



REPORT

Report Date: February 23, 2021
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Meeting Date: March 10, 2021
[Submit comments to Council](#)

TO: Standing Committee on Policy and Strategic Priorities
FROM: Aftab Erfan, Chief Equity Officer
SUBJECT: Women's Equity Strategy Updates and Next Steps

RECOMMENDATION

- A. THAT Council receive this report for information.
- B. THAT Council direct staff to implement the Women's Equity Strategy Phase 2 Actions during 2021-2023 and report back annually on progress.
- C. THAT Council direct staff to send this report to the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation, Vancouver Public Library Board and Vancouver Police Department Board for information.

REPORT SUMMARY

This report provides updates and proposed next steps for the implementation of City's Women's Equity Strategy (WES) 2018-2028.

Over the past year, several events, including the global pandemic and the local overdoes crisis, have highlighted and amplified the disproportionate impact of social disparities on those who are Indigenous, Black, persons of colour, women, immigrants, persons with disabilities, 2SLGBTQ+, and those experiencing homelessness. In the midst of the challenges, the City has engaged in self-reflection, expedited learning, and a concerted effort to embed equity in its various areas of work, including the [recovery, restart, and rebuild phases of the pandemic](#), the creation of a new Equity Office, and ongoing work on the Equity Framework.

Council adopted the Women's Equity Strategy (WES) in January of 2018. The WES included a number of Phase 1 actions that were carried out in 2018-2019. A final update on Phase 1 Actions can be found in [Appendix A](#). The guiding document for Phase 1 actions was the [Healthy](#)

[City Strategy](#), the City's overarching social sustainability plan that places an emphasis on equity through its vision of a healthy city for all. One of the guiding principles of the Healthy City Strategy is that we apply both a universal approach as well as an intersectional lens to ensure we pursue initiatives that meet the universal needs all residents *and* those that meet the needs of specific populations facing unique barriers. WES was one of the early identity-based strategies for the City, in recognition of the specific barriers faced by women.

Phase 2 actions of the Women's Equity Strategy (2021-2023) continue to build on what was achieved in Phase 1. They also reflect the City's more recent engagement with equity issues as reflected in the Equity Framework, namely:

- (a) that the City's work on equity needs to address the barriers to equity-denied groups due to the City's own processes, culture, infrastructure or operations as well as the barriers faced by the groups in the community;
- (b) that systemic and structural changes should be introduced whenever possible, so that the responsibility for equitable decision-making and conduct does not fall solely on individuals;
- (c) that an intersectional lens should be applied in each of our efforts, and that in particular addressing the unique needs of Indigenous, Black and other racialized groups, should be a key consideration within other particular strategies (such as WES).

Accordingly, proposed Phase 2 Actions are the following.

Priority: Intersectional Lens

GOAL	The City's decisions, programs and plans are informed by an intersectional lens to ensure that all citizens - including the most marginalized of marginalized groups - have equitable access to community life.
OBJECTIVE	In 2020-2022 an Equity Framework will be implemented for all City departments.
PHASE 2 ACTIONS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Finalize and adopt Equity Framework (related to/fulfilling Council direction to create a comprehensive gendered intersectional strategy) 2. Develop and deliver training on applying the Equity Framework 3. Pilot Equity Framework across several projects/programs/initiatives in different departments 4. Refine and roll out Equity Framework across all City Departments 5. Develop and implement systems to gather and refresh disaggregated data including: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. conduct a corporate-wide workforce equity and inclusion survey b. develop a conduct a gender and diversity audit of Vancouver City Council and Council operations (related to Council direction for an annual Gender, Diversity and Intersectional Audit)
Accountable Departments	City Manager's Office/Equity Office in partnership with Arts Culture & Community Services (1), Human Resources (2, 5a) and Clerks (5b)

Priority: Women's Safety

GOAL	Vancouver is a safe city in which women are secure and free from crime and violence, including sexual assault.
OBJECTIVE	By 2025, women's sense of safety will be increased by at least 10 per cent
PHASE 2 ACTIONS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conduct a Scoping Study on sexual violence and sexual harassment in public spaces as a part of the UN Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces

<i>(Actions underway/ delayed in pandemic response)</i>	<p>project, which aims to improve the safety of women, Two Spirit, trans, non-binary, and gender diverse people.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to engage with Indigenous communities and review and identify opportunities to integrate within the City's work key recommendations from: (1) Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and (2) Red Women Rising: Indigenous Women Survivors in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. Development of a Sex Worker Safety Plan with focus on long-term goals and planning with internal departments and external partners.
Accountable Department	Arts Culture & Community Services

Priority: Childcare

GOAL	Women's full participation in the workforce and engagement in public life is supported by affordable and accessible quality childcare.
Objective	Families' access to affordable and quality childcare is increased through the efforts of the City of Vancouver working with the Province of BC and other partners. Through a unique MOU with the Province, up to 2,300 new licensed spaces will be added to Vancouver's supply, building on the target of 1,000 spaces set by City Council as part of the City's 2019-2022 Capital Plan.
Actions See further details in May 2020 update to Council .	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Childcare policy development - Addressing priority areas such as increasing equitable childcare access; supporting Vancouver's workforce; aligning childcare policy and investment with affordable housing policy and programs and with the Vancouver Plan; and building new and strengthened partnerships across sectors. Childcare design and regulatory review – Exploration and development of a suite of possible incentive programs, planning and regulatory tools intended to accelerate the development of affordable, accessible and quality childcare spaces. Childcare development process review - Review to enhance efficiency of internal and external processes related to permitting and licensing for childcare.
Accountable Department	Arts, Culture and Community Services

Priority: Housing

GOAL	A range of affordable housing choices is available for women of diverse backgrounds and circumstances, including single parents, seniors, newcomers, and those facing vulnerable conditions.
Objective	72,000 new homes across Vancouver in the next ten years, with 50 per cent of new homes serving households earning less than \$80,000, 40 per cent of new homes large enough for families, and 65 percent of all new housing for renters.
Actions <i>(Actions underway/ delayed in</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct a needs assessment on obtaining and maintaining housing for hard-to-house women in the Downtown Eastside. Through the Women's Legacy Project, plan and develop safe affordable housing options that prioritizes Indigenous women-led families, 2SLGBTQQIA, and gender diverse peoples and their families.

<i>pandemic response)</i>	This project strives to attract capital from senior levels of government; co-create the functional programming & design of the project with the communities the project is intended to serve; and demonstrating women's, 2SLGBTQQA, and gender diverse peoples' abilities in all aspects of the project including management, design, trades, governance and operations.
Accountable Departments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arts, Culture and Community Services (1) • Vancouver Affordable Housing Agency and Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability (2)

Priority: Leadership & Representation

Goal	The City will elevate the visibility, influence, representation and contribution of all women in the organization by providing equitable access to work opportunities, including leadership roles and other under-represented occupations ¹ and by creating and implementing initiatives to specifically enhance their development and leadership.
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish and implement goals for diverse staffing and identify and remove barriers within the City for women in under-represented occupations • Identify and remove barriers to women's advancement and inclusion in leadership to ensure parity in new hires and equitable representation within the City's leadership.
Actions <i>(Actions underway/ delayed in pandemic response)</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop a corporate-wide equity and inclusion plan for the City's workforce that considers objectives based on disaggregated data; that identifies and addresses systemic barriers to full inclusion; and that includes individualized departmental plans and accountabilities for implementation. 2. Update the City's individual and leadership development offerings with emphasis on inclusive leadership skills. 3. Sponsor emerging women leaders to participate in leadership development programs 4. Increase recruitment outreach for job-seekers who are Indigenous, Black, persons of colour, women in under-represented occupations, immigrants, 2SLGBTQ+, and persons with disabilities. 5. Finalize the Corporate-wide long term, flexible and remote work strategies. 6. Review and evaluate the City's Works Yards and Firehalls in order to develop facilities that provide equitable access to all staff and genders.
Accountable Departments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Manager's/Equity Office in partnership with all departments (1) • Human Resources (2, 3, 4, 5) • Real Estate and Facilities Management (6)

COUNCIL AUTHORITY/PREVIOUS DECISIONS

**Please note: These do not comprise a complete record of all previous decisions by successive Councils related to the issues in this report.*

¹ Under-represented occupations include: engineers, engineers-in-training, engineering assistants, information technology, firefighting, trades and entry-level operational roles

[A Gender Equity Strategy for the City of Vancouver](#), 2005

[Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities](#) (previously Canadian Coalition of Municipalities against Racism and Discrimination – CCMARD), 2010

[Motion to support the \\$10-a-Day Plan \(Community Plan for a Public System of Integrated Early Care and Learning\)](#), 2011

[Preventing Sexual Exploitation and Protecting Vulnerable Adults & Neighbourhoods Affected by Sex Work](#), 2011

[Report Back on Missing Women Commission of Inquiry and City Task Force on Sex Work and Sexual Exploitation](#), 2013

[Healthy City Strategy](#), 2014

[Framework for City of Reconciliation](#), 2014

[Supporting Trans* Equality and an Inclusive Vancouver](#), 2016

[Because it's 2016: Action on Gender Equality](#), 2016

[Access to City Services Without Fear for Residents with Uncertain or No Immigration Status](#), 2016

[Making the City of Vancouver a Living Wage Employer](#), 2016

[Vancouver Poverty Reduction Plan](#), 2017

[Vancouver – A City for All Women: Women's Equity Strategy 2018-2028](#), 2018

[Accessibility Strategy](#), 2018

[Women Deliver Conference, Legacy Project, Community Engagement Grant, and Culture Night Public Event](#), 2019

[Establishment of Council Advisory Bodies, the Associated Terms of Reference and Diversity on Advisory Bodies Policy](#), 2019

[Interim Report – Women's Equity and Trans, Gender Diverse and Two-Spirit Inclusion](#), 2019

[Motion to develop a comprehensive gendered intersectional strategy](#), 2019

[Aligning the Healthy City Strategy with the UN Sustainable Development Goals](#), 2020

[Supporting Gender Equity and Diversity in Vancouver City Council](#), 2020

CITY MANAGER'S/GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The Acting City Manager recommends approval of the foregoing.

