

WAVE

Women's Advocacy Voice of Edmonton

The Building Blocks for Success



WOMEN'S
INITIATIVE
EDMONTON



WOMEN'S
ADVOCACY
VOICE OF
EDMONTON

WAVE

- › Makes recommendations to Edmonton city council about women's gender-based issues and opportunities in relation to council policies, priorities and decisions
- › Promotes leadership development to empower Edmonton women to fully participate in civic life
- › Researches and provides information and resources to Edmontonians about women's gender-based issues and opportunities

“ The creation of WAVE is a true milestone for Edmonton and all the people who live here. It shows that we aren't just hoping women will engage in civic life; we're actively seeking women's input in shaping our city. WAVE is tangible proof of Edmonton's commitment to real gender equality. ”

Jackie Foord, WAVE committee chair



*Jackie Foord, WAVE committee chair
Angelica Hernandez, WAVE committee vice chair*

WAVE has made significant progress in Year 1. **We've laid a great foundation for all of our work to come.**

*Angelica Hernandez,
WAVE committee vice chair*



WAVE Year 1

What is WAVE? The Women's Advocacy Voice of Edmonton, or WAVE, is a committee of 15 women working with Edmonton City Councillor Bev Esslinger and Mayor Don Iveson. It was created in spring of 2014, to be the mechanism or 'working part' of Edmonton's Women's Initiative.

Along with the work WAVE does, the **Edmonton Women's Initiative** also

- › supports Women@theCity: a committee of city employees to provide ideas and insights and provide mentorship opportunities in civic leadership roles
- › hosted Women's Symposiums in fall 2012 and spring 2013

WAVE will generate awareness, and share information and recommendations to Edmonton city council and other organizations: to bring a gender lens to decisions that affect all Edmontonians. This, in turn will help break down barriers and open doors to more opportunities for women to become more engaged in all aspects of civic life.

- › **Community conversations about women's issues, engagement and leadership began in 2012. These resulted in the Edmonton Women's Initiative being created in 2013. It's City Council's commitment**
 - to advocate for women in leadership roles
 - to ensure women's rights, issues and opinions are represented fairly and equally
- › **Since 2012 more than 1500 women have engaged in this initiative. Their input supported the creation of the Women's Initiative and WAVE**
- › **The Edmonton Women's Initiative is the umbrella structure within which WAVE and Women@theCity work on specific focus areas**

THIS JUST IN...

May 27, 2015: WAVE, a concerned citizen, and the Edmonton Student Alliance appeared before City Council's Transportation Committee to provide feedback about the issue of safety on Edmonton's buses and LRT. As a result, WAVE will now work with Edmonton Transit to develop a public awareness campaign, training for ETS drivers and improved ways to report harassment.

Why does WAVE matter?

In 2014, women made up half of Edmonton's population. But that's not the case when it comes to our city's community leaders. There simply aren't enough women, particularly those from aboriginal and immigrant communities, and women from diverse backgrounds, sitting at Edmonton's public decision-making tables. Changing that simply makes sense because it means all Edmontonians will get better value from and more opportunities to participate in city services and civic life.

We don't have gender equality.
Let's change that.
Edmonton Women's Initiative VISION



BY THE NUMBERS

minimum % of women required in government, according to the UN, to make a visible impact on style and content of political decision-making

% of mayors in Canada are female

% of city councillors in Canada are female

% of women in Edmonton's total population in 2014



% of senior management positions in Edmonton are held by women³

% of women in Edmonton's labour force in 2011

% of Canada's MP's are female (2011) - the highest ever

of female city councillors in Edmonton 2013 - present

Alberta women working full-time make 63% of what men do.
That's the lowest rate in Canada.²

“ Women's equal participation in decision-making is not only a demand for simple justice of democracy but can also be seen as a necessary condition for women's interests to be taken into account. Without the active participation of women and the incorporation of women's perspectives at all levels of decision-making, the goals of equality, development and peace cannot be achieved. ”

United Nations - Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chapter I, resolution I, annex II, Paragraph 181

² Lahey, Kathleen A., *The Alberta Disadvantage: Gender, Taxation, and Income Equality*; March 2015, Parkland Institute.

³ McInturff, Kate, *The Best and Worst Place to be a Woman in Canada An Index of Gender Equality in Canada's Twenty Largest Metropolitan Areas*, April 2014, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives.

