calgary BluePrint for Action*—which provides strategies we can use to create stronger, healthier and more vibrant communities, which value and embrace the human dignity of LGBT persons. We hope it will engage our allies as well as each other.

The Calgary BluePrint is designed to be broad enough to apply to jurisdictions of any size, yet we are confident that the outcome statements are specific enough to create lasting social change, if they are applied keeping respect for the key differences in many jurisdictions in North America.

In addition, we hope the Calgary BluePrint will be used as an advocacy tool to call upon leaders in the community to create lasting social change. In this regard, please take note of our call to action, which implores the Alberta government to once and for all, explicitly protect GLBT persons from discrimination and hatred by enumerating sexual orientation as a prohibited ground of discrimination under Alberta human rights legislation.

Mapping the BluePrint—Building Foundations

Using the principles of community-based research, a wide consultation process was used before, during, and after the 1st Annual OutRights Conference to determine the wide-breadth of issues facing LGBT persons in various communities.

Prior to the conference an online blog was set-up encouraging users to share their stories of inclusion and exclusion regarding GLBT issues. During the conference short, tape recorded interviews were conducted with over 40 conference participants. The *Listening Posts*, alongside the blog entries, provided insight into the priority issues facing conference participants. Summarized here they include:

- Explicit legal protection and equality for GLBT persons.
- Protection against and strategies to reduce violence against GLBT persons.
- Acknowledgement of personal responsibility from GLBT populations to assume control of their own equality.

A closed-session meeting was also held during OutRights with a diverse group of individuals from various sectors where it was determined that any potential BluePrint for Action would indeed require both general and specific attention to language, inclusivity, and the tremendous value of GLBT communities to any jurisdiction.

It is our hope that in the pages that follow we have been able to incorporate the voices which came through the consultation process, paying respect to the myriad ways in which inequalities of sexual orientation intersect with ethnic background, gender, socio-economic status, ability, age, marital status, family of origin, religious affiliation and so on.

Call to Action

As we enter the 21st century it is inexcusable that some jurisdictions across North America do not include sexual orientation as grounds for protection under human rights and anti-discrimination codes.

Violence against GLBT persons is prevalent in many communities and the state become complicit when there are no explicit anti-discrimination laws in place providing protection on the grounds of sexual orientation.

In Canada, in all provinces, human rights legislation prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation in the work place, in the provision of or access to, services readily available to the public. This is also the case for advertisements and broadcasting and in membership in professional organizations and unions.

YET:

In jurisdictions, such as Alberta, anti-discrimination laws based on sexual orientation ARE NOT explicitly written into the *Human Rights Citizenship and Multiculturalism Act* unlike other prohibited grounds of discrimination such as race, religion or sex.

The expressive value of the Alberta Government's failure to treat sexual orientation like other prohibited grounds of discrimination under the Act is detrimental both to the GLBT community and equality seeking groups generally.

The lack of its explicit inclusion in the Act functions as a tacit form of exclusion and constitutes an unacceptable, hierarchical approach to human rights on the part of the Alberta government.

We therefore demand legislative action to amend Alberta's *Human Rights, Citizenship and Multiculturalism Act* such that it provide for explicit protection against discrimination based on sexual orientation.

We demand this amendment be made as follows in a number of sections of the act. In the area of employment discrimination, for example:

Discrimination re employment practices

7(1) No employer shall

(a) Refuse to employ or refuse to continue to employ any person,

or

(b) Discriminate against any person with regard to employment or any term or condition of employment, because of the race, religious beliefs, colour, gender, sexual orientation, physical disability, mental disability, age, ancestry, place of origin, marital status, source of income or family status of that person or of any other person.

RSA 1980 cI-2 s7;1985 c33 ss2,3;1988 cE-10.2 s125;1990 c23 s4;1996 c25 s9.

The Calgary BluePrint for Action

Vision: All communities valuing and embracing GLBT peoples

In addition to the consultation processes developed with participants to OutRights, we have further adopted a theoretical perspective to creating lasting social change for members of GLBT communities.

The Theory of Change¹ has three main components, which address social change at three distinct levels of society. On the first level, *IMPACT* changes are those which occur at an individual level. Here we see outcomes, as a result of the strategies, programs or services of a community initiative for change. Impact outcomes are the cornerstone of community change.

On the second level, *INFLUENCE* changes occur at more institutional levels where outcomes are seen to occur in partnerships, service practices, policies, and business practices. Closely related to Influence changes are *LEVERAGE* changes which have focused outcomes on private and public funding to facilitate this change. Often times this is the most difficult change to enact.

In the pages that follow, we outline a map of change in the areas where we see the most need for positive outcomes. We understand that it may not cover every area, but using the Theory of Change as a guiding framework, we are certain that it can be applicable to a variety of cases and situations for GLBT communities around North America.