REPORT

Background/Context

On April 6, 2016, Council passed the motion “Because It’s 2016: Action on Gender Equity” which included the following three directives:

- A. THAT Council formally adopt a policy that the number of women appointed to City advisory committees must be equal or greater than 50%;
- B. THAT Council direct staff to undertake a review of City funding through Social Policy Grants and subsidized housing prior to the 2017 granting cycle to ensure that funding and support enables equitable delivery of services for women and girls, particularly in the Downtown Eastside (DTES); and
- C. THAT Council direct staff to work with the Women’s Advisory Committee to establish a process to review the 2005 Gender Equality Strategy (GES) and update it, with an eye to successful approaches, integrating more recently adopted policy such as that in Health City and the Mental Health and Addictions Task Force, and taking into account a change in national and provincial context.

Each of the directives has been completed and includes Council approval of WES in January 2018, and the “Diversity on Advisory Bodies” policy adopted in of March 2019.

The Women’s Equity Strategy was developed in close consultation with the Women’s Advisory Committee and included public consultations and consultations with subject matter experts. Staff also reached out to other municipalities and conducted significant research into best practices and the social and economic conditions of all women living in Vancouver.

These consultations resulted in the identification of five priority areas each with specific goals that aligned with other City strategies. The five priority areas also included eighteen Phase 1 (2018-2020) actions to focus the City’s work on advancing the full inclusion of all women into the social, political and economic life of Vancouver. The five priority areas are:

1. Application of an intersectional approach to our work, including work on the other four priority areas
2. Women’s safety in public spaces
3. Childcare
4. Housing
5. Women’s leadership and representation within the City

The development of the Strategy’s goals, and short-term actions also reflected the results of extensive internal consultations with departments whose work directly related to the five priority areas. These consultations ensured that the Strategy’s goals and actions were aligned with existing work underway in other City strategies such as the Healthy City Strategy and the Housing Vancouver Strategy.

Since the Strategy's adoption in January 2018, staff have implemented the majority of the short term actions, while some of these actions are ongoing and others will be completed during Phase 2. Some of the highlights of Phase 1 include:

- Acceptance into the UN Women's Global Flagship Initiative, [Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces](#)
- Achievement of our targets related to hiring women in positions of leadership, with women representing 51% of all senior leadership hires since January of 2018
- Development and implementation of a [Breastfeeding in the Workplace Policy](#) for City staff, and the creation of a dedicated nursing room at the City's Marine Gateway location
- Recognition of the [16 days of Activist against Gender-Based Violence](#) through internal and public campaigns in 2018 and 2019
- Creation of more than the targeted 1,000 new childcare spaces by the end of 2018, with 1,144 new spaces achieved
- Improved pay transparency at the City with the annual publication of the [Workforce Pay Rates and Gender](#) report on the City's Open Data Portal
- Completion of staff surveys and focus groups with women staff in historically under-represented occupations to identify cultural and systemic barriers to full inclusion

See [Appendix A](#) for a final update on all Phase 1 Actions as well as related work in the WES priority areas.

The work on Phase 1 actions involved all City Departments, resulted in a deeper awareness of systemic barriers within the City's operations to women's full inclusion, and highlighted gaps in our ability to apply an intersectional lens to our work. The recommended Phase 2 Actions listed above aim to address those systemic barriers and to provide the City with the tools – and the supporting qualitative and quantitative data – to meaningfully apply an intersectional approach to women's equity.

Strategic Analysis

Women and girls comprise 51% of the City's population. Since the City adopted the Women's Equity Strategy in 2018, there has been little forward movement on key social and economic indicators of progress. For example,

- Since 2016, Vancouver's annual living wage decreased from 37,500 to 35,000². While virtually all living expenses increased since 2016, these increases were offset by the BC affordable child care benefit available to middle- and lower-income earning families.
- Women's annual median income is still significantly below the annual living wage at \$30,400. Men's annual median income is \$43,200³. Housing affordability and availability issues therefore have a disproportionate impact on women, and can result in women remaining in unsafe and abusive environments.
- Women are overrepresented in part-time work, making up 68% of part-time workers in Canada. 25% of women who work part-time cited childcare as the reason, compared with 5% for men.⁴

² Ivanova, Iglia and Klein, Seth. Working for a Living Wage, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, July 2019

³ Statistics Canada. Table 11-10-0239-01. Income of individuals by age group, sex, and income source

⁴ Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0029-01. Part-time employment by reason, annual (x1,000).

