

## MEMORANDUM

January 19, 2026

TO: Mayor and Council

CC: Donny van Dyk, City Manager  
Armin Amrolia, Deputy City Manager  
Karen Levitt, Deputy City Manager  
Sandra Singh, Deputy City Manager  
Katrina Leckovic, City Clerk  
Tina Penney, Director, Legislative Operations  
Kevin Burris, Manager, Civic Agencies  
Tanya Fink, Social Planner, Arts, Culture and Community Services  
Vancouver Public Library Liaison: Stephanie Kripps, Branch Head Terry Salman  
Vancouver Police Department Liaison: Inspector Kelly Risebrough  
Vancouver School Board Liaison: Trustee Preeti Faridkot  
Vancouver Park Board Liaison: Commissioner Angela Haer

FROM: Women's Advisory Committee

SUBJECT: Women's Advisory Committee Report of Activities, 2024 – 2025

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### PURPOSE

To provide Vancouver City Council with a summary of the activities of the Women's Advisory Committee (WAC) for the period of January 1, 2024 to December 31, 2025.

### BACKGROUND

The mandate of the Women's Advisory Committee is to advise Council and staff on enhancing access and inclusion for women and girls to fully participate in City services and civic life.

The 2023-2026 Workplan of the WAC outlined 3 objectives:

1. Advancing Progress on the Women's Equity Strategy 2018-2028
2. Advancing Municipal Action to Address Gender-Based Violence/Women's Safety
  - a. Advise Council and city staff on practical actions to improve safety for women and marginalized genders in the city through an intersectional, action-oriented approach.

- b. Full implementation of the 284 recommendations from the Red Women Rising Report and MMIWG2S+ Final Report that are within the city's jurisdiction.
  - c. Explore the city's role in providing safe and affordable housing options for women and gender-diverse individuals fleeing violence.
  - d. Explore the relationship between gender-based violence, the opioid crisis, and toxic drug supply.
3. Advancing the City of Vancouver's Child Care Strategy
- a. Continue to advocate for practical and timely solutions and implementation of accessible and affordable child care.
  - b. Cultivate strong partnerships with, and promote dialogue and cooperation among, organizations at all levels working to shape and implement child care policy and practices.

## DISCUSSION

### 1. Significant Activities

Over the period of 2024-2025, the WAC passed 11 motions, related to the advisory committee's core focus areas of child care and gender-based violence:

1. November 18, 2024: Gender Based Violence / Intimate Partner Violence Prevention
2. January 7, 2025: Advancing Affordable Childcare in the City of Vancouver
3. April 22, 2025: Affirming the Role of Civic Agencies
4. September 23, 2025: Reiterating GBV/IPV Prevention
5. September 23, 2025: GBV/IPV Incident in Vancouver, May 19, 2025
6. September 23, 2025: GBV/IPV Incident in Vancouver, May 28, 2025
7. September 23, 2025: GBV/IPV Incident in Vancouver, May 28, 2025
8. September 23, 2025: GBV/IPV Incident in Vancouver, June 9, 2025
9. September 23, 2025: GBV/IPV Incident in Vancouver, July 13, 2025
10. September 23, 2025: GBV/IPV Incident in Vancouver, September 5, 2025
11. September 23, 2025: GBV/IPV Incident in Vancouver, September 9, 2025

The WAC engaged with City of Vancouver staff presentations from:

- Arts, Culture, and Community Services
  - FIFA World Cup 2026 Human Rights Secretariat,
  - Healthy City Strategy Refresh (x2)
- Social Policy and Projects
  - Making Strides: Vancouver's Childcare Strategy,
- Business and Election Services
  - 2022 Municipal Election and 2026 Municipal Election Planning,
- Engineering Services
  - Gastown Public Spaces Plan, and,
- members of the WAC participated in a variety of Joint Engagements including:
  - the TDG2S Safety Plan and Anti-Racism Plan,
  - FIFA Human Rights Action Plan Joint Engagement, and
  - Vancouver Official Development Plan Joint Engagement.

