

## Gay village will make us feel welcome

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Re: Creating a **gay village** is self-ghettoization, Aug. 6.

Perhaps letter-writer Peter Nielson should ask representatives of other communities in Ottawa that have chosen "ghettoization" why they desire this form of segregation? Little Italy comes to mind. Or Chinatown?

The **gay village** designation is an attempt to create an environment where an historically repressed culture can flourish. Where businesses with similar interests can work together with our brothers and sisters and the city to build a community that will support and celebrate gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered issues all year long, rather than for a single week each summer.

Let us not forget that every day is heterosexual day and every neighbourhood and business is assumed to be straight-oriented or owned unless otherwise specified. You are the majority, and you are everywhere. We just want our own tiny slice of what straight people take for granted on a daily basis.

Unless you've lived in the closet, you can't truly understand the feeling of having a space where you're free to be who you are, without fear of reprisal. Having a community where you know you're welcome and safe is empowering -- something worth celebrating.

Matthew Ellis,

Gatineau