- In Vancouver 82% of single-parent families are headed by women.⁵

As noted in the Women's Equity Strategy, women's economic inequality places them at higher risk of violence. This is especially so for Indigenous women and women with disabilities, who experience greater economic disadvantage and disproportionate levels of intimate partner and sexualized violence relative to non-Indigenous women and women without disabilities.⁶

The Strategy's four substantive areas (Safety, Housing, Childcare, and Leadership & Representation), are inextricably linked and work together to either enhance or harm women's full inclusion into the social and economic life of our city.

With respect to Leadership & Representation, the City's actions over Phase 1 deepened our understanding of the systemic barriers that contribute to women being under-represented in senior leadership, engineering, information technology (IT), firefighting, and trades and operations.

The following table highlights progress from December 31, 2017 to March 31, 2020.

	% of women (Dec. 31/17)	% of new hires (2018-2019)	% of women (Mar. 31/20)
Leadership	37%	51%	39%
Engineering/EITs/ Eng. Assistants	30%	42%	33%
IT-Technical roles	34%	25%	30%
Firefighting	4%	9%	3%
Trades & Operations	11%	15%	11%

With respect to senior leadership:

- We met our objective to increase new hires for senior management roles to 50% women during 2018 and 2019.
- This led to an overall increase of women in these positions across the organization from 37% to 39%.

With respect to Engineering and IT:

- We met our objectives for new hires.
- Our workforce composition and hiring rates are reflective of the labour market availability for women in these occupations.
- However, staff survey results and the reports from the focus group identified workplace cultural issues (e.g. micro-aggressions and unconscious biases) that could benefit from additional effort in the leadership development work during Phase 2.

With respect to Trades & Operations:

- These areas continue to be vastly dominated by men, although the City's workforce generally includes a higher rate of women in these occupations than the private sector.
- The recruitment process was reviewed and tracked to confirm that women's recruitment in these roles matches the rates of applicants, confirming that the barriers are not within our recruitment system.
- The key barrier identified was the very limited entry points for recruitment into operational roles.

⁵ Vancouver, City Social Indicators Profile 2019, p.25

⁶ Vancouver, A City for All Women: Women's Equity Strategy 2018-2028, p. 13

- The vast majority of operational roles are posted and awarded internally and based on seniority. For Phase 2, Human Resources is seeking to improve outreach and communication related to trades and operations career opportunities available to women at the City, with the intent of increasing the number of qualified applicants.

Recruitment is only one aspect of our work in the area of Leadership & Representation. For Phase 2, we've added a focus on further addressing and removing barriers to women's full inclusion in these under-represented roles, which in many cases includes shifting the culture of the organization in areas that have been historically male dominated.

The biggest gap in our workforce-related work has been the inability to apply an intersectional approach due to lack of data. This will be remedied in Phase 2 with a workforce survey that will include both equity-related and engagement questions. The survey will provide the disaggregated data to inform an intersectional approach to increasing diversity in our workforce, and will inform and support work on a corporate-wide equity and inclusion strategy.

Public/Civic Agency Input (if applicable)

The WES Strategy is supported by the expertise and input of the Women's Advisory Committee.

Implications/Related Issues/Risk

Financial

The WES Phase 2 actions have been accounted for in the 2021 budget.

Human Resources/Labour Relations

The WES Phase 2 actions above, have been accounted for in the 2021 business and strategic planning efforts. The work may be impacted by the demands of the pandemic response and recovery.

Environmental

There are no environmental implications to the above recommendations.

Legal

There are no legal implications to the above recommendations.

Other

There are no other implications.

CONCLUSION

The City prides itself on being a leader in equity and inclusion. This includes being honest about where we can do better, being open to feedback about how we can do better, and incorporating this feedback into our plans and programs.

The next few years will see an increased focus on systemic changes to embed equity into our policies, programs, and practices, and to do so with an intersectional lens. These are steps in a continuing journey to address systemic racism, colonialism, sexism, transphobia, homophobia and ableism inherent in our structures, which are informed by the history and legacy of colonialism, patriarchy, and white supremacy that marks Canadian society. The journey to dismantle these structures will be ongoing and will require constant vigilance, learning, growth, reflection, and action. The Equity Framework and our work on the Women's Equity Strategy as well as other equity-related strategies will support our efforts to create and sustain a vibrant, inclusive, diverse, and equitable organization and city.

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APPENDIX A - Women's Equity Strategy: Final update on Phase 1 Actions

Priority 1: Intersectional Lens

Objective: In 2018, an intersectional framework will be established for City Departments.

1.1 Pilot Intersectional Framework

- Carried forward to Phase 2: The Equity Framework includes a number of supporting documents/tools to facilitate the integration of equity-informed decision-making into all aspects of City operations. These include:
 - Introduction to Intersectionality
 - Equity Reference Guide: Integrating Equity in City Processes
 - Equity Decision-Making Tool: A guide for Integrating Equity in City Processes

The above tools have been distributed to staff. Training and supports are being developed to build capacity to apply these tools in day-to-day work. These tools will support the implementation of the Equity Framework (see Phase 2 actions).

1.2 Introduce the application of an intersectional lens to senior staff through [GBA+ \(Gender-Based Analysis +\)](#) training offered through Status of Women Canada.

- Senior Staff received training on November 20, 2019.

1.3 Bring forward to Council revised Civic Assets Naming Guidelines that include gender diversity.

- In progress

Priority 2: Safety

Objective: By 2025, women's sense of safety will be increased by at least 10 per cent.

This objective is aligned with the [Healthy City Strategy](#). The progress towards this objective will be measured based on data in the [My Health My Community Survey](#). The survey has not been repeated and results are not available.

2.1 Join UN Women's Global Flagship Initiative, "[Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces](#)" and conduct a scoping study on women's safety.

- On November 25, 2018, the City announced that it was accepted into the Initiative. The Scoping Study will be completed during Phase 2.

2.2 Identify Community partners and collaborate on an annual public campaign to raise awareness on violence against women.

- In 2018 and 2019, the City recognized the [16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence](#) with internal and external campaigns.

2.3 Update the [Women's Advisory Committee](#) annually on progress in ensuring women's safety and needs in the neighbourhood planning and development process.

- Representatives from the Departments of Engineering Services and Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability met with the Women's Advisory Committee in 2018 and 2019.

2.4 Formalize senior staff coordination and oversight of inter-departmental response to critical issues in the Downtown Eastside, including women's safety and related issues.

- An inter-departmental team has been created and meets monthly. The team includes representatives from the Vancouver Police Department, Board of Parks and Recreation, Engineering Services, Legal, City Manager's Office, Vancouver Fire and Rescue Services and Arts, Culture and Community Services.

2.5 Related Work – Sex Worker Safety

- Sex worker safety remains a priority in the immediate and long-term regarding gender equity for women, 2SLGBTQIA and gender diverse peoples.
- The City continues to implement the Sex Work Response Guidelines and to engage with the diverse sex work community across Vancouver in safety planning.
- Key 2020 highlights which focused on sex workers and some anticipated 2021 initiatives:
 - Secured long term social support space for sex workers on Kingsway Street.
 - Developed COVID-19 related resource guide for sex workers with assistance of sex work partner organizations.
 - Sex work planners deployed to EOC to coordinate COVID emergency response work.
 - Conducted consultations with sex workers and sex work affected groups in 2019-2020
 - Updated City's website page: "[Health and safety for sex workers and communities impacted by sex work, and the prevention of sexual exploitation](#)"

Priority 3: Childcare

Objective: By the end of 2018, 1,000 new childcare spaces will be added from the 2015 baseline (aligns with Healthy City Action Plan, 2015-2018.)

- On June 26, 2018, Council announced that it created 1,064 new spaces, [surpassing its target](#) of 1,000 new spaces.

3.1 Share input from the Women's Equity Strategy consultations for consideration in the City's updated childcare strategy.

- The information was shared in February 2018.

3.2 Partner with senior levels of government to significantly increase affordable, quality childcare through creating new childcare spaces, and replacing aging centres.

- A host of Provincial Childcare initiatives have opened the door to a new and enhanced partnership between the Province and the City of Vancouver.
- On July 4, 2019, the City and the Province of British [Columbia jointly announced a partnership](#) that would increase new childcare spaces in Vancouver by 2,300 between 2019-2022.

3.3 Identify child-friendly provisions to accommodate participation by families with children at Council and Public Hearings at City Hall.

- City Clerk's Office adopted several measures to support increased participation of families at City Hall. These include:
 - Seating and a live stream of the Council meeting is made available on the first floor of City Hall for the public attending Council meetings and wait their turn to speak.

- Communication via Twitter has been improved to provide speakers with more updates during meetings and estimated times for their turn to speak.
- Security protocols have been put in place during Council meeting days to ensure safety of all attending meetings.

3.4 Related work in support of increasing affordable and accessible childcare:

- The [Joint Childcare Council \(JCC\)](#) provides leadership in childcare and child development in Vancouver. The City works with the Park Board, Vancouver Board of Education, and childcare sector representatives to support and deliver accessible, affordable, quality childcare spaces in the city.
- The City's childcare grants are provided annually for program [development](#), [program stabilization](#), [research](#), and [enhancements](#).

