



## CITY OF VANCOUVER

### ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Report Date: April 3, 2007  
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Meeting Date: May 1, 2007

TO: Vancouver City Council  
FROM: Director, Equal Employment Opportunity Program  
SUBJECT: Gender Equality Strategy - Status Update

#### RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council receive this report for information.

#### CITY MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The City Manager submits the foregoing report for information.

#### COUNCIL POLICY

There is no applicable Council Policy.

#### PURPOSE

The purpose of this Report is to provide Council with a report back on the status of the Actions set out in Phase I and Phase II of the City's Gender Equality Strategy.

#### BACKGROUND

At the Regular Meeting on January 30, 2007, City Council passed a resolution that staff prepare a report back as soon as possible on the status of the Actions set out in Phase I and

Phase II of the City's Gender Equality Strategy. That Report back to Council is attached as Appendix A.

## DISCUSSION

On December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2003, City Council resolved that the City establish a "Women's Work Taskforce" to report to Council on:

- 1) ways in which the City of Vancouver can better assist women impacted by provincial cuts to programs, services and legislation protections;
- 2) a review of the principles, operating procedures and funding to ensure women's equality concerns are reflected appropriately throughout the City's workplan; and
- 3) what initiatives can be taken by municipalities, acting together and with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, to improve the situation of women.

The Women's Task Force subsequently submitted a Report, "A Gender Equality Strategy for the City of Vancouver," which was adopted at **the Regular Meeting on July 12, 2005**. The Gender Equality Strategy contained a series of Actions, subdivided into Phase I and Phase II.

At the Regular Meeting on January 30, 2007, City Council resolved to direct staff to prepare a report back as soon as possible on the actions set out in Phase I and Phase II of the City's Gender Equality Strategy. Appendix A of this report provides a detailed response to each of the Actions in Phase I and Phase II, as requested.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications.

## CONCLUSION

On January 30, 2007 at the Regular Meeting, Council ask staff to provide a status update on the Actions contained in the Gender Equality Strategy. This report is in response to that request.

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## REPORT BACK ON STATUS OF ACTIONS CONTAINED IN PHASE I AND PHASE II OF THE CITY OF VANCOUVER GENDER EQUALITY STRATEGY

### PHASE I ACTIONS

#### Action 1.1 Social Planning, CSG

Provide financial and other types of resources dedicated to initiatives that support the safety, inclusion and well-being of women, including childcare services, family services, neighbourhood houses, women's shelters and centres, and specific services for immigrant women, young women and girls, and Aboriginal women throughout the City.

In 2006, City Council provided Community Services Grants totalling \$588,116 to 14 groups whose focus is to work for and with women. These groups include Battered Women's Support Services, Big Sisters, the Downtown Eastside Women's Centre, PACE (Prostitution Alternatives Counselling and Education Society), Pacific Post Partum, Philippine Women Centre, Pacific Immigrant Resources, Vancouver Rape Relief, Vancouver Status of Women, Vancouver Women's Health Collective, WISH Drop-In Centre, Women Against Violence Against Women, YWCA Crabtree Corner and YWCA Single Mother's Support Services.

While these groups focus specifically on women, virtually all of the 101 programs funded by the City support and involve women. Younger mothers from diverse cultural backgrounds, and often with low family incomes, connect with each other through the city's eight family places; young women drop in at the Broadway Youth Resource Centre, lead training workshops with Self Help Resources, and participate in many other youth programs; older women are participants and contributors in eleven different seniors' groups supported by City funding.

Social Planning staff are beginning to Co-Chair a committee on women and safety in the DTES, in collaboration with the Province. The committee includes representatives from across the city, provincial ministries, and Vancouver Coastal Health. In addition, we work with Planning, the Housing Centre and Drug Policy on projects such as a new space for the WISH Drop-in for sex trade workers, and other developments serving women. Social Planning is also working to coordinate efforts within the city on the issues of sexually exploited youth, who are mostly young women, sex trade workers, and gang violence.

The Youth Outreach Team involves young women in a variety of projects. 53% of Youth Politik participants were young women, as were 50% of CoV award recipients. Young women also had significant involvement in Get Plugged In (the network for preventing harmful drug use) and the prevention summit. Almost 55% of Partners at Work participants were young women. (The YOT work also supports Action 1.9 on public involvement.

The Community Services Group, via staff at the Carnegie Centre, has also coordinated the Annual Missing Women's Memorial March, in order to recognize and honour the women who have gone missing, and their families and friends.

