



Women's Advocacy  
Voice of Edmonton

## Annual Report 2022-2023



### **Message from WAVE Chair, Funmi Omole**

Over the last year, the Women's Advocacy Voice of Edmonton (WAVE) has made significant achievements. We welcomed 12 new members with a wealth of knowledge, experience and passion for advocacy. WAVE has made effective efforts to successfully connect with various communities across the city of Edmonton, and diverse organizations through strategic enhancement of the new and existing networks, to strengthen our critical relationships. Internally, our focus was to unite the team through innovative ways towards a shared vision, and with one voice towards equity.

WAVE is encouraged by the direction and strategic priorities of the City Council, as we see equity, accountability and dedication evidenced in the collective efforts made so far. We are aware of the complexities that characterize the current social issues, and



appreciate that these are understood by the Council. These issues disproportionately affect women and other marginalized individuals.

Our current strategic objective is to further connect with communities, so that we can bring their voices to Council with evidence based recommendations on how we can navigate the challenges that our City is experiencing.

I am proud of our collective successes, and grateful for a commitment of continued collaboration towards emerging opportunities in the days ahead. You must agree that there is much to be done towards making Edmonton a model city where people can thrive without limitations of gender and orientation.

### **Message WAVE Vice Chair, Julianne Threlfall**

In 2022, we welcomed an almost entirely new committee which came with new energy and a renewed focus on where we are going as a committee. We have seen and experienced the impact of COVID in our communities which was compounded by challenges in housing, transit safety, job security and inflation. We are witnessing what women and gender diverse folks are facing in the neighboring US and watching the impacts of new legislation and what that means for equity but more over the safety of women and gender diverse folks. We take seriously the impacts that policy and planning have in ensuring women and gender diverse folks' voices are heard and intentionally included in policy decision making.

It is our goal to continue to bring our views, lens and voice to Edmonton City Council to represent this community. Our work is far from over and we are whole-heartedly committed to ensuring we continue to advocate for these voices. What is good for women and gender-diverse folks in the City of Edmonton, is truly good for all Edmontonians.

*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.*



**The Women's Advocacy Voice of Edmonton (WAVE)** is currently comprised of 18 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.

During our 2022-2024 strategic planning session, we identified the need to expand our advocacy to include gender diverse folks. WAVE heard from community engagement to add a GBA+ lens to the Vehicle for Hire Report that went to Council in March 2022, on the struggles of feeling safe while riding Transit that is being faced daily by 2+QLGBT folks. There is an opportunity for this lens to be added to current advisory committees to council. **We request that our mandate be updated to reflect this change and include gender diverse individuals in WAVE's mandate.**

**WAVE Vision Statement**

WAVE is committed to make Edmonton an inclusive and equitable community powered by bravery and diverse perspectives that creates a platform for all women and gender diverse persons to feel included and respected, and to be able to fully participate.

**WAVE Mission Statement**

Through advocacy, engagement, and community building, we strive to create an inclusive and gender equitable city by recognizing and removing barriers, promoting opportunity for contribution, and respect for all.

Among the first of its kind in Canada, WAVE ensures the unique perspectives of women and gender diverse individuals 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, and brings an intersectional perspective to City Council and the Civic Administration.





## WAVE's Work in 2022-2023

### Policy

To empower, educate, and mobilize women and gender diverse folks in the Edmonton community through the execution of policy-based initiatives.

The Policy subcommittee has provided input to the following City of Edmonton policies and projects:

- Vehicle for Hire bylaw 17400 amendment: After the 2021 motion to amend the current VFH bylaw WAVE and the Accessibility Advisory Committee spoke to the council approved the motion to amend the current VFH bylaw to add more driver education for customer safety, and accessibility/disability considerations. We now have regular check-ins with our contact at the City of Edmonton's Development Services Branch to provide feedback after milestones have been achieved. For example, the creation of a driver education program is being added into the VFH bylaw. Uber also presented to us and provided an overview of their safety program and safety commitments and we shared our concerns regarding safety on Uber.
- Restorative Justice Bylaw 14614 Public Places amendment: Participated in a focus group as a part of the Community Standards and Neighborhoods public engagement. The object is to understand how restorative justice could be applicable in the case of offenses related to race, religion, sexual orientation or gender identity. We provided feedback on the potential positive and negative effects of incorporating restorative justice practices to this bylaw.
- Edmonton Housing Needs Assessment: Presentation from Social Planning and Housing. The two CoE Departments are currently working on creating a housing needs assessment and will bring it to attach to the Housing Strategic Plan which will be presented at Council in 2023. The City of Edmonton has plans to partner with the HART (Housing Assessment Resource Tools) and follow their methodology.
- Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls: The Indigenous Relations Office (IRO) at the City of Edmonton provided us information on their MMIWG report to Council. In November, WAVE received an update from the IRO on the MMIWG and Action Plan. MMIWG is part of the WAVE Strategic Plan for 2023.



