

Halifax's Participation in the UN Women Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces programme

Presentation to Women's Advisory Committee

Halifax

Sept 25 2020

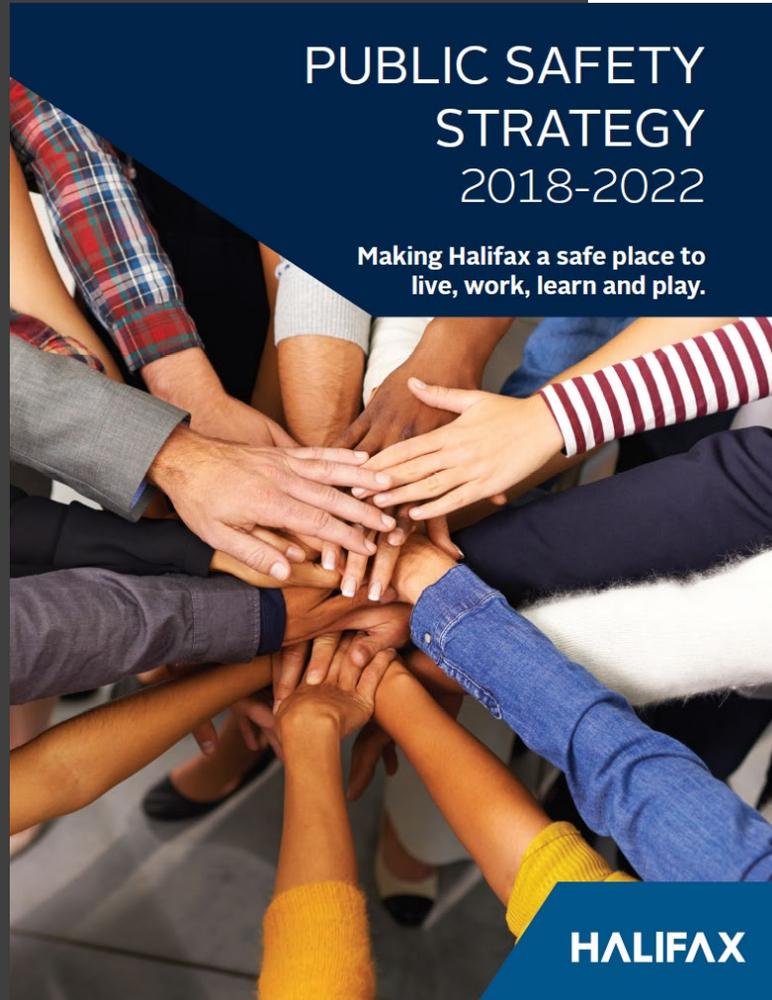
Introduction

- Dr Amy Siciliano – HRM Public Safety Advisor, Office of the CAO, Government Relations and External Affairs Division
- Brandy Whitford– Community Safety Intern, Public Safety Office

overview

- Context: HRM's Public Safety Strategy
- UN Women Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces Programme
 - Global context
 - Local context
 - Role of WACH in the programme
 - Theory of change
 - Scoping Study
 - Women's Safety Assessment
- Questions/Comments

PUBLIC SAFETY STRATEGY



- Unanimously adopted by Regional Council: Fall 2017
- Grounded in research from Dr. Clairemont's Roundtable Report (2008) and Review (2014)
- 2014 Review a focus area on gender-based violence
- Promotes upstream intervention: focus on a proactive approach to addressing community safety & wellbeing

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Strategic Priorities

- 4 Priority Areas
- 76 Actions

www.halifax.ca/about-halifax/regional-community-planning/public-safety



BUILD RESIDENT RESILIENCE: Help people to reduce their sense of isolation, build resilience and improve their quality of life.



ENSURE SAFE PLACES: Reduce the opportunities for crime and social disorder at places where people live, work and play.



STRENGTHEN COMMUNITIES: Increase local participation and social interaction, and develop ways to deal with conflict in non-violent ways.



PREVENT AND REDUCE CRIME: Protect citizens, organizations, and institutions against threats to their well-being and prosperity.