## **Action 1.2 CSG**

### **Provide support for the key strategies of the Vancouver Agreement's Women's Task Team.**

The Vancouver Agreement Women's Task Team has worked with a number of community organizations representing women in relation to several projects benefiting women and girls.

**Justice for Girls:** This three-year initiative will identify key issues and barriers that street-involved young women and girls face in accessing safe, supportive, and sustainable housing. The project will provide opportunities for marginalized young women to take leadership roles in developing creative options for housing and other preventive measures to address the causes of young women becoming involved in street life. Vancouver Agreement funding is directed at capacity building and leadership development during the project's first year. Results of this initiative have far exceeded expectations.

**Mobile Access Program:** This program provides a place of respite and safety from violence for street-based sex workers. Services include emergency medical advice and assistance; resource and referral information; facilitation of access to services and transportation; provision of condoms and clean needles, and counselling and information about the prevention of violence against women. This is a three year pilot delivered by WISH and PACE.

A comprehensive evaluation of the pilot has been completed. The evaluation was presented at the 17th International Conference on the Reduction of Drug Related Harm in May 2006 (peer reviewed) and at the Centre for Clinical Epidemiology and Evaluation at VGH in June, 2006. It has been accepted for the 7th World Indigenous Women and Wellness Conference: Warriors Against Violence in Vancouver, September 2006.

**Bad Date Reporting:** This pilot project is administered by the BC Coalition of Experiential Women and the Prostitution Alternatives Counselling and Educations (PACE) Confrontation Management Team. Project objectives include educating sex trade workers, police and protective services about bad dates, to reduce the high rate of violence against sex trade workers, and to increase the effectiveness of prosecution for assault crimes. The project involves creating partnerships between sex trade workers, police and protective services, with the goal of reducing the high rate of violence against sex trade workers through Bad Date Reporting and response strategies

### Action 1.3 EEO

#### Continue to:

- ensure equal employment opportunities for women through the effective implementation of our Equal Employment Opportunity policy;
- protect employees' human rights through the effective implementation of our Harassment policy;
- promote and support the employment of women, including specific initiatives for women in non-traditional jobs, by partnering with educational institutions and community agencies, work practica, career fairs, the Aboriginal Employment Partnership Initiative, and related outreach activities;
- provide staff training in a variety of formats on the City's Workplace Harassment and Equal Employment Opportunity policies, including training on preventing harassment, building respectful workplaces, conflict resolution and building and supporting a diverse workplace;
- act as a neutral and impartial resource for all City staff on issues relating to harassment and human rights, and
- provide mediation, intervention and investigation services related to harassment complaints and issues.

The Equal Employment Opportunity Program continues to work with all City departments to provide guidance and training on the City's EEO and Harassment Policies, and promote equal employment opportunities for under-represented groups, including women.

EEO acts as an impartial resource for all City staff on issues relating to harassment and human rights. Interventions can include: information and advice, workplace agreements or guidelines, coaching, mediation, informal and formal investigation services. During the 2006 year, EEO provided intervention and resolution of 12 internal harassment complaints/potential harassment situations. Half of these complaints were brought forward by female staff. Of the approximately 52 inquiries received, 20 were initiated by women.

EEO continues to promote and support the employment of women, including specific initiatives for women in non-traditional jobs, through a wide variety of outreach activities. These include partnerships with educational institutions and community agencies, work practicums, career fairs, the Aboriginal Employment Partnership Initiative, and related activities. Resource information on educational institutions and community agencies, including specific agencies representing women, was updated and expanded in 2006. The Human Resources Department also received this update and uses it in communicating information on upcoming job opportunities to a variety of community organizations, including: ATIRA Women's Resource Society, SUCCESS, BCIT Trades Exploration Program, Tradeworks Training Society, Minerva Foundation for B.C. Women, YWCA, UBC Life & Career Centre, VCC Employment & Educational Access for Women. Information interviews, job-shadows and work placements within City departments are also arranged through EEO.

EEO continues to provide staff training, including one and two-day workshops to staff and supervisors on harassment and human rights ("Workplace Harassment Prevention

and Intervention Skills"). EEO also provides crew talks and information sessions at City worksites. EEO presents sessions to Vancouver Fire & Rescue Services Recruits, as well as workshops on harassment prevention and creating respectful workplaces to Battalion Chiefs and Company Officers. One-day workshops on diversity are offered to City staff ("Creating An Inclusive Culture") and in 2007 we will be offering a half-day workshop on "Understanding Cultural Differences". In partnership with representatives from Human Resources, Occupational Health & Safety and the Unions, EEO takes part in the delivery of half-day "Respectful Workplace" sessions.

