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February 14, 2017

His Worship John Tory
Mayor, City of Toronto
100 Queen St. W.
City Hall, Second floor, West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Re: Gender Equity in the City Budget

Dear Sir:

We are writing to you today to express our deep concern for the lack of gender equity in the proposed 2017 City Budget. At the July 2016 Council meeting, a motion was adopted that mandates all 2017 budgetary processes and decisions be made through a Gender Equity Lens and we are highly disappointed that this did not occur. As a result, women in Toronto will continue to face systemic discrimination through gender-blind decision-making.

At its very core, a Gender Equity Lens acknowledges and analyses the underlying root causes of disparities that different groups of people face based on their social, cultural and economic identities.

It recognizes that both revenues and expenditures of City budgets impact women in particular ways and that these effects are compounded when gender intersects with other identities that can include Aboriginal identity, race, culture, creed, language, citizenship, amount and source of income, family status, dis/ability, sexual identity and orientation, age, geographic location in the City, among others. The goal of a Gender Equity Lens is to redress and remedy these systemic disparities through fair taxation and fair allocations of public resources.

Governments that use a Gender Equity Lens in both budgetary decisions and policy development make a strong commitment to collecting, understanding and publishing disaggregated data through an investment of time and resources. To fully understand this data, there must be robust ongoing engagement processes in place with diverse women who are impacted by budget and policy decisions that include design, implementation and evaluation processes. There are approximately 150 regions worldwide that conduct gender budgeting and we strongly encourage the City to look to international best practices that would make sense for Toronto.

The need for a Gender Equity Lens is imperative. The persistent, substantial and unacceptable wage gap between women and men in Toronto is 32%. In other words, on average women are making 68 cents to the average male dollar, a gap that widens when gender intersects with other social, cultural and economic identities. Women are generally the poorest members of a household, the poorest people in a neighbourhood, and the poorest citizens of a City. The recent confirmation that Toronto has the highest child poverty rate in Canada is really an indicator of our City's rate of poverty among mothers.

Custom research by the Neighbourhood Change Research Partnership (attached) indicates that in 311 census tracts, or 57% of our City, women's incomes are below average. Women's incomes are even less able to keep up

with rising costs for housing, food, transportation and other basic needs for themselves and their children. As a result, women are disproportionately reliant on City services including housing, transit, childcare and community programs to make ends meet.

Women who are escaping gender-based violence cite the lack of affordable, quality housing as the number one reason why they cannot leave abusive relationships. With women's shelters operating at 100% capacity, hundreds of women, their dependents and youth are left with no safe place to go. Proposed budget cuts to shelter staff and inadequate investments into affordable housing will exacerbate this.

Increased fees for services including transportation and lack of access to affordable childcare make it difficult, and in many cases, impossible, for women to access the job market. Women are twenty times more likely than men to cite childcare as a barrier to participating in the workforce, however, we know from other jurisdictions that when affordable childcare is in place and women can return to work, the economy grows and everyone benefits. Inadequate sustainable investments into childcare subsidies and cuts to transit services while increasing fares mean women will continue to struggle with these barriers to workforce participation.

This year's budget does not go far enough towards remedying the disparities that women in Toronto face, which leave women in unsafe and precarious positions. A true Gender Equity Lens, along with a City-wide Gender Equity Strategy to remedy policy decisions that compound budget disparities, will provide the City with the correct tools to understand and make decisions that will ultimately reduce, and potentially eliminate, systemic intersectional gender discrimination.

Therefore, we ask that the City:

1. Implement an Intersectional Gender Equity Lens in all City budget discussions, processes and decisions over the long term, including in the City's Long-Term Fiscal Plan, and for the development of an Intersectional Gender Equity Strategy;
2. Adequately resource the Office of Equity, Diversity and Human Rights to finalize the development of the Gender Equity toolkit currently in process and train City staff in how to implement it;
3. Collect and publish data disaggregated by gender, race, immigrant status and other variables;
4. Seek gender equity-informed partnerships with diverse women and women-serving organizations to understand impacts of budget and policy decisions in their lives; and
5. Rely on this quantitative and qualitative data to inform budgetary and policy decisions in an ongoing structural way.

