

# **Survey of Candidates for Mayor and Council on Women's Issues**

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## ***Results and Analysis***

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## *Results and Analysis*

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## ABOUT THE SURVEY

### Why a Survey on Women's Issues?

The Toronto Women's City Alliance (TWCA) knows that access to city programs and services—like quality childcare and affordable housing—can have a profound influence on women's lives. We believe that valuing women's perspectives as starting points for policy- and decision-making may lead to more inclusive options that can benefit all Torontonians

### What we did

Candidates for mayor and council were sent a survey via e-mail asking about their views on governance, affordable housing, childcare, access to green jobs, policing, violence against women, transportation, urban planning and poverty. Only candidates for whom a valid e-mail address could be found were sent a survey. Candidates were also sent a second e-mail reminding them about the survey. Responses to the open- and closed-ended questions were collected online through surveymonkey.com. This report summarizes the results and highlights the most insightful answers to open-ended questions.

## RESPONSES

### What was the response rate?

TWCA received a total of 102 responses. Overall, just under one third of all candidates responded. Forty-three percent of mayoral candidates and thirty percent of councillor candidates responded.

Table 1: Response Rates

	Number of Candidates	Number Responded	Response Rate
Mayor	40	17	43%
Councillor	281	85	30%
Total	321	102	32%

## **Background**

As part of the Toronto Women's City

Alliance's (TWCA)

work to end the

invisibility of women

and girls from the City

of Toronto's political

agenda, we surveyed

candidates for mayor

and council on

women's issues.

The overall response rate is rather low. It is possible that those who responded are more likely to be knowledgeable and /or supportive of women's issues.

## Who responded?

Note: We did not count those who responded without answering any questions.

Table 2: Candidates who responded by Ward

Name	Ward or mayoral	Name	Ward or mayoral	Name	Ward or mayoral
Peter D'Gama	1	Brian Bragason	17	Sandra Bussin	32
Suzan Hall	1	Jonah Schein	17	Michael Ihnat	33
Ted Berger	1	Frank de Jong	18	Marvin Macaraig	36
Jem Cain	6	Hema Vyas	18	Robert Spencer	36
Michael Laxer	6	Ken Wood	18	Tony Ashdown	36
Wendell Brereton	6	Kevin Beaulieu	18	Vicki Breen	36
Larry Perlman	7	Jason Stevens	19	Caldwell Williams	39
Nick Di Nizio	7	Karen Sun	19	Patricia Sinclair	41
Scott Aitchison	7	Mike Layton	19	Leon Saul	42
Victor Lucero	7	Adam Vaughan	20	Neethan Shan	42
Arthur Smitherman	8	Mike Yen	20	Benjamin Mbaegbu	43
John Gallagher	8	Charles Sutherland	23	John Laforet	43
Naseeb Husain	8	Peter Clarke	23	Samuel Getachew	43
Gianfranco Amendola	9	Bob Nahiddi	24	Abdullah-Baquie Ghazi	Mayoral
Brian Shifman	10	Nawab Salim Khan	26	Barry Charles Goodhead	Mayoral
Drago Banovic	10	Shaukat Malik	26	Colin Magee	Mayoral
Jarrold Friedman	10	Ben Bergen	27	Daniel Walker	Mayoral
Frances Nunziata	11	Chris Tindal	27	David Epstein	Mayoral
Fulvio Sansone	11	Gary Leroux	27	David Vallance	Mayoral
Leo Marshall	11	Joel Dick	27	Dewitt Lee	Mayoral
Joe Renda	12	Jonas Jemstone	27	George Babula	Mayoral
Rick Gosling	12	Kristyn Wong-Tam	27	Howard Gomberg	Mayoral
Steve Tasses	12	Susan Gapka	27	Joe Pantalone	Mayoral
Jackie Van Altenberg	13	Dennis Hollingsworth	28	John Letonja	Mayoral
Sarah Doucette	13	Eric Brazau	28	Mark State	Mayoral
Barry Hubick	14	Howard Bortenstein	28	Rocco Achampong	Mayoral
Gord Perks	14	Jane Pitfield	29	Rocco Rossi	Mayoral
Jules-José Kerlinger	14	Andreas Bogojevic	30	Selwyn Firth	Mayoral
Michael Erickson	14	Brenda MacDonald	31	George Smitherman	Mayoral
Tar, Istvan	14	Donna Braniff	31	Tibor Steinberger	Mayoral
Giuseppe Pedo	15	Janet Davis	31		
Tony Evangelista	15	Rasal Rahman	31		
Karen Stintz	16	Robert Walker	31		
Michael Coll	16	Brad Feraday	32		
Roy Macdonald	16	Neil Sinclair	32		
Terry Mills	16				
Benny Stirpe	17				

