

Women-friendly Policies for Toronto's Official Plan

These Policy Proposals were presented to Staff of the City of Toronto Planning Department Staff on December 6, 2011. They were part of the consultation process for the Official Plan Review. The proposals were supported by METRAC, OWN, YWCA, Toronto Coalition for Better Child Care.

Introduction

1. What are women's issues

So called "women's issues" differ from men's in two inter-related ways.

In most societies, women continue to be the **main care givers**. The responsibilities of care and life giving are fundamental to social reproduction, and critical to the survival, functioning and welfare of any community. Care giving - be that by men or women - is still under-valued and often not taken into consideration in urban planning decisions.

In addition, women's increasing participation – by choice and necessity - in the paid labour force has simply been added to the number of women's tasks without sharing or lessening their domestic responsibilities. The resulting complex set of navigating between paid and unpaid emotional, physical and occupational work plays itself out in the physical setting of the home, community and city and is therefore part of the urban planning mandate of cities.

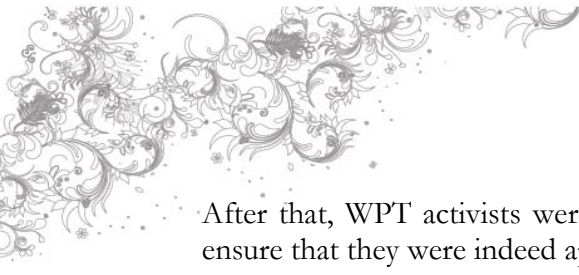
The other set of women's issues are related to the socialization of girls and women and to how girls and women have been 'constructed' in various societies. These include discrimination against women and girls due to physical differences and their reproductive abilities; to social norms that value stereotypes of women and girls as weaker than men and in need of 'protection'; to women's weaker economic status; and to persistent patriarchal values of unequal power between women and men and domination of men over women.

2. Global Responses

For many decades women around the world have organized around the links between our 'issues' and our built environments. Women planners, architects, engineers and activists have started to focus on this interface through their own practices and through magazines, web sites, list serves, planning manuals, books and by forming women's organizations to address the collectively.

Women Plan London formed in the early 1980s. It legitimized women's issues as policy and planning themes and came to an end when Margaret Thatcher axed the London County Council.

Women Plan London inspired Women Plan Toronto which - amongst many other activities - surveyed 25 women's groups in Toronto, prepared a women's planning manual and succeeded in getting the 1991 City of Toronto's Official Plan to commit to "consider the needs of women and other vulnerable groups" in five policy areas.



After that, WPT activists were too exhausted and under-funded to monitor these policies and ensure that they were indeed applied to planning and development proposals.

Meanwhile, cities around the world have responded to women, gender and diversity issues by incorporating an intersectional analysis in their planning and governance policies. Some of these cities include Madrid, Zurich, Berlin, Vienna, London, Montreal, San Francisco, Naga City (Philippines), Seoul, and Santo Andre (Brazil). The European Community also mandated its member states to carry out gender mainstreaming in urban planning.

San Francisco implemented CEDAW the 1979 UN Convention to Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. The city is gender mainstreaming department by department. The Royal Town Planning Institute of the UK commissioned a *Gender Mainstreaming Tool Kit* to guide UK local governments to gender mainstream their urban planning departments.

Several Latin American cities use gender-responsive budgeting to ensure that public funds are being spent equitably between women and men.

Many European cities have set up 'women's offices' to integrate a gender analysis in civic structures, policies, processes as well as service delivery. We have some power point images to illustrate how this approach has changed parks, housing and street design when we present our policy proposed.

Since our formation in 2004, Toronto Women's City Alliance (TWCA) has been lobbying the city of Toronto for a Women's Equalities Office – to ensure that we have an inclusive city and that this inclusiveness is reflected in the city's governance structures, policies, programmes and budgets.