Priority 4: Housing

Objective: 72,000 new homes across Vancouver in the next 10 years (aligns with Housing Vancouver Strategy).

- The [Housing Vancouver Strategy](#) prioritizes affordable housing, building the right types of affordable homes, protecting affordable rental housing, and providing housing and support for residents experiencing marginalized conditions.
- The [2020 Annual Progress Book](#) provides an update on the Housing Vancouver Strategy

4.1 Identify how to determine the extent of women's hidden homelessness to better understand its full scope.

- Carried forward to Phase 2: The City provided a [Homelessness Action Week 2019 Grant](#) of \$20,000, to the Downtown Eastside Women's Centre (DEWC) for a 'Needs Assessment: Obtaining and Maintaining Housing for Hard-to-House Women in the DTES'
- The Project will focus on determining the needs of women experiencing homeless or those at risk in terms of resources to support them in efforts to find and retain housing.
- This work has been delayed due to COVID-19; revised target date will be late fall 2020

4.2 Research integration of outreach role within Coordinated Access Centre to liaise with women-serving organizations and identify women in need of priority housing.

- City staff regularly engages with women-serving shelters to identify capacity to assist with housing applications, their knowledge of BC Housing Coordinated Access and Assessment, BCH supportive housing registry and applications, Modular Housing applications, including Vulnerability Assessment Tools.

4.3 Share input from the Women's Equity Strategy consultations for consideration in the implementation of the Housing Vancouver Strategy.

- The information was shared in February 2018.

4.4 Related work in support of increasing affordable and accessible housing for women:

- On March 15, 2018, the City, the Province and [Atira Women's Society](#) announced the opening of the [Olivia Sky House](#). Olivia Sky House added 198 studio and one-bedroom suites of secured, affordable rental housing for women in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. The City contributed a capital grant of \$1.2 million towards this project.

- [Aneki Housing for women](#): The City, in partnership with the Vancouver Affordable Housing Agency and BC Housing, developed 39 self-contained studio homes for women in the Downtown Eastside. Seven of the homes are wheelchair accessible.
- The City delivered 31 family units of the new housing collocated with the [Fire Hall #5 in 2019 for single mothers and their families](#).
- 44% of tenants occupying the over 600 units of temporary modular are women.
- Sex worker safety community consultation groups are underway to engage peers and key stakeholders to assess needs and make recommendations to reduce barriers and increase sex worker safety through access to a range of inclusive housing and shelter options.

Priority 5: Leadership & Representation

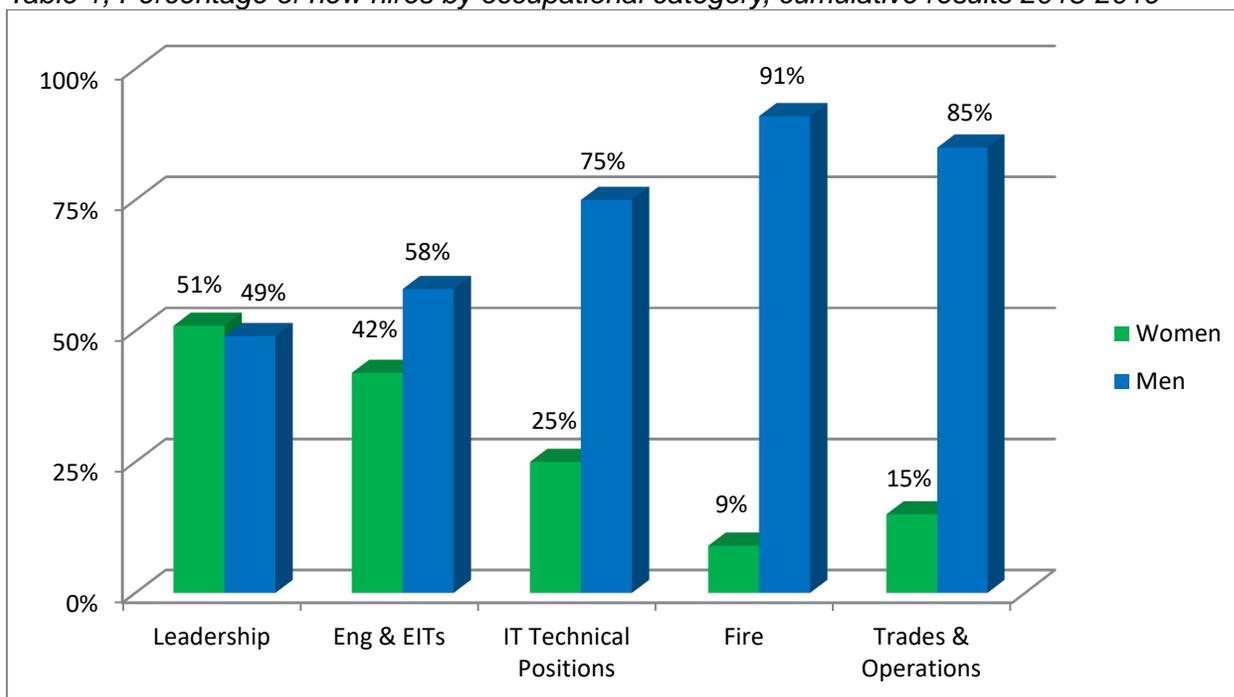
Objective 1: Effective immediately, the City will increase the percentage of new hires for Senior Management roles to 50 per cent.

