



Women's Advocacy
Voice of Edmonton

Annual Report 2021-2022



Message from New WAVE Chair, Funmi Omole

Since my time on WAVE, I have had the privilege to know and work with passionate and knowledgeable Edmontonians. We had great women come before us to lay strong foundations for the work that needs to be done. Edmonton is a place where people from all backgrounds and lived experiences can come to thrive. It is our mandate and privilege to keep it that way and make it even better. Our vision is that Edmonton leads cities around the world in its equitable policies and standard of well being for all people.

Our Mayor and current City Council is a beacon of hope to many and demonstrates that we all have important roles to play. Voting, advocacy, community engagement, stakeholder engagement, diversity of voices and opinions all make for the perfect recipe for a forward thinking and equitable city. We on WAVE are particularly excited to be a part of the work being done by our City Council. We have seen first hand when we spoke to the Community and Public Services Committee. We appreciate the City Council's engagement and support for our vehicle for hire presentation.

We intend to continue to be effective in bringing the voice of women and gender diverse folks to City Council. Looking ahead there is much to be done to engage Edmontonians, amplify the voice of women and gender diverse folks and provide support to help them reach their full potential and WAVE is committed to this task.

Message New WAVE Vice Chair, Julianne Threlfall

Back in 2014, WAVE was created because the voice of women was missing on Council directly. Since my time on WAVE, we've seen more women seek council roles which led to 2021 and a historic election result. For some this might be viewed as a task complete - but in my view WAVE's work is far from over. We've seen the importance of ensuring women and gender diverse folks are consciously considered in City of Edmonton policies and planning. I look forward to being part of the leadership team that shares this voice and the work of WAVE with the City. I am looking to call up our next generation and encourage women and gender diverse folks in leadership opportunities across the City, in all public and private sector roles.

Equity is more than a goal in itself, it is a precondition for meeting the challenge of reducing poverty, promoting sustainable development and building good governance.

Who is WAVE?

Women's Advocacy Voice of Edmonton (WAVE) is comprised of 15 community volunteers from diverse backgrounds and experiences who provide Edmonton City Council with advice on affairs relevant to municipal jurisdiction. In February 2014, the Women's Advocacy Voice of Edmonton Committee Bylaw was approved by the City Council and the WAVE Committee was formally established in spring 2014.

Our Mandate is to:

- make recommendations to Council about women's gender-based issues and opportunities in relation to Council policies, priorities, and decisions;
- promote leadership development to empower Edmonton women to fully participate in civic life; and
- research and provide information on resources about women's gender-based issues and opportunities in Edmonton.

Among the first of its kind in Canada, WAVE ensures the unique perspectives of women and girls are included in the conversations that shape the city.

WAVE is a key pillar, a community-based committee that reports directly to Edmonton City Council, brings invaluable perspective to City Council and the Civic Administration.

 WAVE Committee 2022 		
Returning Members	New Members 2022-2024	Administration, Social Media Coordinator, City Council Advisor
Angelika Matson Charlotte <u>Oluwafunmayo</u> (Funmi) Omole Muno Julianne Threlfall Nadia	Elli Dehnavi Santana Febrey Maria George Areezah Jiwa Rachel (Echo) Keizer Del Marlow Thy Nguyen Olubusola Onasile	Christine Causing Kendra Fincaryk Councillor Jennifer Rice

“WAVE is imperative to the City’s goals of diversity and inclusion. It’s important to have the voice of Edmonton women advocating and providing women’s perspectives to help ensure Edmonton is advancing towards gender equality in all aspects of the City”

~From former Councillor Bev Esslinger, City Council Advisor to the WAVE Committee

WAVE’s Work in 2021-2022

Policy (Need to add more info on the VFH Report)

During consultations at WAVE meetings this year, feedback was provided on a number of City of Edmonton plans and City Council reports.. This included:

- Vehicle for Hire Annual Report (VFH): WAVE presented their concerns and recommendations regarding to safety and accessibility on VFHs to City Council on the Vehicle For Hire Annual Report on March 7, 2022 and look forward to working the VFH at the City to implement some of the recommendations proposed by WAVE
- Snow and Ice Control
- Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls
- Affordable Housing Needs Assessment

Leadership and Engagement

The Leadership and Engagement Working Group’s mandate is leadership development and promotion to empower Edmonton women to fully participate in civic life. The focus this year was:

- Maintaining social media presence during the covid pandemic including content specific around elections, COVID-recovery and highlighting leaders in the community
- Meeting with several community leaders on projects and initiatives that WAVE could support (Edmonton Fire Dept - Inspire Camp for Women, Intersectional Yeg, ParityYeg (Election Campaign))
- Volunteer management within WAVE for projects, this year’s focus was social media
- Strengthening our partnership with ParityYEG by supporting a Policy Competition for women and Councillor mentorship funded by FCM

Reconciliation and Allyship

A new working group was formed with the goal of recognizing the importance of reconciliation and working towards it by concentrating on WAVE members’ education and awareness in order to become allies with Indigenous Communities. The focus this year was:

- Created a land acknowledgement guide for WAVE members to use when creating land acknowledgements for WAVE meetings
- Establishing a book/article/resource club for all WAVE members to participate, ongoing cultural training for WAVE members, and being open to other opportunities as they arise
- Visiting the Indigenous Peoples Experience at Fort Edmonton Park
- Establishing a reconciliation moment at every WAVE meeting with the commitment to read the MMIWG report and discuss a chapter at each WAVE meeting

Presentations at WAVE meetings

A variety of organizations and City of Edmonton Administration presented and exchanged learnings at WAVE Committee meetings this year, discussing a variety of women's needs, interests and potential collaborative opportunities. They included the following:

- Snow and Ice Control Program
- The Indigenous Relations Office and their report on MMIWG
- Camp Inspire, a firefighting camp designed to promote firefighting as a viable and rewarding career for women and gender diverse communities

Community Outreach

Due to the pandemic, it was a challenging time to do community outreach.