## Who did not respond?

In 13 out of 44 Wards, none of the candidates responded.

Table 3: Wards with no responses

Ward Number and Name
Ward 2 Etobicoke North
Ward 3 Etobicoke Centre
Ward 4 Etobicoke Centre
Ward 5 Etobicoke Lakeshore
Ward 21 St Paul's
Ward 22 St. Paul's
Ward 25 Don Valley West
Ward 34 Don Valley East
Ward 35 Scarborough Southwest
Ward 37 Scarborough Centre
Ward 38 Scarborough Centre
Ward 40 Scarborough Agincourt
Ward 44 Scarborough East

## WHAT DID THE CANDIDATES SAY?

### Governance

In the areas of governance, TWCA asked four specific questions:

	YES	Number of Responses
1. Do you believe that women and girls are unequally and inequitably served by City Hall?	70%	92
2. Will you support a Women's Equalities Office at the City? This office will be resourced to develop Toronto's Gender Equality Action Plan in collaboration with other City departments and the Agencies, Boards, Commission and Corporations.	81%	97

Many candidates stated their support for gender equality, diversity and equity lens. Others, however, thought that women's equality was already a reality, that there was no need for an Office since there was already an equity plan, division and services in place like the Blue Book (which incidentally is simply a directory of all social services and programs, including, but not specific to women's service). While the respondents seemed keen on equality, their open-ended responses suggested they favoured the same treatment for everyone as a general response.

Since women and girls make up 52% of the Toronto population and they are taxpayers and users of municipal services, TWCA asked:

3. What will you do to ensure that municipal services such as the TTC and municipal supported services such as community centres, recreational centres, and the economic and business services of the city will be provided equitably to both women and men?

***Janet Davis, Candidate for Council, Ward 31:*** "I will continue to fight to ensure that the services that women rely on are not cut in an effort to cut the budget, as some candidates in this election have promised to do. Services like after-school programs, child care programs, supports for immigrants, and many others are considered by other candidates as frills that should be cut. I will fight to maintain those services, as well as grants to community organizations, that are such important supports to women and families.

*I also support the inclusion of a gender analysis in the City's decision-making processes to ensure that changes to programs and policy decisions are informed by the potential effect on the equitable delivery of services by the City to both women and men."*

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***Adam Vaughan, Candidate for Council, Ward 20:*** "It is never just a question of making sure programmes are available. Women must play a role in designing programmes and managing the delivery and evaluation of programmes. I believe that creating equal access is done through engaging women as leaders and partners in the process will ensure equity. Outcomes must also be measured and reported to the public too."

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Finally, recognizing that women come from different backgrounds, TWCA posed the question:

4. What will you do to ensure that Aboriginal and racialized women and women with disabilities are brought into civic engagement initiatives and leadership processes of the City?

### Themes from questions on governance

- Some candidates gave vague responses without being concrete about what they would do to ensure equitable services or to encourage civic engagement and leadership. For example, they said that they would have regular reviews, enforce laws and policies, ensure “equality will be the norm,” propose resolutions to Council, make sure everyone is “treated with respect and fairly,” or advocate or lobby on behalf of women, create advisory committee
- Some respondents said they would rely on TWCA to do the work of identifying inequities, problems and solutions.
- Some would simply “do nothing” or “maintain the status quo for the time being.”
- Others would consult with communities, listen to their concerns, poll women or work with community organizations to set targets and goals
- Others would go further in assessing specific needs or challenges

