

Motion to Declare a Gender-Based Violence and Intimate Partner Violence Epidemic in the City of Brampton

Moved by: Regional Councillor Navjit Kaur Brar & Councillor Santos

WHEREAS gender-based violence is defined as violence or abuse perpetrated against a woman, girl or gender-diverse individual because of their gender, gender expression, gender identity or perceived gender; and

WHEREAS according to official 2023 UN Women statistics, globally, an estimated one in three women have been subjected to physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence, non-partner sexual violence, or both at least once in their life (30 per cent of women aged 15 and older); and

WHEREAS, globally, according to the same report, there is a woman or girl being killed every 11 minutes in their home; and

WHEREAS femicide is a result of gender-based violence and 22 countries specifically reference it in their criminal legislation; and

WHEREAS Canada does not currently include the term femicide in their criminal legislation; and

WHEREAS the Canadian Femicide Observatory for Justice and Accountability (CFOJA) found that in Canada between 2018 and 2022 one woman was killed every 48 hours; and

WHEREAS in the same report not all femicide cases have an identified accuser, the majority of identified accusers have been male suspects; and

WHEREAS the injustice of a flawed system in Canada has allowed a serial killer who has been convicted of multiple femicides, Paul Bernardo, to be moved from a maximum-security facility to a medium-security corrections facility, despite the outrage and disdain of victims' families, elected representatives across the country and the public at large; and

WHEREAS 75% of women reported abuse and conflict with a partner, spouse, or parent as their top reason for their housing loss; and

WHEREAS the federal government has allocated 25% of the federal housing budget to housing for vulnerable women; and

WHEREAS the Province of Ontario saw an increase in gender-based violence and intimate partner violence during the Covid-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS according to the Annual Femicide List published by the Ontario Association of Interval and Transition Houses, the number of femicides from 2019 to 2022 has increased by approximately 30%: and

WHEREAS in 2022 the Ontario government committed to investing \$5.9 million over two years through the [Victim Support Grant](#) (VSG) program to enhance capacity to support survivors of intimate partner violence and human trafficking; and

WHEREAS at the September 2019 Brampton City Council unanimously passed the motion for the City of Brampton to continue to support and work with existing programs at the Region of Peel, who are providing services to those affected by domestic violence, including the Peel Committee Against Woman Abuse, the Safe Centre of Peel, Interim Place, and Victim Services of Peel; and to support public awareness and advocacy work regarding domestic violence and violence against women such as Step Up for Her and Take Back the Night; and

WHEREAS the City of Brampton on [Wednesday, January 29, 2020 \(pg.5-6\)](#) unanimously passed the motion to work with the Region of Peel, Peel Regional Police, and community organizations to develop and strategize a public education and awareness campaign to tackle the issue of Domestic Violence in Brampton and Peel Region; and

WHEREAS on Feb 13, 2020, the Region of Peel Council unanimously supported a motion to work with the City of Brampton, City of Mississauga, Town of Caledon, Peel Regional Police and community organizations to develop and strategize a public education and awareness campaign to tackle the issue of Domestic Violence across the Region; and

WHEREAS the “It’s not ok” and “Break the Silence” public awareness campaigns launched as of November 2020, annually for the past 3 years during the 16 days of action to end violence against women; and

WHEREAS the demand for support services increases as awareness increases; and

WHEREAS according to the Peel Regional 2021-2022 Snapshot published by the Peel Committee Against Women Abuse, Embrave: Agency to End Violence have seen a 27 percent increase in survivors accessing shelter programs between 2021 to 2022 in Peel Region; and

WHEREAS Peel Regional Police reported that they responded to more that 17,000 incidents of family and intimate partner violence in 2021 which equates to two disputes every hour; and

WHEREAS all statistics are only scratching the surface and do not include unreported cases; and

WHEREAS a Brampton resident, Davinder Kaur, a 43-year-old woman, was killed by her estranged husband at Sparrow Park in Brampton on May 19th, 2023;

WHEREAS in response to the case involving Davinder Kaur and other cases of femicide in the Region of Peel, various community-based organizations are raising awareness and advocating to all levels of government for immediate action and support; and

WHEREAS 24 municipalities and regions (Ajax, Burlington, Carleton Place, City of Ottawa, Conmee Township, Durham Region, Halton Region, Kincardine, Lanark County, Mattice-Val Cote, Municipality of Mississippi Mills, North Algoma Wilberforce, Prince Edward County, Renfrew County, Town of Hawkesbury, Town of Laurentian Hills, Town of Perth, Town of Rainy River, Town of Renfrew, Town of Smith Falls, Township of Armour, Township of Enniskillen, Whitby and Woodstock) across Ontario have declared a gender-based violence and/or intimate partner violence epidemic;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE CITY OF BRAMPTON:

1. Declare a gender-based violence and intimate-partner violence an epidemic in Brampton; and
2. Request that the Region of Peel's upcoming awareness campaign regarding gender-based and intimate partner violence include this declaration; and
3. Forward a copy of this Resolution to the Region of Peel Council with a request the Region of Peel declare a gender-based and intimate partner violence epidemic across the Region; and
4. Take a stand and advocate with the 24 municipalities and regions that have declared gender-based violence and/or intimate partner violence an epidemic to push the Province of Ontario to officially recognize it as such; and
5. Send a communication to Brampton MPs and MPPs, signed by Mayor Brown on behalf of Council, requesting that they join their municipal counterparts in solidarity, asking for an epidemic of gender-based violence and intimate-partner violence to be declared at the Provincial and Federal levels; and
6. Send a communication to the Honourable David Lametti, Minister of Justice and Attorney General Canada, and the Prime Minister of Canada, signed by Mayor Brown on behalf of Council, advocating that Femicide be added as a term to the Criminal Code of Canada; and
7. Send a communication to Premier Ford and Prime Minister Trudeau, signed by Mayor Brown on behalf of Council, advocating to the provincial and federal governments to provide the appropriate supports necessary to address the epidemic; and
8. Send a copy of this Resolution to the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) and Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO).