

Submitted by Councillor Davis

CC51-8.2

TWCA Toronto Women's City Alliance
Making Equality Matter.

6th May, 2014

City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Dear Councillor,

I am writing on behalf of Toronto Women's City Alliance with regard to Council Agenda Item 2014.CC51.8 "Toronto Street Furniture Program - Agreement Modifications."

The Staff Report "Toronto Street Furniture Program – Agreement Modifications" (29th April 2014) notes that *The Coordinated Street Furniture Program* would deliver advertising on transit shelters and information pillars (p. 3).

Advertising on transit shelters are a significant safety issue for residents of Toronto, particularly for women. It is distressing that while the Guidelines For Creative Advertising Proposals states that creative ads should "not compromise public safety and security," most of the guidelines, when implemented on transit shelters, pose clear risks to public safety.

Guideline 1 states that "Full height and partial height translucent wrapping is permitted, providing TTC patrons and drivers are able to fully view each other." While it is certainly desirable that patrons and drivers be able to see each other, TTC drivers are typically above ground level, whereas those who may be potential attackers are at ground level and can be easily obscured by advertising. Furthermore, the risk to safety typically occurs during wait periods, not when the TTC vehicle is at the stop. Thus, this guideline does nothing to improve public safety at transit shelters.

65% of coverage on shelters is too much. Transit shelters should be *completely free of advertising and completely clear*. The design of transit shelters has differential implications for women and men in the City. In our experience, we have met women who described feeling unsafe travelling at night, and women with disabilities who are unable to see or hear anyone approaching the shelter. Some of these women have been attacked.

Transit shelters must be accessible and must have adequate lighting both *inside* and *adjacent to the shelter* (so that patrons can see those on the outside) with clear, unobstructed sightlines.

52% of women report feeling worried about safety when travelling at night (*Juristat Article December 1*, Statistics Canada Catalogue No. 85-002-X, 2011). 65% coverage or any amount of coverage could enable irreparable harm. These are not trivial issues and should be approached with all due care by City Council.

We urge City Council to be fully responsive to the safety needs of women and Toronto and remove advertising from transit shelters.

Sincerely,
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