

Martin Canning—NewOttawa Campaign

Response: Addressing and Preventing Gender Based Violence in Ottawa

First, I would like to thank Hollaback! for the work that it does in the community, and the strength of advocacy that it brings to gender violence issues. I understand that gender-based violence is complex and nuanced. Throughout my campaign I have benefited from both the support of my Gender Equity Advisory Committee, and the advice and engagement of the stakeholders and community leaders to enhance my campaign's gendered lens.

Funding Public Service Ads (PSA) to raise awareness about harassment in public spaces

I am strongly in favour of the need to fund public service announcements because at the root of gender violence, which includes street harassment, there is a need to change societal attitudes. I agree that PSAs have the potential to greatly help in breaking the silence about the existence of harassment, educating about the myths associated with harassment and providing supports for those who are or who have experienced violence. If gender violence is to be meaningfully addressed it must be recognized that adequate funding of prevention programs is necessary. This is the message that I will carry to city hall if elected.

Hire more OC Transpo special constables

I am in favour of this priority. When Ottawa is compared to cities of a similar size there is room to increase the number of special constables. I would work with OC Transpo to identify barriers to increasing special constables and to find long-term action-oriented solutions to address this priority.

Prevent Sexual Assault at mass gatherings

Prevention programs are the best way to truly end gender-based violence. If elected, I will support the development and implementation of effective ways to prevent this form of violence during mass gatherings in our community. For example, we can review the permit applications for mass gatherings to include requirements for measures that prevent sexual violence. My campaign is centred on the value of community engagement, and for me, the creation of safe spaces is paramount to building a strong community.

Promote comprehensive sexual health

I agree with encouraging a comprehensive sexual health program, which includes the discussion of consent, the bystander approach to sexual assault prevention, safe

sex and healthy relationships. This is important and I will work with our Public Health and community partners to build strategies that engage Ottawa's young people in the discussion of sexual health.

Show a commitment to making public transit safer for women and LGBTQ* folks

After knocking on now close to 30,000 doors, Somerset Ward residents have told me that this is a significant concern. I've listened to their concerns and have included a commitment to creating a permanent Transit Safety Working Group in my platform, which can be found at newottawa.ca. I believe this permanent safety group will create meaningful solutions for this issue. As an advocate for the enhancement of public transit and alternative forms of transportation these alternatives need to be safe in order to maximize use. I am the only Somerset Ward candidate with specific commitments in this area.

I would like to again acknowledge Hollaback! Ottawa's passion and dedication to these action priorities. They have been formulated as a result of lived experiences of people in our city, and should be taken seriously. Throughout my campaign I have worked to include a gendered lens and as an election commitment, I will target the issue of gender-based violence and the promotion of gender equity within the city of Ottawa through the incorporation of policy, the fostering of community and the engagement of stakeholders.

Regards,

Martin Canning