



# TORONTO WOMEN'S CITY ALLIANCE

c/o North York Women's Centre  
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Members of the Executive Committee:

The Toronto Women's City Alliance (TWCA) strongly urge City Council to maintain its leadership role on anti-discrimination and human rights issues and to clearly include all the existing grounds of anti-discrimination in the proposal to revise its Declaration of Anti-discrimination. These grounds are listed in the City's vision statement included in the report of the Task Force on Community Access and Equity (1999) and the Plan of Action for the Elimination of Racism and Discrimination (2003). Toronto City Council has made the following commitment:

*The City will create an environment of equality in the government and in the community for all people regardless of their race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, disability, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, same sex partnership, age, marital status, family status, immigrant status, receipt of public assistance, political affiliation, religious affiliation, level of literacy, language and/or socio-economic status.*

*The City of Toronto will implement positive changes in its workforce and communities to achieve access and equality of outcomes for all residents and to create a harmonious environment free from discrimination, harassment and hate.*

Toronto has been in a leadership role on human rights and anti-discrimination measures for many decades. In 1973, Toronto City Council was the first government in Canada to provide human rights protection on the basis of "sexual orientation." Council strengthened its commitment to anti-discrimination in 1984 when it adopted the recommendations of the Task Force on Contract Compliance and extended its anti-discrimination policies to all grant recipients, civic agencies and suppliers of goods and services. These are among the policies and practices that have led to diversity as strength in Toronto and a reason that Toronto is looked to for its diversity successes. Therefore, it is ironic that the staff report suggests that the City's anti-discrimination policy should "align" with



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legislation.

The City's commitment has not been limited to the civic workforce; its efforts have been intended for the community as a whole. It is also important for the City to continue to address economic development issues with respect to its diverse communities of women and men through the purchasing process and to continue to compile data on designated group ownership.

Once again, the TWCA urges the continuing inclusion of all the existing protections in the Declaration of Anti-Discrimination. All the grounds impact upon the constituencies of women with whom we engage. All research indicates that grounds of impact are complex and intersect to particularly disadvantage different groups of women and men.

Sincerely,

Lishai Peel

Coordinator, Toronto Women's City Alliance