WAVE is already setting records.

When Edmonton City Council formed WAVE in February 2014, 150 women applied to volunteer for it. That's the one of the highest number of applicants ever for a city committee.



WAVE's year 1 highlights

The WAVE committee met for the first time in May of 2014.

Fifteen women, of varying ages and cultures, from all aspects of life in Edmonton, all determined to break down gender barriers in our city. And they were working from a blank slate, so to speak, because this is the first committee of its kind in our city.



Women of Edmonton! We want to hear your stories. Drop into the Stanley Milner Library tonight between 5 and 8 pm, and tell us about your experiences in Edmonton as a woman. It's a way of collecting and preserving our social history, and for us, to better understand the fabric of our city as seen through women's eyes.



"Women of Edmonton! We want to hear your stories. Drop into the Stanley Milner Library tonight between 5 and 8 pm, and tell us about your experiences in Edmonton as a woman. It's a way of collecting and preserving our social history, and for us, to better understand the fabric of our city as seen through women's eyes."

This event was part of In Your Own Words – a MAKE SOMETHING EDMONTON initiative to collect the region's oral history and preserve it on Soundcloud, so it can be accessed by all.

The WAVE committee began its work by determining how WAVE could most effectively apply an intersectional gender lens to city policy; learning how and where to be involved in civic decision-making. Committee members then started building a framework, outlining WAVE's work for the next few years, including

- › **Defining WAVE's 4 strategic priority areas, each with its own working group**
 - Leadership
 - Engage
 - Gender Lens
 - Policy
- › **Identifying policy areas where WAVE should focus**
- › **Doing baseline research on the state of women's civic and political involvement in Edmonton, aimed at promoting evidence-based decision-making**
- › **Creating a public presence for WAVE and gender-based issues by creating a Women's Initiative social media campaign on Facebook and Twitter**

What is an **intersectional gender lens**?

Applying a *gender lens* means considering all genders' interests and needs. These come from many perspectives such as race, gender, or socio-economic status – and they all intersect. An *intersectional gender lens* considers all of these and how together they might lead to discrimination, oppression or domination.

WAVE's year 1 work on strategic priority areas.

Each area has a working group to forward each priority's actions.

Engagement and open dialogue lay at the heart of our work at WAVE, as we remove barriers and inform policy.

*Dawn Newton,
WAVE committee member*



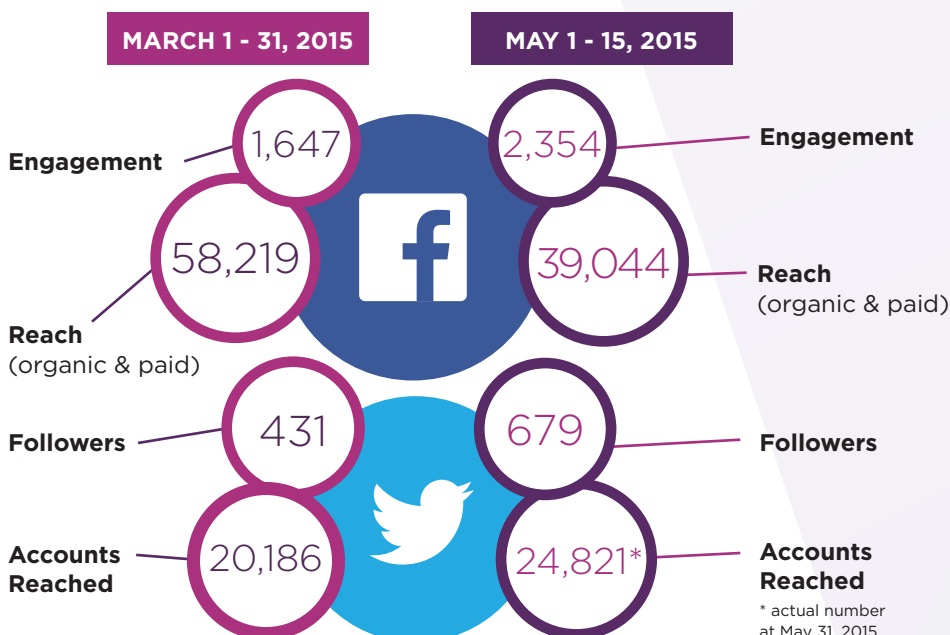
LEADERSHIP: model and share leadership skills with women; address barriers they face in community participation; identify existing leadership tools, new approaches and opportunities and apply these in Edmonton



ENGAGE: determine how WAVE should identify policy areas of focus and then how to influence those; develop a full communications strategy; foster dialogue through social media and other avenues; identify opportunities for public engagement; engage other advocates to be involved with WAVE initiatives

WAVE SOCIAL MEDIA SUCCESS

In just its first six months, WAVE's social media campaign is taking off. The infographic below is a snapshot of the growth from March to May 15, 2015.