IMPACT: Changes on an Individual level

Outcome Area	Outcome Statements
Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Increased knowledge among general public of the issues facing GLBT persons -Increased knowledge of the wide spectrum of diversity/ intersecting inequalities including race, gender,
Attitudes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Increased positive view among general public towards GLBT persons -Increased feeling of safety among GLBT persons -Increased belief among GLBT youth of a positive outlook for the future Increased desire to participate in change for GLBT communities
Behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Increased participation in GLBT community capacity building -Increased informed decision making around issues affecting GLBT communities, including health
Economic Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Decreased incidences of poverty -Decreased unemployment -Increased opportunities to participate in meaningful work processes
Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Decrease in violent crimes against GLBT -Increase in reporting of violent crimes
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Reduction in the incidence of HIV/AIDS other STIs, Breast Cancer -Reduction in the number of suicides -Increased self-esteem



INFLUENCE:

Outcome Area	Outcomes
Visibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Local media accurately portray messages of media around GLBT communities -Increased fair coverage of GLBT events, issues -Public or community raises pertinent issues to a higher priority
Changes in Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Strategic partners jointly implement actions toward mutually agreeable goals -Partnerships become increasingly strategic -Strategic partners deepen their collaborative relationships -Partnership shares a plan of action -Partners increase sharing of relevant data -Partners increase formal interagency agreements and/or collaborative protocols
Policies (explicitly state Sexual Orientation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Specific policies of interest to GLBT communities change (marriage, anti-discrimination, violence) -Increase in policy statements that support mutually agreed upon goals -Policymakers adopt common language in policies and regulations -Policymakers draft, adopt, maintain, and fund legislation that reflect community priorities
Business practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Key businesses are newly available to the community -Businesses/service employees in community improve day-to-day interactions with diverse customers -Businesses change recruiting practices to attract a more diverse pool of qualified individuals -Businesses change practices (hours, advertising, product selection) to meet community preferences -
community norms	
Political Will	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Political leaders express increased awareness, and willingness to take action of issues facing GLBT communities -Legislators co-sponsor bills that support community initiatives -
Public Will	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Community is motivated to take action on an issue -Community has decreased tolerance towards anti-gay hatred -Community increases shared definition of specific problems or concerns (anti-gay violence, marriage) -Community members change attitudes and/or beliefs towards an issue

LEVERAGE:

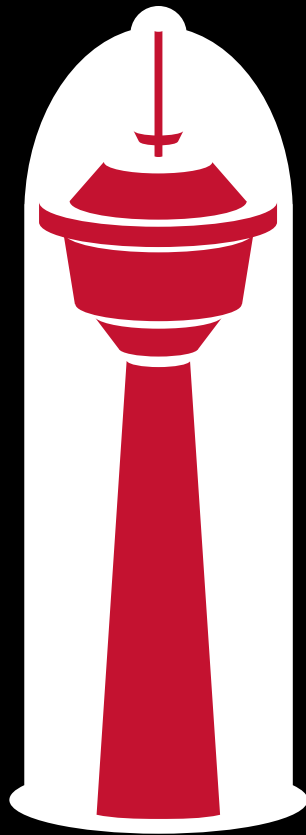
Outcome Area	Outcomes
Consultation	-GLBT persons and groups are routinely consulted and surveyed on issues of civic interest including inclusion, violence, and diversity
Public funds	-New Public funds allocated towards GLBT community issues -Public funds redistributed toward mutually agreeable community goals and priorities -New funding methods increase monetary resources -Public funding processes (RFPs, selection criteria) change to include priorities of GLBT communities -Public agencies express active/transparent involvement in funding process
Philanthropy	-Increased funding available for community practices -Foundation funding practices and methods change to reflect the needs of the community -Foundations previously uninvolved in community begin to provide funding for community programs, agencies and initiatives
Resources available to our communities	-New physical resources are available (meeting spaces, safe environments) -New transportation resources are available to community -New and inclusive service resources available
Private investment	-Investments in commercial development are increased -Private investments towards GLBT issues occur -Increased private donations for public housing

Conclusion

The Calgary BluePrint is the first of its kind to be developed in Western Canada. The BluePrint itself, articulates the needs of GLBT communities and their allies. Using a theoretical framework that could be adapted to specific locales, the BluePrint outlines broad suggestions for creating lasting social change in your community.

We believe it is critically important to tailor outcomes and activities where we leverage our strengths, create influence and impact in broader communities. If we can create positive social change in our communities, each of us benefits. The BluePrint can be used as part of a larger inclusion strategy, or as a standalone advocacy document. We encourage you to develop your own Call for Action that addresses the needs in your community.

On behalf of the organizing committee of the OutRights Conference we hope that you will continue to stand up and speak out for your human rights.



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