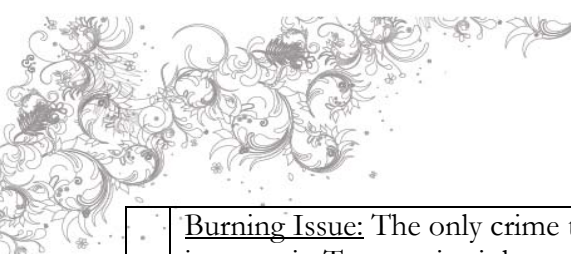
3. Who are we

TWCA a diverse group of women who are organizing to end the growing silence and invisibility of girls' and women's voices, needs and priorities on the political agenda in the City of Toronto. We are concerned about racism, poverty, discrimination, domestic violence and sexual assault, un- and under-employment, lack of affordable housing, lack of affordable and appropriate services such as child care and transit. We strive for an inclusive city – that engages the diversity of its residents in collaborative planning, budgeting and decision making.

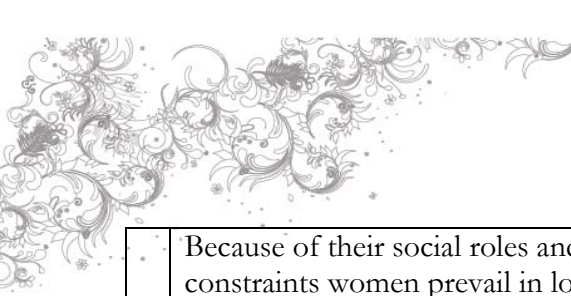
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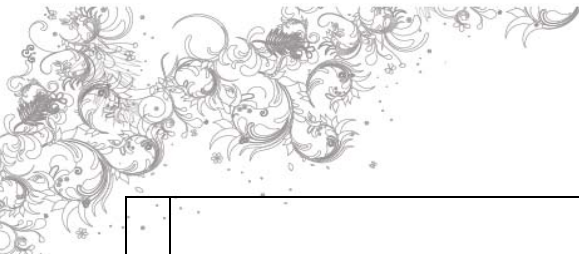
	Themes/Burning Issue/Context	Proposed Policy	Fit in Official Plan
1	<u>SAFETY</u>		



	<p><u>Burning Issue:</u> The only crime to increase in Toronto is violence against women.</p> <p><u>Context:</u> Sexual assault and harassment are daily realities for women and severely restrict their access to the city.</p>	<p><u>3.1.1.12 Added sentence:</u> These measures include aspects such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) lighting, b) sightlines, c) entrapment spots, d) movement predictors, e) visibility by others, “eyes on the street,” f) activity generators, “round the clock,” g) sense of ownership, f) signage, clarity of orientation, g) access to help, h) land use mix, i) presence of a wide diversity of people. 	<p><u>3.1.1 The Built Environment: The Public Realm,</u> add sentence to 3.1.1.12</p>
<p>2</p>	<p><u>TRANSPORTATION</u></p> <p><u>Burning Issue:</u> “TTC is too expensive.”</p> <p><u>Context:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Women are more transit dependent than men; yet transit schedules, fares, routes and design do not reflect the travel patterns of these major user groups, arising from women’s multiple roles, and economic and social realities; both Kingston and Waterloo have discounted monthly passes for persons on low incomes. - As care givers, women are reliant on cars to accompany very young, elderly and frail dependents - On the move, women are more vulnerable to sexual harassment and assault. 	<p><u>New Policy 2.4.10</u></p> <p>The transportation system will address the travel patterns and transportation needs of women care givers, low income earners and vulnerable and minority women, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) ensuring that transit schedules, fares, routes and design reflect the needs of these user groups; b) providing publicly accessible toilets along major transit and pedestrian travel routes; c) taking women’s safety into consideration. 	<p><u>Bringing the City Together – A Progressive Agenda of Transportation Change,</u> insert a new policy 2.4.10</p>
<p>3</p>	<p><u>HOUSING</u></p> <p><u>Burning Issue:</u> approximately 80,000 on waiting list for affordable (social) housing</p> <p><u>Context:</u></p>	<p>3.2.1.2 - “especially existing affordable rental and social housing” will be maintained and replenished. To this end, projects such as the Tower Renewal Project shall be continued and expanded.</p>	<p><u>The Human Environment – Housing 3.2.1.2</u> insert clause after “the existing stock of housing” will be maintained and</p>