**Projects** (This is a new subcommittee previously called Leadership and Engagement)

To empower, educate, and mobilize women and gender diverse folks in the Edmonton community through the execution of initiatives that align with WAVE strategic priorities.

The Projects subcommittee has worked on the following over the past year:

- Partnered with ParityYEG on a policy competition and Councillor mentorship. ParityYEG is a nonprofit, nonpartisan community organization that aims to effect societal and structural change by empowering women to seek leadership positions in public service and aims to ensure that every door is being opened for women.
- Discussions on WAVE's community reach through social media.
- Discussion on creating a WAVE website.

**Internal**

To foster a spirit of community, maximize operational efficiency, advocate for internal change and leverage internal synergy in order to empower and support our members. Internal support of membership, educational component, supporting folks internally, leadership, networking, mentorship, reconciliation, or all weaved in.

The Internal subcommittee has worked on the following over the past year:

- Orientation and onboarding.
- To support the administrative staff with recruitment and onboarding process. This includes reviewing applications, interviewing applicants, choosing new members, and training for new members.

Education coordination

- To create and facilitate learning opportunities that supports the work of WAVE such as the Kairos Blanket exercise and the Allyship workshop facilitated by Bent Arrow Traditional Healing Society.



- Inviting community members to speak at WAVE meetings, collecting resources on local organizations and groups to potentially partner with on future projects.

#### Areas of Growth

- To determine opportunities for growth within the committee and facilitate related education.

#### Knowledge Management

- To keep information up-to-date in the WAVE Internal Hub.

#### Volunteer Management

- To consider how to work with volunteers to help and assist with WAVE's work or events if required.
- To ensure WAVE Committee members who volunteer their time and energy to the work of WAVE are actively involved and are working with other WAVE members.

### **Reconciliation and Allyship**

To ensure Reconciliation and Allyship is a focus for the whole committee and a part of all working groups. This includes coordinating, planning, and creating curriculum content for the monthly reconciliation learning moments in our general meetings.

The Reconciliation and Allyship subcommittee has worked on the following over the past year:

- Indigenous cultural learning with Indigenous elders and cultural practitioners including Bent Arrow Traditional Healing Society and Wase Saba Experiences in the PĪYĒSĪW WÂSKÂHIKAN (Thunderbird House) at the Edmonton Public Library.
- Commitment to an Indigenous learning moment (such as discussion of UNDRIP and the TRC and the MMIWG report) and discussion at WAVE Committee meetings.
- Visits to the Indigenous Peoples Experience at Fort Edmonton Park with the WAVE Committee.



## **Presentation and Engagements at WAVE and Subcommittee Meetings**

WAVE provided input to the following policies, projects and reports:

- City of Edmonton's Vehicle For Hire
- City of Edmonton's, Amendment of the Bylaw 14614 Public Places, Restorative Justice
- City of Edmonton's Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women's and Girls report, Indigenous Relations Office
- City of Edmonton, Exploring Policy Directions for Newcomer Inclusion, C529 Policy Review
- City of Edmonton's Snow and Ice Control Program
- City of Edmonton's Warehouse Park Project
- Edmonton Housing Needs Assessment

## **Key Accomplishments and Highlights**

- Welcomed thirteen (13) new members to the WAVE Committee
- Partnered with ParityYEG, a non profit organization that encourages and helps women and gender diverse individuals to run for political positions in all levels of government, and collaborated to organize a policy competition and Councillor mentorship to encourage BIPOC women and gender diverse individuals to receive an opportunity to receive a mentorship from City Councillors.
- Attended a Municipal Governance Session with the Office of the City Clerk and Luncheon with Mayor Sohi and Councillors Salvador, Knack, Cartmell, Rice and Rutherford
- Participated in a "Human Library" as part of W.P. Wagner High School's Women's History Month celebrations
- Supported a project with the Black Muslim Women's Group
- Presented 17 times to City Hall School to grades 4, 5, 6 about gender equity and the importance of women and gender diverse leadership and sharing the work of WAVE





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# WAVE at **W.P. Wagner's** **She Did, So I Can** Event





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## Community Outreach

As we recover from the pandemic, a main focus is connecting with communities, equity seeking organizations and programs. These groups included:

- LEAF Edmonton
- Black Canadian Women in Action
- Africa Center's Ujima Fellowship Program
- TCLI Foundation
- Canadian Federation of University Women
- University of Alberta - Community Service Learning Program
- Caribbean Women's Network
- Pembina Institute
- University of Alberta - Intersections of Gender