2015 Leadership Outcomes

- › WAVE is a key connector with Women@theCity, an internal city committee dealing with gender-based issues for municipal employees
- › Co-hosted Celebrating and Inspiring Women Workshop and the International Women's Day event
- › Learning more about Family Friendly Parliament procedures and how these can be applied to the City of Edmonton

2015 Engagement Outcomes

- › Communication plan and key messages completed
- › Social media campaign underway with steady and consistent growth
- › Women's Initiative website work is underway
- › Participation in two Public Consultation Council Initiative open communication workshops

WAVE is proof for me, and for all of us, **that every person's voice – no matter their gender – is equally important.** It's also a symbol of progress; a building block towards an equitable society where each and every one of us is fully valued.

Meghana Valupadas, WAVE committee member

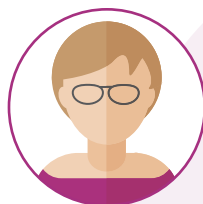


2015 Gender Lens Outcomes

- › Benchmark research completed on women's civic involvement in Edmonton
- › Glossary of terms completed, so all members understand and use the same language in discussing gender lens
- › Two gender lens training sessions for WAVE members, to understand how to apply a gender lens to policy work
- › Gender Gap scorecard work underway

2015 Policy Outcomes

- › Review current Edmonton policies and initiatives to identify initial policy priorities for WAVE
- › Review and evaluation of Safety on Transit report and recommendations and resulting presentation to City Council Transportation Committee
- › City advocacy training session for committee members completed
- › Participation on the Mayor's End Poverty Task Force



GENDER LENS: educate WAVE members on the concept and application of gender lens; build an online resource database on gender-based issues; identify gaps for further research; develop a gender-gap scorecard for the City of Edmonton, modeled on the United Nations Gender Gap Scorecard



POLICY: focus initial work on city policies relating to social issues, transportation, infrastructure and urban design; find ways to connect and work on joint initiatives with Women@theCity; develop and present annual reports to City Council

WAVE has two additional working groups

› Symposium

- planning Edmonton's October 2015 Women's Symposium

› Communication

- providing timely communication support and input on emerging issues and messaging for public and social media outreach

“For me, WAVE is a unique opportunity because we're casting a gender lens on issues that are important to all Edmontonians. Our committee membership is so diverse that our deliberations and actions intersect virtually every aspect of municipal concern.”

Philomena Kokeke-Ihejirikam, University of Alberta, WAVE committee member



WAVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- Emily Dietrich
- Rajvir Gill
- Angelica Hernandez
- Jennifer Jennax
- Dawn Newton
- Mia Norrie
- Philomina Okeke-Ihejirika
- Claudette Rain
- Preet Kaur Sandhu
- Cristina Stasia
- Meghana Valupadas
- Sandra Woitas
- Hendriatta Wong
- Meheret Worku
- Dilara Yegani

Missing from the photo: Jacqueline Foord, Preet Kaur Sandhu (recruited in May 2015)

WOMEN'S INITIATIVE CITY COUNCIL SPONSORS

Mayor Don Iveson,
Councillor Bev Esslinger

WOMEN'S INITIATIVE COMMUNITY SERVICES LEADS

Lyall Brenneis, Kate Gunn

WOMEN'S INITIATIVE PROJECT MANAGER & COORDINATOR

Marian Bruin, Brenda Wong

“ WAVE represents women of all ages and different social and cultural backgrounds. We're united by a common goal: to engage all Edmontonians to talk and to take action, so that Edmonton is an excellent place for women and for everyone who lives here - in term of leadership, equality, representation and quality of life. ”

Bev Esslinger, Edmonton City Councillor



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Connect with us
www.edmonton.ca/women
and click on WAVE



Women's Initiative
Edmonton



@equalityYEG