



January 31, 2023

Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee

Re: Delegation Status at February 7, 2023 SPPC Meeting

Our names are Jessie Rodger and Jennifer Dunn. Jessie is the Executive Director of Anova: A Future Without Violence and Jennifer is the Executive Director of the London Abused Women's Centre.

In 2019, Anova and the London Abused Women's Centre came together with the London Coordinating Committee to End Woman Abuse to recommend ways that the City of London could create a safe London for women and girls. As a result of this work and thanks to some incredible championing from city council at the time, London Ontario was the first municipality in all of Canada to create a stand-alone, strategic area of focus around creating a safe London for women and girls in its strategic plan.

For those that may not know, Anova is a gender-based violence organization that operates two violence against women shelters in London. Anova is also the London-Middlesex area's sexual assault centre that offers services to survivors. The London Abused Women's Centre is a feminist organization that supports and advocates for personal, social and systemic changed directed at ending male violence against women and girls. The London Abused Women's Centre is non-residential and provides women and girls over the age of 12 who have been abused, assaulted, exploited, and trafficked with immediate access to long-term, trauma-informed, woman-centred counselling, advocacy and support.

In 2022, Anova served over 350 women and children in shelter and answered over 8,500 crisis calls on our 24-hour crisis line. The London Abused Women's Centre had over 11,000 service interactions.

In Canada, sexual assault is the only violent crime that is not on a decline. Sexual violence is rooted in gender inequality and injustice.

The City of London needs to continue to recognize and understand the severity of violence against women and gender-based violence. Women, girls, and gender-diverse people deserve to live free from violence. Therefore, we would like to request delegation status to appear before the City of London's Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee on February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

Ending violence against women is a responsibility of everyone. Addressing violence needs to happen at every level of community and government. We believe the City of London needs to continue to work collaboratively, alongside community-based organizations, leaders, and women with lived experience to design a community approach to address, prevent, and raise awareness of violence against women and gender-based violence.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Thank you,

Jessie Rodger  
Executive Director, Anova

Jennifer Dunn  
Executive Director, London Abused Women's Centre