	<p>Because of their social roles and constraints women prevail in low income groups and spend more than 50% of their income on shelter. Further, women who are single parents, victims of abuse or elderly, depend far more on affordable rental and social housing, than men.</p> <p>The Tower Renewal Project has been critical to refurbishing affordable rental housing.</p>	<p><u>New Policies 3.2.1.4</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implement the HOT (Housing Opportunities Toronto, 2010 - 2020) Report recommendation, adopted by Council, to provide 1000 affordable units per year. - Eliminate the social housing waiting list within 10 years. - Permit "Live-work" combination in housing as of right, subject to compliance with environmental protection and nuisance regulations. - (3.2.1.7 a) "double" instead of "full" replacement; - 3.2.1.9 b) First Sentence to read: 25% of the proposed residential units shall be affordable rental housing. 	<p>replenished. Insert new 2nd sentence.</p> <p>New Policy following 3.2.1.3:</p> <p>Amend 3.2.1. 7 a)</p> <p>Amend 3.2.1.9 b)</p>
<p>4</p>	<p><u>SOCIAL SERVICES</u></p> <p><u>Burning Issue:</u> 20,000 children are on the waiting list for subsidized day care.</p> <p><u>Context:</u></p> <p>Women, especially single parenting women and elderly women, depend on affordable and accessible social services such as child care, meals on wheels, senior citizens and recreation centres.</p>	<p><u>New Policies</u></p> <p>3.2.2.1. d) giving priority to areas with concentrations of low income and single parenting households;</p> <p>3.2.2.2 a) Surplus school property shall remain publicly owned and if not needed for community services then to meet social housing needs;</p> <p>3.2.2.8 Child care and other appropriate social service facilities shall be considered for inclusion in new schools.</p> <p>5.1.7.3 Development charges shall include the cost of social services needed by the population of a given development, especially child care, either by providing space or</p>	<p><u>The Human Environment – 3.2.2 Community Services and Facilities</u></p> <p>New Policy: 3.2.2.1 d)</p> <p>New Policy: 3.2.2.2 a)</p> <p>New Policy: 3.2.2.8</p> <p>5.1.7. <u>Development Charges</u></p>



		payment in lieu.	New Policy: 5.1.7.3
5	<p><u>EMPLOYMENT</u></p> <p><u>Burning Issue:</u> Women prevail in low/unpaid, temporary, part- time and shift work while being greatly under-represented in top levels of jobs.</p> <p><u>Context:</u></p> <p>Women's multiple roles as un/underpaid care givers need to be considered in designing and locating employment areas.</p>	<p><u>New Policy</u></p> <p>2.2.4.2 d - recognizing the social and economic reality of low and unpaid care giving work and ensuring land use and transportation policies address the needs of this crucial social function by:</p> <p>i supporting live-work arrangements as a right in all dwellings;</p> <p>ii supporting inclusion of housing, in all single-use non-residential areas, which are free of environmental hazards other nuisances;</p> <p>iii routing and scheduling transit links between employment and neighbourhoods.</p>	<p>2.2.4 <u>Employment Districts: Supporting Business and Employment Growth:</u></p> <p>New Policy 2.2.4.d</p>
6	<p><u>INCLUSION</u></p> <p><u>Burning Issue:</u> no research or data is available to statistically substantiate women's issues, including those of girls, elderly, single parents, racialized and differently abled women in Toronto.</p> <p><u>Context:</u></p> <p>Discrimination takes place on the basis of more than just age and ability, all major reasons for discrimination need to be stated.</p>	<p><u>New Policy</u></p> <p>5.4.1. f collection and analysing of data by sex, race, class, ethnicity, creed, age, language, sexual orientation, ability, aboriginality and other social variables,</p>	<p><u>5.4.1 Monitoring and Assessment,</u></p> <p>New Policy 5.4.1.f</p>