

# **City for All Women Initiative (CAWI) Initiative: une ville pour toutes les femmes (IVTF)**

**Fiscal Framework and Budget Directions 2008  
Corporate Services and Economic Development Committee  
September 18, 2007**

Deputation presented by: H  l  ne Ndaboroheye, Schola Innocent  
(See French version below)

**My name is H  l  ne Ndaboroheye;** I am a case worker with women and their children who have experienced or been witnesses to partner abuse. I know how critical city services are for them to be able to make real changes in their lives.

We are here representing women and organizations that are part of the network of the City for All Women Initiative/ Initiative: une ville pour toutes les femmes.

In reviewing the Fiscal Framework, we appreciate that City Council is setting guidelines for the budget process. We are pleased that the document states this is a “work in progress” as it would be harmful to the future of our city if we were to lock into guidelines that do not contribute to a quality of life for everyone.

For example, in the policy area of Strategic Initiatives and Enhancements, it states that Council will establish its priorities at the beginning of its term. Given the changing nature of our city and the fact that City Council now sits for 4 years, we are concerned that new priorities may emerge within that timeframe. If a 2/3 majority vote is required to make changes in those priorities, we fear it may be too difficult for City Council to adjust.

In reviewing the Budget Directions document, we are concerned about the outcome of saving \$20 million through “management efficiencies”. We ask you: Is it really possible to find more efficiencies in the city without reducing the quality of services or making city staff workload unmanageable? Or would these efficiencies be achieved by downloading onto community organizations where staff are paid a lower salary and are already over-extended?

We know that jobs in the public sector have been among the best jobs for women, especially women of colour and women with disabilities, as their salaries and benefits are more equal to those of men. When those public sector jobs are lost, not only do women lose good jobs, but women end up providing the same social services in a community organization at a lower pay. Or even worse, the social service disappears and women end up providing the service as unpaid workers in the community or in the home.

We want your assurance that a saving of \$20 million in management efficiencies will not translate into a decrease in quality of service or worsening working conditions for women.

**My name is Schola Innocent**, I am a resident at McPhail House of Cornerstone Women's Shelter. I live with women who rely upon our city's services to meet their needs and those of their families.

In reviewing the Budget Directions document, we have considered its consistency with the Strategic Directions that you approved in July. Women in our network were pleased to see that the city has made a commitment to a 'triple bottom line' so as to consider the social, environmental and economic impact of your decisions upon service delivery. However, the draft Budget Directions indicates several ways of balancing the budget that put at risk the social aspect of the triple bottom line.

There has been much discussion about "gaps in the city's infrastructure" but little discussion about the "gaps in the city's social services". We are concerned that a 1.4% tax increase for operations may not be enough, especially given the \$27 million shortfall that could be taken from social services.

I see the gaps in social services and fear they would widen further without adequate funding in this budget.

- I have seen the impact on women's lives when they can find safe and affordable housing. City Council has a strategic priority to "repair, replace and uphold all City Housing stock". Will this budget direction decrease our chances of reaching that goal?
- I know many women who rely upon public transit to transport themselves and their families to needed services and jobs. For many Aboriginal, immigrant and low-income women, it is their only means of transportation. . We fear that an over-emphasis on cost-recovery by increasing the fares by 5% in 2008, 2009 and 2010, will keep many of us from being able to take the bus.
- As mothers, we are concerned about rising recreation fares. When our children can access recreation services, they live healthier lives. When I can afford a course, I am healthier too. Subsidies do not address this problem as many do not know they are available or are too ashamed to ask for them.
- We are pleased that the budget directions include the enhancement of francophone childcare services. We know how important childcare is for women in our communities.

In making your decisions today, we ask that you remember the "gap in social services" as well as the "gap in infrastructure". The quality of life for all our citizens depends upon it.

Thank you.