- This objective has been and continues to be achieved (see Table 1, below.) The result has been an increase in the representation of women in Senior Management from 37% women to 39%.

Objective 2: By 2020, the proportion of women new hires in under-represented occupations will be increased by at least 5 per cent over the 2017 baseline.

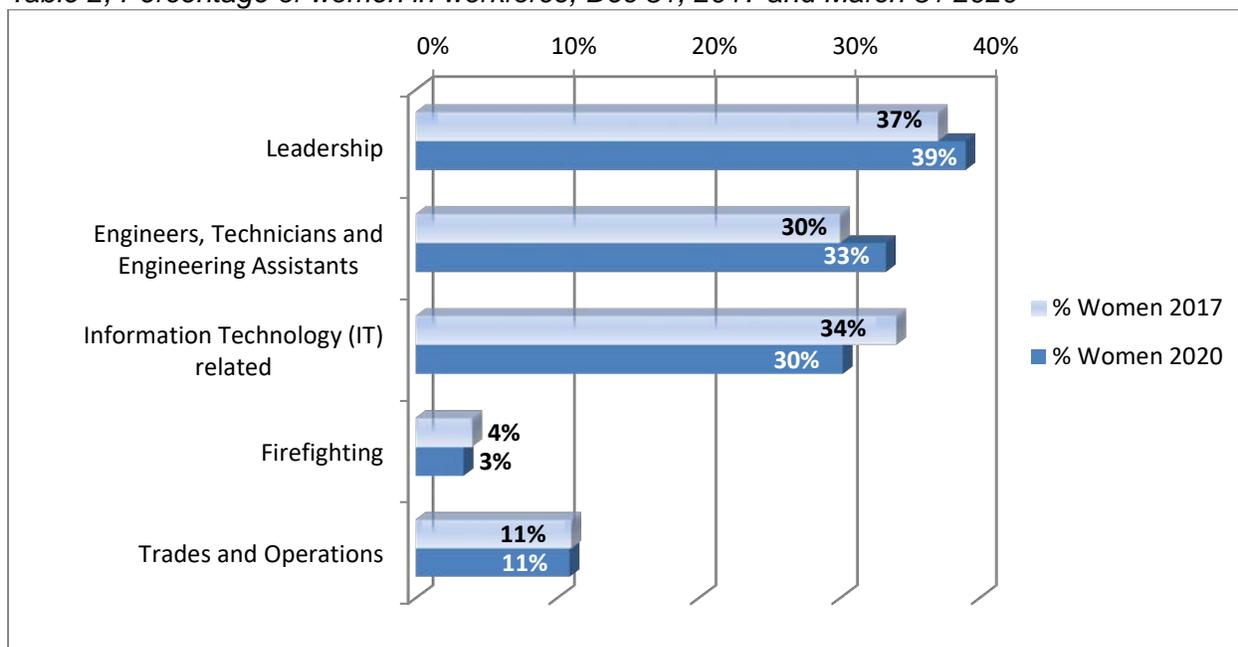
- This objective has not been met (see Table 1, below)
- The baseline for 2017 was 20% of all new hires in all under-represented occupations combined.
- The Phase 1 goal was to recruit at a rate of 25% women.
- At the end of 2019, the recruitment level over the two years remained at 20% overall.
- The bulk of hiring is in Trades & Operations.

Table 1, Percentage of new hires by occupational category, cumulative results 2018-2019



- Based on a review of our metrics and recruitment process, we learned:
 - For Engineering and IT related occupations, the City is recruiting at or above labour-market availability rates.
 - For trades and operational roles, the City is recruiting women at the same rate at they are applying. However, there are few women applicants to these roles. The City’s current workforce composition for women in these roles (11%) is higher than industry standards (6%). Discussions with others in these industries indicate that there is a consistent shortage of women applying to these roles – in particular the entry-level operational roles.
 - For operational roles, one barrier to entry at the City of Vancouver is the very limited number and type of entry-level roles. Most operational roles are internally awarded based on seniority considerations. This limits the City’s ability to hire diverse external candidates.
 - VFRS hires in annual recruitment cycles. VFRS made several changes to encourage greater diversity in applicants (see details below, in 5.6). These changes will take time to manifest over future annual hiring cycles.