#### **Action 1.4 City Clerk's**

**Establish an Advisory Committee on Women's Issues to provide advice and further develop actions in this plan, with liaison positions from the VSB, VPB and VPD. NB: Please provide information re: when and how the issue of the proposed Committee was addressed by incoming Council.**

At the Standing Committee on Planning and Environment on November 2, 2006 Council discharged the Advisory Committee on Women's Issues. Given that this committee was initially approved late in the last Council term, staff did not have the opportunity to develop terms of reference for Council's consideration nor were members appointed.

#### **Action 1.5 City Clerk's**

**Create a page on the City's website that increases the visibility of women's civic engagement.**

In response to the action plan, we established a link to various materials and a toolkit to increase women's participation in municipal decision-making on "The Get Involved with Your Community" page on the Public Involvement Program website.

#### **Action 1.6 City Clerk's**

**Create a new compulsory category in the City Council report template called "Sustainability Implications," combining the current "Environmental" and "Social" Implications. This category will direct that Council Reports address social, economic and environmental sustainability, including different implications for women and men, girls and boys.**

The template has not been changed to combine 'Environmental' and 'Social' implications into a single compulsory category called 'Sustainability'. However, the above implications are captured where relevant under the existing categories. At present, the only compulsory category in the template is Financial Implications.

#### **Action 1.7 Sustainability Office, City Clerk's**

**Add a training module on using the Sustainability Implications lens to the Committee Orientation for all Committees at City Hall.**

The Committee Orientation as currently provided serves to introduce applicants and potential members of the advisory committees to the general role of advisory bodies, the advisory bodies in place, and the commitment expectations when serving on an advisory body. The training is general - not in-depth - and does not address any form of implications 'lens' whether it be financial, legal, community, or sustainability.

#### **Action 1.8 CSG**

**Develop, pilot and implement a gender impact assessment tool for use by City programs, which includes guidance on collecting and using gender disaggregated information.**

A gender impact assessment tool has not been implemented in a systemic fashion. However, work is being done to determine which programs and resources are most frequently accessed by women, which are not, what is needed to increase programs that meet women's needs, and to make other programs more accessible to women. Examples of this work include the Carnegie Centre and Library, and Lifeskills Centre, and the Downtown Eastside Women's Centre.

#### **Action 1.9 Public Involvement, City Clerk's, CSG**

**Develop and add a module on increasing women's participation to the Public Involvement training course offered to staff.**

While women's participation is addressed as part of the training re 'identifying the participants' this area is not presently addressed as a separate module. However, in the training, staff become familiar with the tools available online through the 'Get Involved' site. This site does have a link to a body of information and a toolkit to increase women's participation in municipal decision-making - including public involvement.

#### **Action 1.10 Planning, CSG**

**Work with the Urban Design and Development Planning Centre to find ways to apply a gender lens to CPTED guidelines and review processes.**

Crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) uses specific design solutions to reduce the opportunity for crime and the fear of crime in the urban environment. Recognition of woman's safety issues related to CPTED is an important component of this approach.

The CPTED program at the City of Vancouver, developed in 1993 as a result of the Safer City Task Force, focuses on studying crime and nuisance activity occurring throughout the City and on specific sites. The vast majority of crimes are crimes against property, such as theft from cars; only a small portion is crime against persons and is generally found in localized areas of the City. While such crime is committed

against both men and women, in rare circumstances, vulnerable female populations such as seniors and immigrants are targeted, and special attention is paid to these cases.

The City's CPTED program addresses women's safety by creating safer environments, thereby reducing the risk of these crimes. CPTED has been incorporated into the City's development processes as follows:

- All new major developments and rezonings are subject to a comprehensive CPTED review which assesses the site, area crime, existing and future uses, users (including use patterns and use conflicts), and neighbourhood safety concerns. Based on this review, CPTED strategies are used to find design solutions that respond to the crime issues;
- Safety concerns identified through public consultation during other development review processes are also addressed through this CPTED approach; and
- New land use and development guidelines include CPTED considerations that are specific to that policy area or form of development.

#### **Action 1.11 Social Planning, CSG**

**Continue to work with DTES Women's Centre to develop a Street Banners project as requested.**

No request was made for assistance with this project.

#### **Action 1.12 Vancouver Police Department**

**Promote "inclusion with influence" of Aboriginal women and girls in the community consultation process on the re-instatement of the VPD Native Liaison Unit.**

The Vancouver Police Department consulted with Aboriginal elders and youth (both female and male) to facilitate the creation of the Aboriginal Community Police Center. The Aboriginal Liaison for this center is Cst. Mike Matheson.