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Context

- Nearly 90% of sexual assaults occur against women and girls
- One in three women in Canada will experience some form of sexual violence in their lifetime.
- Youth, Indigenous, racialized and other marginalized women are at a greater risk for sexual violence
- Between 1997-2015, 90 females were victims of femicide in Nova Scotia, an average of 5 each year
- Halifax Police receive on average one sexual assault report per day, yet we know that survivors less likely to report to police than other crimes (only 1 of 5 are reported)

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Global Context



FLAGSHIP PROGRAMME



SAFE CITIES
AND SAFE PUBLIC SPACES

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Local Timeline

May 2019—Mayor Savage requests to join UN Women program, with NS Status of Women as a supporting partner

August 2019—Halifax accepted into the programme; proposed WACH identified as community advisory committee for programme

November 2019—Regional Council approves WACH

January 2020—Recruitment for WACH commences/ Internal implementing committee established / A cohort of local women receive training on conducting Women's Safety Assessments

August 2020 – Inaugural meeting of WACH

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Role of WACH

Duties of the Committee

6. The Committee shall advise Council, through the Executive Standing Committee, on matters related to women as follows:

(a) receive and review municipal policies, priorities and decisions using a gender lens, for items directed to the Committee by Council or a Standing Committee of Council, or on its own initiative with direction from the Executive Standing Committee, and to make recommendations;

(b) advise on mechanisms to engage and empower women to fully participate in the political process at the municipal level;

(c) advise on mechanisms to promote community leadership development for women in the municipality;

(d) provide information and resources about women's gender-based issues to Council, including the use of Gender-Based Analysis Plus; and

(e) advise and make recommendations about strategies designed to achieve the objectives of the Committee.

7. The Committee shall advise business units, through the Chief Administrative Officer, in responding to gender-based issues and concerns of women when requested to do so by the Chief Administrative Officer.

8. The Committee may advise the municipality on matters relating to its participation in the UN Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces Programme.

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Theory of Change

- Take a locally informed approach: understand the nature of the issues and what works to address them.
- Develop and implement laws and policies to prevent and respond to sexual violence
- Develop an expanded view of safety by supporting a gender approach across all municipal departments.
- Be a leader in supporting the conditions for social norms change to promote women's and girls' rights to enjoy public spaces free from violence.

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Scoping Study

- Take a locally informed approach: undertake a **scoping study** to understand the nature of the issues and what works to address them.
- Develop and implement laws and policies to prevent and respond to sexual violence
- Develop an expanded view of safety by supporting a gender approach across all municipal departments.
- Be a leader in supporting the conditions for social norms change to promote women's and girls' rights to enjoy public spaces free from violence.

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What is a Women's Safety Audit?

- A checklist women can use to assess the built and social environment.
- Empower women to help create safer spaces.
- A tool to provide insight on how women and girls view their safety in the built and social environment of specific sites.
- Adaptable and meant to change according to need.

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History of Women's Safety Audits

- First developed by the Metro Toronto Action Committee on Public Violence Against Women and Children (METRAC).
- Purpose of WSAs:
 - ➔ reduce opportunity for sexual violence
 - ➔ give women a voice in the design & management of public spaces
- If a space feels safer, more people will use it, and it will become safer.

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Women's Safety Audit Training in Halifax, January 2020

- A cohort of 20+ women completed a train-the-trainer session
- Highlights from the session:

A mapping exercise

Piloting the tool

Adapting the tool

Participants plan their audit



Group photo!



Piloting the Women's Safety Audit tool

Dartmouth North WSA September 9th, 2020

- Recently, we had an opportunity to conduct our first WSA in Halifax following the train-the-trainer session.
- Location: Jason Mac Cullough Memorial Park.
- Participants: 5 local women who received the training, including one who grew up in and lives in the area.

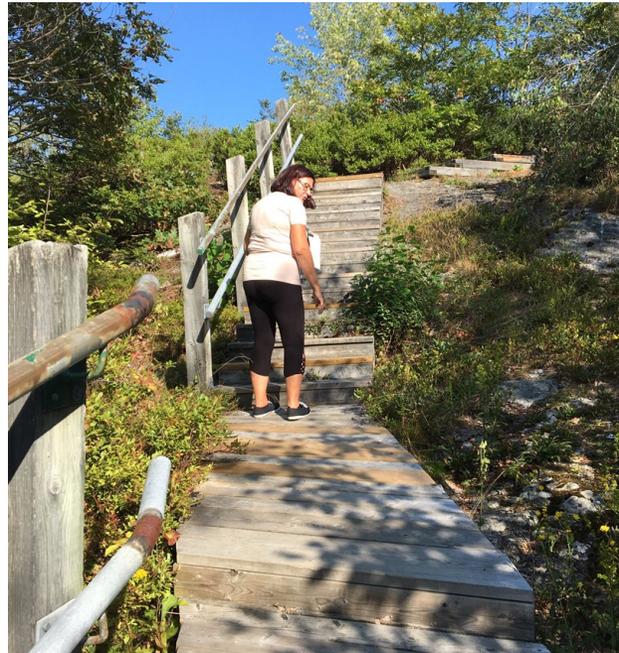


Photos from the Jason Mac Cullough Memorial Park Women's Safety Audit

Outdoor gallery



Jagged stairs



Discarded needles



Benches and basketball court

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