

COUNCIL MEMBERS' MOTION

*For consideration at the Standing Committee on City Finance and Services meeting on
November 5, 2025*

2. Ensuring Continuity of the Women's Equity Strategy Following the Closure of the Equity Office

Submitted by: Councillor Bligh

WHEREAS

1. The City of Vancouver has made significant commitments to advancing gender equity and inclusion through the *Women's Equity Strategy 2018-2028*,¹ adopted by Council to guide policy, service delivery, and workplace culture, and to address the issues faced by women in 5 priority areas, being:
 - a. Applying an intersectional lens to strengthen City processes and decision making,
 - b. Addressing safety concerns and violence against women,
 - c. Accessible, quality childcare,
 - d. Safe and affordable housing, and
 - e. Women's representation and leadership in our workforce;
2. Many other City of Vancouver initiatives are closely tied to and related to the *Women's Equity Strategy 2018-2028*, such as the *UN Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces Initiative*,² as well as the Host City Human Rights Action Plan as a part of FIFA World Cup 26™;
3. The recent closure of the Equity Office has created uncertainty regarding the continuation, implementation, and accountability of this work;
4. National and provincial research continues to demonstrate that women—particularly Indigenous, racialized, 2SLGBTQIA+, and low-income women—experience disproportionate levels of violence, housing insecurity, and economic marginalization;
5. *The Women's Equity Strategy 2018-2028* update to Council is overdue, with the last update being issued to Mayor and Council in March 2022,³ and it is critical that this work not be lost, delayed, or deprioritized in light of recent organizational changes;

¹ <https://vancouver.ca/docs/council/Women%27sEquityStrategy.pdf>

² <https://vancouver.ca/people-programs/un-safe-cities-and-safe-public-spaces-initiative.aspx>

³ <https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/2022-03-08-update-on-womens-equity-strategy.pdf>

6. The City's Women's Advisory Committee plays an important role in advising Council on issues affecting women and gender-diverse people, and in ensuring that equity-related initiatives are informed by lived experience and community expertise; and
7. While the City's Women's Advisory Committee did receive a brief update on the Women's Equity Strategy in June 2025,⁴ this update was lacking in robust analysis of any progress made across all five pillars of the Women's Equity Strategy or details of Phase 2 implementation or completion, despite indication of such an update scheduled for March 2023 in the March 2022 Memorandum, Update on Women's Equity Strategy.⁵

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

- A. THAT Council direct staff to report back to Council by Q1 2026 with an update on the Women's Equity Strategy, including:
 1. Progress to date on the implementation of the strategy and key performance indicators across each of the strategy's five pillars;
 2. Identification of any gaps, paused initiatives, or risks resulting from the closure of the Equity Office; and
 3. Options for maintaining accountability, reporting, and coordination of equity-related work across City departments.
- B. THAT Council direct staff to engage the Women's Advisory Committee in the preparation of said report, ensuring the Committee's input informs the analysis, recommendations, and proposed next steps.
- C. THAT Council invite the Women's Advisory Committee to participate in the presentation of the report to Council, to reinforce transparency, accountability, and collaboration in advancing gender equity.

Rationale: This motion seeks to ensure the continuity and accountability of the City's *Women's Equity Strategy 2018-2028* following the closure of the Equity Office and to advance a coordinated approach to addressing gender-based violence. The motion directs staff to report back on the status of the Women's Equity Strategy and engage the Women's Advisory Committee.

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⁴ <https://vancouver.ca/docs/council/wadv20250624min.pdf>

⁵ <https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/2022-03-08-update-on-womens-equity-strategy.pdf>