#### **Action 1.13 Mayor's Office**

**Host a civic engagement event at City Hall on International Women's Day 2006 highlighting women's involvement in the Community Visions (City Plan) process and reaching out to those women who have not historically been involved in those processes.**

An event was held on International Women's Day 2006 highlighting women's civic involvement and experiences, including women speaking about their experiences as Aboriginal women, women with disabilities, youth and other communities.

An event is currently planned to celebrate International Women's Day 2007 that involves a collaboration between the City and a number of other municipalities through the FCM. This event again focuses on women's involvement in political and



civic life, and involves a number of women contributors who have been and/or are active in political life, across jurisdictions.

#### Action 1.14 City Council

Request that Translink engage in a public education campaign for transit users to promote safety features within the transit systems (such as the "request stop" program).

#### Action 1.15 City Council

Request that Translink develop a policy to involve women in the design of bus and sky train stops, routes and shelters including a program of women's safety audits of current transit system and routes.

#### Action 1.16 Communications, City Clerk's

Ensure all images used in City publications and promotional materials promote positive and varied images of women and men, girls and boys of diverse backgrounds.

Images used in City communications promote positive and varied images of women and men, girls and boys, of diverse backgrounds.

## PHASE II ACTIONS

#### Action 2.1a CSG

Create a coordinating body focussed on issues of well-being of Aboriginal women and girls, with an initial membership of elected and staff representatives from the City, the Parks Board, the School Board and the community, and an initial mandate of

- a) identifying current VSB, VPB and City initiatives focused on Aboriginal women and girls;
- b) identifying opportunities for coordination amongst these, and
- c) ensuring "inclusion with influence" of Aboriginal women and girls in these initiatives.

#### Action 2.1b CSG

Develop a pilot project that brings the VSB, VPB and City together to develop a supportive program in two schools for Aboriginal girls, focussing on grades 7/8/9, to help this age group stay in school and be successful in the high school grades.

### Action 2.1c CSG

Work through the Vancouver Agreement to explore the feasibility of providing an after hours safe place for Aboriginal women and girls in the DTES (including the possibility of expanding hours of operation of the DTES Women's Centre).

2.1(a)(b)(c): These items of Phase 2 work depended upon the appointment of the Committee and additional resources being provided.

### Action 2.2 CSG, Community Visions

Develop a pilot project that would result in the creation of practical gender mainstreaming tools for the neighbourhood visioning and planning process - a partnership project between a team of interested planners and a women-serving organization in a neighbourhood scheduled for "re-planning." The model developed to include tools for engaging those women who have not historically been involved in the community visioning process, as well as tools for neighbourhood planning through a gender lens.

An inclusive approach to engaging neighbourhoods in planning has been adopted, involving efforts to reach out to all members of the community. Particular attention is paid to members who may have barriers to participating in the planning process, due to gender as well as culture, language, income level, and age group.

Through the City's Visions outreach program the City has been able to increase both its ability and capacity to involve individuals and groups in a variety of ways by adopting an increasingly flexible and open approach. For example:

- A balanced membership of Community Liaison Groups to ensure appropriate representation in terms of gender, ethnicity and age group.
- Mini-workshops in Cantonese and Mandarin - including for women taking care of small children.
- Childcare provided, or costs reimbursed, to allow parents to participate in community planning events.
- Child-friendly activities provided at events to encourage family involvement.
- Staff connections with grassroots groups and community institutions to identify the best ways to engage groups with more specialized needs.

This inclusionary approach, evolved through the Visions program, will also be brought to the new community planning programs in the inner city neighbourhoods, beginning with Mount Pleasant. In addition to applying the lessons learned during the Visions program, staff will be developing and implementing a "social action plan" which will focus on issues in the community, many of which will affect women. This will include outreach to the most marginalized who face a difficult range of barriers including gender, income and others. To better address this challenge, the Mount Pleasant planning process will include a specialized social Planner.

**Action 2.3 Planning, CSG**

Develop a pilot project that would result in the creation of practical gender mainstreaming tools for the development process - through a partnership project with a developer interested in creating a "women-friendly" development.

There is no existing program that undertakes such work, and there is no resourcing available at present to undertake this pilot project.

**Action 2.4 Mayor's Office**

Celebrate the contributions of women and girls through an annual International Women's Day event at City Hall.

This has been done.

**Action 2.5 CSG**

Monitor developments, review progress and deliver an annual report on gender equality measures on March 8th each year, at an International Women's Day Event at City Hall.

This item of Phase 2 work depended upon the appointment of the Committee and additional resources being provided.