Through reaching out and connecting with various organizations and groups, dialogue was encouraged and awareness of women's issues and concerns was increased. These groups included:

- YWCA and WAVE co-hosted a Women's Day Online Event in 2021
- City Hall School presentations
- City for All Women Initiative (CAWI) Intersectional Feminist Revoverly Toolkit For Municipalities

2022 WAVE Participation and Support of Events

- SkirtsAFire Festival: This festival creates space for women's artistic expression to be cultivated, experienced and shared.

WAVE's Strategic Plan 2022-2024

In April 2022, WAVE created its 2022-2024 strategic plan.

WAVE's Overarching Values

Values are the committee's agreed upon principles that guide the work, planning, mandate, and future aspirations. They are meant to provide direction when thinking of any actions and when thinking of relationships within the committee and with the community.

Advocacy and Engagement

Meaningfully and collaboratively engaging with community and various stakeholders doing work to advance issues that are central for women and gender diverse peoples in the city and advocate for them.

Interconnected Community and Inclusion

WAVE is committed to building and maintaining an interconnected and inclusive community in Edmonton by working with community leaders, advocates, and allies. We prioritise

intersectionality and decolonial perspectives when planning, advising, community relationship building with and for women and gender diverse folks. We commit to intentional learning by taking ownership of our own learning, individually and collectively to better represent and amplify the voices of the community.

Self-reflection and Learning

WAVE members recognize the importance of self-reflection on their positionality as a collective and as individual members by acknowledging the privilege, bias, limits and the intersectional power structures that shape lived experiences.

Equity

WAVE recognizes that institutions, systems, and practices have historically disproportionately impacted equity seeking communities in the city. An anti-oppressive approach supports equity and inclusive work within the committee and its engagement with community.

Reconciliation

WAVE recognizes the settler colonial system that has shaped and continues to shape institutions and systems in Canada, and continues to impact the lives of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples. Reconciliation work starts with each member as a self-reflection and commitment to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 94 Calls to Actions and Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Calls to Justice, and WAVE as a collective to create transformative change.

Priorities

Priorities are the main areas of work that WAVE will be committed to in the next two years. The priorities provide some direction for focus and orientation of the work, actions, and initiatives for the committee. The priority areas will be discussed in each subcommittee and in the general committee over the next months to determine what actions can be taken that fall within the priorities commitment.

- 1. Advocacy**
- 2. Intersectionality, Reconciliation, Anti-Racism, and Equity**
- 3. Empowering women to get involved in different ways with municipal government**

WAVE's work will be structured in 4 subcommittees and an ad hoc committee which will implement WAVE's work plan and strategic priorities. The subcommittees

Subcommittee 1: Policy	Subcommittee 2: Projects	Subcommittee 3: Internal	Subcommittee 4. Reconciliation	Social Media Admin
To empower, educate, and <u>mobilize women</u> and gender diverse folks in the Edmonton community through the execution of policy-based initiatives	To empower, educate, and <u>mobilize women</u> and gender diverse folks in the Edmonton community through the execution of initiatives that align with WAVE strategic priorities	To foster a spirit of community, <u>maximize</u> operational efficiency, advocate for internal change and leverage internal synergy in order to empower and support our members. internal support of membership, book clubs, educational component, supporting folks internally, leadership, networking, mentorship, reconciliation, or all weaved in	1- Reconciliation would be part of the whole committee and part of the 3 working groups. 2- To direct, plan and create curriculum content for the whole committee's reconciliation moment in general meetings.	Ad hoc volunteers who are interested in the work of Social media posts, messages, WAVE activities would work with the social media admin.

How WAVE is Making a Difference

Outgoing WAVE Member Amy Yu

I joined the WAVE to get involved, raise my voice, and advocate for women to bring about positive change for gender-based issues. Being part of WAVE's Leadership and Engagement working committee allowed me to not only raise my voice but to amplify the collective voice of WAVE through social media. I'm proud of the team I worked with, in the foundational work that we did in creating a framework for communicating through social media to extend our reach to various demographics, supporting women. I most value the diverse opinions and perspectives that were brought to every meeting and the connections I made with WAVE members who are inspirational in the change that we all

hope to bring about to empower Edmonton women. Thank you for the opportunity and I will watch from the sidelines cheering on future efforts and successes.

Outgoing WAVE Member, Joan Welch

WAVE is a diverse group of intelligent and committed women. Their rich experience and advice enhances our city. An example is the work done to bring safety and accessibility issues with Vehicles for Hire to Council, a success built on collaboration with other city advisory committees and the persistence of WAVE members over several years.

Current WAVE Member, Charlotte Wray

I joined WAVE in May 2020, right at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. There was so much uncertainty and change during that time, that I struggled to understand my role as a committee member. However, members were incredibly patient and through numerous meetings helped me to gain the context needed to support WAVE. In the last year, I have gained the confidence to support more initiatives (supporting our recruitment of new members, participating in other subcommittees, building an internal resource) and am excited for what another term will teach me!

Goodbye to Members and Welcome New Members

WAVE said goodbye to a few members on the WAVE Committee: Kourtney Boucher, Kristina Midbo, Elyssa Teslyk, Joan Welch, Michele Jackson and Amy Yu. These members helped lay down the foundation for the next two years for WAVE and we thank all them for their valuable contributions and insights.

We welcomed eight new members who joined on May 1st, 2022. We are looking forward to working with our new City Council advisor, Councilor Jennifer Rice. We are excited to work with these new members and implement our 2022-2024 Strategic Plan.