Sincerely,

1. Silvia Samsa, Executive Director and Leila Sarangi, Community Programs Manager, Women's Habitat of Etobicoke

2. Abi Ajibolade, Executive Director, The Redwood | A safe haven for women and children fleeing abuse

3. Rupaleem Bhuyan, Associate Professor, University of Toronto and Lead Researcher, Migrant Mothers Project

4. Amanda Dale, Executive Director, Barbara Schlifer Clinic

5. Diane Dyson, Board Member, Federation of Metro Tenants' Associations

6. Rachel Epstein, Executive Director, Winchevsky Centre / United Jewish People's Order (Toronto)

7. Maureen Fair, Executive Director, West Neighbourhood House

8. Fatima Filippi, Executive Director, Rexdale Women's Centre
9. Russ Ford, Executive Director, LAMP Community Health Centre
10. Dr. Grace-Edward Galabuzi, Associate Professor, Ryerson University
11. Everton Gordon, Executive Director, Caribbean Africa Canadian Social Services (formerly the Jamaican Canadian Association)
12. Margaret Hancock, Executive Director, Family Services Toronto
13. Margaret C. Haynes, MSW, RSW , Executive Director, Homeward Family Shelter o/a Julliette's Place
14. Lubna Khalid, Coordinator Women Speak Out
15. Farrah Khan, Co-Chair, Provincial Roundtable on Violence Against Women
16. Wendy Komiotis, Executive Director, METRAC: Action on Violence
17. Tim Maguire, President, CUPE Local 79
18. Akio Maroon, Founder, Toronto Childcare Collective
19. Ana Marques, Manager of Finance, Abrigo Centre
20. Arlene McCalla, Nadine Chan, Lesley Ackrill, Executive Co-Directors, Interval House
21. Jean McDonald, Executive Director, Maggie's: Toronto Sex Workers Action Project
22. Heather McGregor, CEO, YWCA Toronto
23. E. Ann McRae, B.A., LL. B., Director of Legal Services, Rexdale Community Legal Clinic
24. Sean Meagher, Executive Director, Social Planning Toronto
25. Harmy Mendoza, Executive Director, WomanACT
26. Janet Mercer, Toronto Coalition for Better Childcare
27. Julius Mlynarski, Lawyer-Director, South Etobicoke Community Legal Services
28. Jeanne Françoise Mouè, Directrice Générale, La Maison
29. Patricia O'Connell, Executive Director, Sistering
30. Maureen O'Reilly, President, CUPE Local 4948
31. Emily Paradis, Senior Research Associate, Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work, University of Toronto
32. Huong Pham, Executive Director, Assaulted Women's Helpline
33. Marcie Ponte, Executive Director, Working Women Community Centre
34. Alana Powell, Michelle Jones and Munizah Salman, Co-Chairs, Ryerson Student Childcare Advocacy Association (RSCAA)
35. Enrique Robert, Executive Director, Birchmount Bluffs Neighbourhood Centre
36. Angela Robertson, Executive Director, Queen West-Central Toronto Community Health Centre
37. Maya Roy, Executive Director, Newcomer Women's Services Toronto
38. Gita Schwartz, Interim Executive Director, Elizabeth Fry Society
39. Bill Sinclair, Executive Director, St. Stephen's Community House
40. Lee Soda, Executive Director, Agincourt Community Services Association

41. Nadine Sookermany, Executive Director, Springtide Resources

42. John Stapleton, Open Policy Ontario

43. Sharlene Tygesen, Executive Director, Ernestine's Women's Shelter

44. Fatima Valentim, Director, Yorktown Shelter for Women

Cc:

Councillor Ainslie, Paul, Ward 43 Scarborough East

Councillor Augimeri, Maria, Ward 9 York Centre

Councillor Bailão, Ana, Ward 18 Davenport

Councillor Burnside, Jon, Ward 26 Don Valley West

Councillor Campbell, John, Ward 4 Etobicoke Centre

Councillor Carmichael Greb, Christin, Ward 16 Eglinton-Lawrence

Councillor Carroll, Shelley, Ward 33 Don Valley East

Councillor Colle, Josh, Ward 15 Eglinton-Lawrence

Councillor Crawford, Gary, Ward 36 Scarborough Southwest

Councillor Cressy, Joe, Ward 20 Trinity-Spadina

Councillor Crisanti, Vincent, Ward 1 Etobicoke North

Councillor Davis, Janet, Ward 31 Beaches-East York

Councillor De Baeremaeker, Glenn, Ward 38 Scarborough Centre

Councillor Di Ciano, Justin, Ward 5 Etobicoke-Lakeshore

Councillor Di Giorgio, Frank, Ward 12 York South-Weston

Councillor Doucette, Sarah, Ward 13 Parkdale-High Park

45. Francisco Vidal, Director of Services, Centre for Spanish Speaking People

46. Effie Vlachoyannacos, Lead, Engagement & Leadership, Maytree

47. Anna Victoria Wong, Executive Director, Chinese Family Services of Ontario

Councillor Filion, John, Ward 23 Willowdale

Councillor Fletcher, Paula, Ward 30 Toronto-Danforth

Councillor Ford, Michael, - Ward 2 Etobicoke North

Councillor Fragedakis, Mary, Ward 29 Toronto-Danforth

Councillor Grimes, Mark, Ward 6 Etobicoke-Lakeshore

Councillor Holland, Michelle, Ward 35 Scarborough Southwest

Councillor Holyday, Stephen, Ward 3 Etobicoke Centre

Councillor Karygiannis, Jim, Ward 39 Scarborough-Agincourt

Councillor Kelly, Norm, Ward 40 Scarborough-Agincourt

Councillor Layton, Mike, - Ward 19 Trinity-Spadina

Councillor Lee, Chin, Ward 41 Scarborough-Rouge River

Councillor Mammoliti, Giorgio, Ward 7 York West

Councillor Matlow, Josh, Ward 22 St. Paul's

Councillor McConnell, Pam, Ward 28 Toronto Centre-Rosedale

Councillor McMahon, Mary-Margaret, Ward 32
Beaches-East York

Councillor Mihevc, Joe, Ward 21 St. Paul's

Councillor Minnan-Wong, Denzil, Ward 34 Don
Valley East

Councillor Moeser, Ron, Ward 44 Scarborough East

Councillor Nunziata, Frances, Ward 11 York South-
Weston

Councillor Palacio, Cesar, Ward 17 Davenport

Councillor Pasternak, James, Ward 10 York Centre

Councillor Perks, Gord, Ward 14 Parkdale-High Park

Councillor Perruzza, Anthony, Ward 8 York West

Councillor Robinson, Jaye, Ward 25 Don Valley West

Councillor Shan, Neethan, Ward 42 Scarborough-
Rouge River

Councillor Shiner, David, Ward 24 Willowdale

Councillor Thompson, Michael, Ward 37
Scarborough Centre

Councillor Wong-Tam, Kristyn, Ward 27 Toronto
Centre-Rosedale

Chris Brillinger, Executive Director, Social
Development, Finance and Administration

Uzma Shakir, Director, Equity, Diversity and Human
Rights

Female Average Income, City of Toronto, 2012