Table 2, Percentage of women in workforce, Dec 31, 2017 and March 31 2020



5.1 Sign Minerva BC’s [Face of Leadership™](#) Diversity Pledge, making a public commitment to support women’s advancement in leadership in our workforce and in our community.

- The City signed the Minerva Pledge during a staff event held on March 9th 2018 recognizing International Women’s Day.

5.2 Develop and implement a Breastfeeding Policy for City Staff.

- The [Breastfeeding in the Workplace](#) was completed and implemented in November of 2019.

5.3 Conduct focus groups with women in leadership and under-represented positions.

- During 2019, focus groups were held with women in leadership, engineering-related positions, IT-technical positions, trades, and operations' positions.

5.4 Measure and publicly report annually on the City's workforce composition including positions and compensation.

- The "[Workforce Pay Rates and Gender](#)" report was released in the City's Open Data Portal in February 2020. The report will be updated annually.

5.5 Address potential bias in hiring process by training recruitment staff to recognize and mitigate unconscious bias.

- Recruitment staff with the Department of Human Resources received the training in the Spring of 2018. Since then, all new Human Resources Recruitment staff have been required to take the training.
- The City's online recruitment system includes a tool that scans job descriptions and advertisements, identifies gender biased language and recommends replacements.

5.6 Related work in support of achieving goals for Leadership & Representation...

... Compensation and benefits

- The City's compensation package for exempt (non-unionized) staff has been updated. Effective September 1, 2020
 - Contraceptives are covered under the City's extended health plan
 - Parental leave top up to 75% of gross salary for 12 weeks is available for exempt staff on approved parental leave and in receipt of EI parental leave benefits
- Discussions regarding these benefits will be integrated in the collective bargaining process for unionized employees which is ongoing.

... Research

- The City partnered with [Women Transforming Cities](#) and the [Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women](#) (CRIAOW) on a three-year research project "[Action on systemic barriers to women's participation in local government](#)".
- The City participates in McKinsey's research on women in leadership. For two years, the City's senior staff have been invited to complete McKinsey's survey.
- Engineering Services partnered with the University of British Columbia to participate in [Project RISE](#) an collaborative effort led by a consortium of Canadian research scientists to survey professionals working in science, engineering, and technology organizations. The research seeks to identify how workplace culture promotes employee success—above and beyond organizational policies.
- Human Resources and Engineering Services partnered with the [Canadian Coalition of Women in Engineering, Sciences, Trades and Technology](#) (CCWESTT), to develop, pilot, and implement a Code of Practice that defines a respectful workplace. This Code will present strategies to create and sustain the attitudes, practices, behaviours, and policies that are necessary for workplace culture change.

... Outreach and Recruitment

- Vancouver Fire and Rescue Services (VFRS).
 - In 2018, VFRS conducted 25 sessions with 1,042 attendees, 41% of which were women. This was a 20% increase from 2017.
 - VFRS promotes diverse recruitment by attending community events and career fairs.
 - In 2019, VFRS hosted two workshops aimed at recruiting women.

- VFRS offers recruitment coaching for interested women applicants. Twenty-four women applicants benefitted from this coaching in 2019.
- The City hosted an employment information open house in 2019 aimed at women interested in working in operations and trades. The event attracted 68 women.
- On May 11th, 2019, the City hosted its annual Family Fun Fair at Manitoba Works yard. The event included an employment information table aimed at encouraging diverse participants, including women, to consider employment with the City in trades, operations, and engineering.
- The Human Resources Department maintains relationships with professional and community organizations supporting women's inclusion in leadership and historically under-represented occupations for the purposes of recruitment outreach.

... **Strategic Initiatives**

- The City took an active role in participating in the Women Deliver Conference including offering [free satellite events](#) at the Vancouver Public Library.
- In 2018-2019, VFRS hired a temporary full time Assistant Chief, Recruiting, Outreach, Diversity & Inclusion with a mandate to increase workforce diversity.
- In 2019, Engineering Services launched its Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan outlining a comprehensive set of actions to address workplace diversity and inclusion for 2019-2020. The plan had been developed over two years of consultation with internal groups and aimed to accomplish 33 actions across three core goal areas: Attraction and Recruitment, Employee Experience, and Career Development and Opportunities. The plan was conceived as a short-term set of actions to bridge the department to a long-term strategy, which will be developed in 2021.

... **City Facilities for Staff**

The City has undertaken a review and capital planning project to ensure equitable facilities (washroom and change rooms) at City works yards and fire halls. This work continues to into Phase 2 of the Strategy:

- A gender equity review has been completed in most City owned service yards and Fire Halls.
- All renovation projects at Fire Halls are soon to be completed, with the current renovations in Fire Halls #1, #19 and #21.
- Gender equity review is currently underway for all Engineering, Parks and Real Estate and Facilities management service yards.
- Phase one renovations are completed at Manitoba Engineering Yard.