

To the members of the Emergency and Community Services Committee of the City of Hamilton,

We are writing to communicate our support for the motion being brought forward by Councillor Wilson “Gender Based Safety Audit”, item 11.1 for the September 21st 2023 committee meeting.

A gender-inclusive Hamilton will help us achieve our climate goals. As Environment Hamilton, we’ve been working towards and advocating for immediate, sustainable climate actions. It has been heartening to see the City take initiative on this to date. In particular, the recognition of the importance of transportation as a key area of focus for the City of Hamilton is vital - as transportation emissions have continued to rise in our community for many years, driven primarily by an increase in single occupant private vehicle usage.

We also have been long-time advocates for increasing our natural green spaces in our community, and ensuring that equitable access to our parks and natural areas is improved upon for all Hamiltonians.

Thus, Environment Hamilton supports the motion being brought forward to have the YWCA conduct gender-based safety audits of public spaces - particularly our public transportation, streets for active transportation, and parks. To put it plainly - to achieve a modal shift with Hamiltonians getting out of their private vehicles and starting to use public transit and active transportation, it is imperative that all members of our community feel safe doing so. We cannot achieve greenhouse emission reductions if half of our community have barriers to accessing and using alternative transportation choices to private vehicles.

We feel that by accomplishing the goals set out in this motion the City of Hamilton will be better able to continue its important climate change work - and will achieve a variety of other positive social and economic outcomes for our community.

- Ian Borsuk, Executive Director
Adeola Egbeyemi, Project Coordinator
On behalf of Environment Hamilton