Representatives from the WAC committee spoke at City Council meetings three times:

1. In February 2025, in support of Childcare Strategy Implementation and Policy Harmonization, related to Vancouver's *Making Strides: Childcare Strategy* Implementation Update
2. In November 2025, in support of Ensuring Continuity of the Women's Equity Strategy Following the Closure of the Equity Office
3. In November 2025, in support of Advancing a Gender-Based Violence Prevention Strategy

The WAC invited representatives to speak from a variety of community organizations and welcomed presentations and discussions from:

- Battered Women's Support Services (BWSS),
- The Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC

## 2. Future Directions

The priorities for the WAC in 2026 are:

- **Gender-Based Violence Prevention Strategy and Task Force:** Continuing to support the development of a City of Vancouver Gender-Based Violence Prevention Strategy and the establishment of a Gender-Based Violence Task Force, including co-development of the Terms of Reference to ensure appropriate representation from City of Vancouver staff and community organizations.
- **Housing, Gender, and GBV Nexus:** Work with City Staff and City Council to advance housing policy and planning that considers and protects the needs of women and gender-diverse folks in housing and homelessness planning. This includes advocating for the specific needs of affordable housing; supportive housing for women who are drug-users; drop-in, temporary, and long-term housing options for women fleeing gender-based, intimate partner violence, or coercive violence.
- **Women's Equity Strategy:** Continuing to advocate for the full implementation and adequate resourcing for all work taking place under the *Women's Equity Strategy 2018-2028 (WES)*, including protection from layoffs and cuts for City of Vancouver staff working to implement the WES and advance its thematic aims.
- **FIFA 2026 and the Gendered Impacts of Major Events:** Continue to monitor gender-specific considerations in the FIFA Human Rights Plan and execution of plan, including observations of lessons for future major events (Olympics, FIFA, etc.) hosted by the city.
- **Childcare:** Continuing to advocate for the full implementation of the *Making Strides: Vancouver's Childcare Strategy*, including a sustained investment in \$10/day public childcare spaces and long-term support for the expansion of universal childcare infrastructure in Vancouver, including non-profit and Indigenous-led operators.

## 3. Self-Assessment

The WAC is proud of the work accomplished in 2024-2025. The WAC contributed valuable feedback to numerous staff presentations shaping planning efforts in the City and found these

interactions with city staff to be mutually beneficial. The WAC also found great value in the relationship with our VPD, VPL liaisons and their consistent updates and attendance at regular meetings. The committee is particularly grateful for late 2025 support at City Council via Cllr. Bligh's two motions related to the committee's work, including unanimous support for [the development of a City of Vancouver Gender-Based Violence Prevention Strategy and the establishment of a Gender Based Violence Task Force](#). The WAC is eager to continue this work in 2026 with urgency and collaboration.

During the 2024-2025 period, the WAC experienced significant portions of 2024-2025 without a designated staff liaison (between June 2024-October 2025). When a staff liaison was assigned, they provided crucial insight into the city's work and allowed a better flow of information, feedback, and collaboration with the committee.

During this period, the WAC experienced consistently low attendance by our council liaison(s). In July 2025, the WAC was assigned a second council liaison. However, of the twelve regularly scheduled meetings of the WAC in 2024-2025, a single council liaison was only present at two (total) and both assigned liaisons were never present at the same meeting. Between both councillors (2/12, 0/2), this was an overall council attendance rate of 2/14 or 14.29%. This lack of mutual engagement and mutual accountability does not allow civic agencies to uphold their "essential role in the City's public engagement efforts," nor does it allow the civic agency to meaningfully and consistently "convey community perspectives to Council and/or staff while advising on City priorities, projects, and initiatives", as outlined in the *Guidelines for Civic Agencies*. When all parties - WAC members, staff liaisons, and council liaisons - are present and engaged, Advisory committees are a crucial part of developing effective and equitable city policy/planning, but when this participation is lacking, so too is the ability to do effective work.

We learned that much of this absence was due to conflicting obligations on City Councillors time (i.e. competing public hearings, committee meetings, etc.), therefore the WAC emphatically recommends that City Councillors have no other mandatory Council obligations (meetings, hearings, etc.) that conflict with the regular meetings of Civic Advisory Committees where they are assigned as liaisons in order to allow for consistent participation in these bodies.

Additionally, members note some accessibility limitations to participation in the WAC, including challenges in the timing of the meetings, the time pressures of additional joint engagements, the lack of compensation for members' time devoted to the advisory, and lack of stipend available to external speakers or community organizations. This makes participation in bodies like this unfeasible for many residents, especially those working in shift work, lower-income residents, or residents with additional unpaid caretaking responsibilities. Positively, the WAC is grateful for virtual options that allow for online participation, the stipend for parental care coverage, and applauds the consistent and high level of support provided by the City Clerks and the Civic Agency Manager.

## **CONCLUSION**

The foregoing is presented to Vancouver City Council for information.