

Response from Penny Thompson

Fund public service ads to raise awareness about harassment in public spaces

I support this 100%. As a woman and mother of a university aged daughter, there needs to be a zero tolerance standard for behaviour that is demeaning and offensive to women. We, as a civilized society, cannot tolerate it at any level. Our silence is our consent. Educating and creating awareness of the issue is a key element to the eradication of street harassment.

Hire more OC Transpo special constables

Yes. Those who rely on OC Transpo include shift workers, who are often travelling alone either early in the dark of morning or late at night. We need to ensure the safety of all riders. In addition to adding more OC Transpo special constables, I also want to know what the state of the lighting and emergency call boxes are in transit stations. Public transportation is a core service and it is our responsibility to ensure it is safe for everyone.

Prevent sexual assault at mass gatherings

It is imperative that this issue be taken seriously. We are all too familiar with stories of women, of all ages, being assaulted under the cover of mass gatherings. If the city is playing a role in approving or participating in mass gathering events, then they need to be responsible for the supervision and enforcement of aggressive sexual behaviour. We know that they have trained security staff on site, but how far does that training go? Would they know how to respond to a sexual assault if informed of one? Are they trained to identify predatory behaviour? The city needs to make this part of any special event permits they approve.

Promote comprehensive sexual health

Yes I agree. We have all seen the benefits that come with consistent messaging educating the public, including the campaigns on the dangers of smoking and the Don't Drink and Drive campaign. We should be targeting sexual health in the same manner. Promoting safe sex and sex with consent would have my support as part of a major public health campaign by the city.

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

Safety in our ward and in our city is non-negotiable and applicable to every member of society. It is one of the key pillars to my platform. I support and appreciate the dedication and work that Hollaback! Ottawa has committed to bringing these issues to the forefront of discussions. Once elected, I will be requesting a meeting with your team to discuss these issues in more detail.

Thanks for allowing me to share my thoughts with you.