



December 8, 2021

ATTN: Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Advisory Committee

RE: QS4.5 – Gender Equity Strategy

Dear Chair and Committee Members:

WomanACT is a policy and planning body that works collaboratively to end violence against women through community mobilization, coordination, research, policy, and education. We have done this work for the past 30 years. In recognition of the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women earlier this week, we would like to dedicate our submission to the 159 women and girls killed across Canada in 2021 to date.

We are writing today to request that the City extend the consultation period for its Intersectional Gender Equity Strategy to ensure meaningful consultation and to ensure a more diverse advisory membership is possible.

WomanACT was recently invited to serve on the Gender Equity Consultation Advisory Committee and we are pleased to have accepted this important role alongside other four representatives. We look forward to guiding the consultation process in support of a strong, evidence-informed Intersectional Gender Equity Strategy for Toronto.

As part of this Advisory Committee, WomanACT will provide expert review of consultation materials, carry out a community consultation with 20 residents, and contribute to the analysis and development of recommendations to the Strategy. However, the period to conduct this work is limited to December 2021 to March 2022. **This is simply not enough time to dedicate to such a critical activity for the future of our city. We need an extension to allow for robust data collection. Similarly, we believe the advisory could be strengthened by increasing the number of members, which will ensure additional expert insights and contributions.**

We are asking the Committee to consider extending its current consultation timelines by at least one month, from March 2022 to April 2022. This will allow us to refine our consultation tools in line with best practices; enhance our outreach strategy to reach diverse women across Toronto; and engage a wider group of sector leaders who are currently missing from these discussions. A minimum two-month extension is especially necessary as two of the consultation months – December and January – are busy times of the year, where both organizations and individuals have limited availability.



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We recognize and appreciate the City's leadership and commitment to gender equity and working across sectors to achieve it. To reflect this commitment further, let's ensure the consultation process is designed to best capture the voices of Toronto's women and gender-diverse people. Taking the time to do this right will only strengthen gender equity going forward.

Sincerely,

Harmy Mendoza

Executive Director, WomanACT