



Report Number: PFC2020-1370

Meeting: Priorities & Finance Committee

Meeting Date: 2020 December 01

## NOTICE OF MOTION

**RE: Street Harassment**

**Sponsoring Councillor(s):** Druh Farrell

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WHEREAS the City of Calgary has a responsibility to support the well-being, comfort, and safety of Calgarians in public spaces;

*AND WHEREAS, in 2017, The Government of Canada launched It's Time: Canada's Strategy to Prevent and Address Gender-Based Violence, which informs policy makers and service providers on practical knowledge and best practices to prevent gender-based violence;*

AND WHEREAS *It's Time* adopted an intersectional approach to fill gaps in policies and supports particularly for Indigenous women, immigrant and refugee women, women of colour, and other marginalised sectors of the female population that are historically at greater risk of gender-based violence;

*AND WHEREAS gender-based violence is not limited to physical violence, and can take many forms including neglect, discrimination, and harassment;*

AND WHEREAS street harassment has been defined as unwelcome comments, gestures, and actions forced on a stranger in a public place because of their actual or perceived sex, gender, gender expression, or sexual orientation, and that are disrespectful, demeaning, alarming, and/or insulting;

AND WHEREAS Statistics Canada reports that one in three women, 15 years of age or older, were victims of unwanted sexual behaviour while they were in a public place in the past 12 months;

AND WHEREAS the 2018 *Survey on Safety in Public and Private Spaces* shows that unwanted sexual behavior in public spaces result in women avoiding certain places, changing routine to avoid certain people or situations, and carrying items to defend themselves or alert others;

AND WHEREAS, while the 2017 *Taking Action to End Violence Against Young Women and Girls in Canada* report recommended that the Government of Canada strengthen the harassment offence provisions in the *Criminal Code*, no implementation has occurred to-date and municipalities are left to fill this gap;

AND WHEREAS there are no provincial laws against street harassment in Alberta;

AND WHEREAS several municipalities across Canada, including Vancouver, Edmonton, and London, regulate street harassment through bylaws;

AND WHEREAS City of Calgary's Calgary Transit Bylaw (4M81), Municipal Complex Bylaw (38M2012), and Parks & Pathways Bylaw (11M2019) already prohibit some forms of street harassment in certain places;

AND WHEREAS City of Calgary does not have a bylaw that broadly addresses street harassment through a gender-based lens;

AND WHEREAS *The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* states that everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of the person and the right not to be deprived thereof except in accordance with the principles of fundamental justice;

AND WHEREAS Section 7 of the *Municipal Government Act* grants Council the authority to enact bylaws relating to the safety, health, and welfare of a municipality's people;

AND WHEREAS, in 2019, The City of Calgary approved the Gender Equity Diversity and Inclusion Strategy that includes direction to implement Gender Based Analysis Plus to address the different impacts of policies, programs, and services on diverse Calgarians;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that City Council directs City Administration to review current bylaws related to public safety, through Gender Based Analysis Plus, and identify existing gaps with respect to street harassment;

AND FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that, as part of the review, City Administration engage with Calgarians and the Social Wellbeing Advisory Committee on the topic of street harassment and its resulting impacts on quality of life;

AND FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that City Administration determine whether the City of Calgary has the jurisdiction required to enact a constitutionally defensible bylaw that addresses street harassment, especially for certain groups that are at greater risk;

AND FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that City Administration report to City Council through the Standing Policy Committee on Community & Protective Services no later than Q1 2022.