**Joe Pantalone, Mayoral Candidate:** *“I will consult with all the different groups and work with them to come up with appropriate strategies. More broadly, I will ensure that internship and job opportunities are available and accessible to all women, and especially to those from marginalized backgrounds. I will continue to push to make sure that the City of Toronto is drawing upon a diverse base of residents for appointments and nominees to all our Agencies, Boards and Commissions through our Civic Appointments Committee.”*

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**Kristyn Wong-Tam, Candidate for Council, Ward 27:** *“The city of Toronto needs to engage aboriginal and racialized women and men and people with disabilities in municipal decision making. I will ensure that when the city organizes meetings, public consultations and outreach for city events, that efforts are made to reach out to aboriginal, immigrant and racialized women’s groups and women with disabilities and that child care is provided so that they can attend. The city can also make a greater effort to ensure that the diversity of the city is reflected in the city’s ABCCs as a way of building people’s experience and leadership in municipal issues. The city can also actively solicit diverse residents as advisors and ensure equity in hiring.”*

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**Gord Perks, Candidate for Council, Ward 14:** *“During the last term I have fought for improvements in hiring practices that create opportunities for equity seeking groups and accountability of senior managers to those practices in both City Divisions and City Agencies. I will continue that work.”*

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## Housing

Recognizing that in Toronto, more than 66,000 people are on the waiting list for affordable housing, TWCA wanted to know the candidates' stance regarding some specific proposals.

	YES	Number of Responses
1. Will you commit to continue implementing the HOT Report's recommendation to build 1000 affordable housing units/year? ("Housing Opportunities Toronto: An Affordable Housing Action Plan 2010 – 2020")	89%	87
2. Will you ensure that at least 60% of these units are family homes with at least 3 or more bedrooms?	86%	84
3. Will you commit to passing a law that requires all residential development of more than 20 units to allocate at least 15% of their units to be affordable?	76%	83

## Childcare

Affordable, high quality child care is critical for women who want to work outside the home or pursue education or training. Quality child care is also important for infants, toddlers and children who are provided with stimulating and caring environments that enhance their development. Daycare fees per child are about \$40 - \$60 per day. As of June 2010, over 17,800 children were on the waiting list for a fee subsidy.

	YES	Number of Responses
1. Will you preserve existing funding and programs and support efforts to expand childcare services and the number of subsidized spaces?	97%	89
2. Will you provide childcare at City Hall (and other municipal offices) to allow mothers and fathers to bring their children while they participate in municipal, council, and committee meetings?	89%	88

## Good Green Jobs

Recognizing that a gender wage gap still exists which is wider for racialized and immigrant women, and assuming that the growth of good green jobs is desirable in Toronto, TWCA asked:

1. What will you do to ensure that racialized and newcomer immigrant women and young women will have equitable access to training and jobs in this new green and low-carbon economy?

### Themes from responses

- Similar to the section on governance, some respondents gave very general answers like "advocate for balanced services for all genders and ethnicities" and some referred to inequities face by men (Incidentally, TWCA does not deny some groups of men face employment



discrimination and barriers; however, our question was specific to strategies for racialized, newcomer immigrant and younger women).

- Some respondents wanted to provide women with access to training, and language skills development, use employment equity targets and goals, or work with newcomer agencies as means of helping different groups of women access jobs.

**Kevin Beaulieu, Candidate for Council, Ward 18:** *“The City must partner with agencies that train and hire for these new businesses. The City itself must also lead by example and ensure that its contractors and partners achieve equitable access in work conducted on the City's behalf. The City must encourage the recognition of credentials and work experience of newcomers, and again, lead by example in its own hiring and training practices. The City also has a role to play in settlement services and public services such as child care, so that racialized and newcomer immigrant women and young women have the resources and time to seek employment and work.”*

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## Police

The Police budget has gone up every year for the last 25 years. Last year (2010) the net Police budget was \$844 M. Knowing that all City departments and agencies were asked to reduce their budget by 5%, except the Police even though it is well known that violent crime in Toronto has gone down, TWCA asked candidates:

	NO	Number of Responses
<b>1. Will you reduce the police budget?</b>	58%	80

Some candidates who said they would not decrease the policy budget pointed out the strategy of using the Toronto Police Services Board to overlook the police budgeting process, the limitations imposed by jurisdictional issues, and a need to focus on community policing and to identify efficiencies in the system.

**George Smitherman, Mayoral Candidate:** *“I believe there is at least \$5 million efficiency to be gained by rigorous control of overtime in the police budget. Through greater operating efficiencies and existing overtime pay, to hire at least 50 more uniformed officers. The new officers will target guns and gangs, emphasize community and youth engagement through schools, and youth activities. Current community policing activities are making a difference and we should use our budgets more efficiently to help the police do their job.”*

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Candidates who were in favour of decreasing the budget thought that reductions of between 2% to 25% could be allocated to areas such as social services, transit, “subsidized food for deserving people”, community centres, housing, schools, at-risk youth, debt reduction, United Way priority areas.

## Violence Against Women

When police do not adopt a “Don’t ask, don’t tell” policy for immigrant status, women with precarious immigration status who are subject to violence and abuse may choose not to report the abuse to police for fear of being deported.

	YES	Number of Responses
2. Will you work with the Toronto Police Service to enact and enforce a “Don’t ask, don’t tell” policy?	74%	82

## Urban Planning

City building and urban planning should reflect the needs, priorities and creativity of all its diverse residents. Women should also be involved in these processes.

	YES	Number of Responses
1. Will you support local area planning councils that will engage women and men in equal numbers and support gender-sensitive city planning?	93%	84

## Public Transit

Women and girls are more dependent on public transit than men. In the 1980s, the TTC (Toronto Transit Commission) implemented an excellent program to enhance women and girls' safety. Yet, fare structure, scheduling, design of vehicles and stations, and routes still fail to meet the needs of women as care givers, shift workers, elderly, or women and girls with disabilities.

### 1. How would you address women and girls' public transportation needs?

#### Themes in responses

- Some candidates were keen to consult various groups to understand transportation needs. One person would consult her daughters, others said they would talk to civil society organizations, the TTC, stakeholders, or hold focus groups.
- Some thought there is no difference between men and women in transportation needs.
- Others would “support a study”, or see what other jurisdictions do.
- A few took a crime and punishment perspective. They would have more police, laws, CCTV cameras.
- A few people mentioned their support of Transit City to bring more reliable services and decrease wait times and transfers
- Some would work towards improving customer service
- Other ideas included reducing fees, increasing accessibility, increasing safety – lights, request stop program, and advocating to restore provincial funding.

**Karen Sun, Candidate for Council, Ward 19:** “There are many small changes that would make the TTC more responsive to different needs. Having a timed transfer that would allow people to hop on and off the system for 2 hours is something that Vancouver has done for many years, and would make a big difference for women running errands, picking up kids from daycare etc. Elevators and kneeling buses would help those with mobility issues and mothers with strollers. Public washrooms in every subway station would make travelling with young children easier. There are many small things we can do to make the TTC more friendly and accessible. I think it would make sense to have a women's advisory committee for the TTC to help them understand and address problems that many people face on the transit system.”

## Poverty

Women in Toronto have higher rates of poverty than men in the city. The province has recently passed poverty reduction legislation.

	YES	Number of Responses
1. Will you follow the province's lead and commit to creating a plan to reduce Toronto's poverty rate by 25% in 5 years and include measurable outcomes to review the plan annually?	95%	83
2. Will you include a gender lens in the poverty reduction plan to address women's higher rates of poverty?	92%	86

## LAST WORDS

While the candidates who responded to our survey show strong support for a Women’s Equality Office and willingness to discuss women and gender issues for city programs and services, TWCA is disappointed that many made general statements that showed a lack of understanding of what is involved to implement actual strategies and options for achieving gender equality. Obviously, TWCA’s work is not done yet. We will continue to talk to candidates and elected officials and we will ask specific questions about how their policies and programs enrich girls’ and women’s lives. We encourage all voters to do the same.