

HALIFAX

What We Learned HRM's UN Safe Cities & Safe Public Spaces Scoping Study

Presented by:

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Agenda

- Overview of today's presentation
- UN Safe Cities & Safe Public Spaces Global FPI
- The HRM's UN SC & SPS program
- Timeline
- The Scoping Study: What we learned
 - Key themes
 - Priority Areas
 - Next steps
- Questions?

Today's Presentation



This is the final draft of the HRM's UN Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces Scoping Study.

The scoping study helps us to better understand what we know, don't know and what next steps we can take to address sexual and gender-based violence in public spaces in the HRM.



As one of our advising committees, we want to share with you (the WACH) what we learned through this process (including the insights you shared with us!) and have an opportunity to answer questions you might have.

Today's Presentation



This scoping study is only the first step in the program: it provides us with a compass, directing us towards issues, people and communities that must guide our next steps of creating a theory of change and project plan.



We will be presenting this final draft of the scoping study at a meeting with the program's Implementing Committee in early October. At that meeting, we will begin to formulate the theory of change and the project plan.

UN Safe Cities & Safe Public Spaces Global FPI



A multi-stakeholder, global initiative supporting cities to develop local approaches to preventing and responding to gender-based and sexual violence in public spaces.

The HRM's UN SC & SPS Program

- Coordinated by the HRM's Public Safety Office, with key support from the Office of Diversity & Inclusion/African Nova Scotian Affairs Integration Office.
- The UN Women SC SPS Program Coordinator is the main staff person responsible for overseeing and managing the program.
- The program is guided, supported and advised by two committees: the Implementing Committee and the WACH.

Timeline

August 2019

HRM Regional Council unanimously approves motion to join the UN Women SC SPS Global FPI, with NS Status of Women.



January 2020

The program's Implementing Committee meets for the first time to discuss the program, terms of reference for the committee and important themes and resources to be included in the scoping study.



October 2020

The Public Safety Office presents on the HRM's UN SC SPS program at the WACH's inaugural meeting.

Timeline

January 2021

The WACH reviews a first draft of the scoping study and members contribute insights about sexual and gender-based violence in public spaces in the HRM.



June 2021

The Public Safety Office hires UN Women Safe Cities & Safe Public Spaces Program Coordinator who reviews and adds to the scoping study.



September 2021

The WACH reviews the final draft of the scoping study.

The Scoping Study: What we Learned

Guiding Questions

- What do we know about sexual and gender-based violence in public spaces in the HRM?
 - Who is impacted?
 - What are some of the most pressing local issues?
 - Who is already speaking up about these issues in our communities (locally, provincially, and nationally) and what are they telling us?
 - Who in the HRM is responding to, preventing, and educating about sexual and gender-based violence?
- What don't we know? What more information do we need to better understand the issues and solutions?
- Based on this information, what are some priority areas that should shape the design, implementation, and measurement of the HRM SC SPS program?

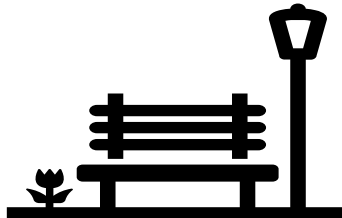
Who is most impacted by sexual and gender-based violence in public spaces in the HRM?

- Women, girls and non-binary people
- We also know that sexual and gender-based violence occurs at the intersections of other systems of oppression and discrimination
 - This means that youth, women, girls and non-binary people who are Indigenous, racialized, newcomers, 2SLGBTQ+, have disabilities and who have experienced/are experiencing homelessness are made more at risk of sexual and gender-based violence in public spaces
 - Different systems of oppression also produce barriers to reporting, access to services

Key Themes

Important Issues/Insights

- The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on women, girls and non-binary people
- Feelings and experiences of safety in public spaces
- Local resources, organizations and networks



Priority Areas

Values that will guide the program

1. Centering people who belong to communities and demographics who have been identified as being made most vulnerable to sexual and gender-based violence in public places. This program must aim to be informed by these communities at each step along the way.
2. Considering which issues are persistent, emergent, or of a pressing nature in the HRM; responding to immediate needs but being flexible enough to shift plans and priorities as our understanding of issues changes.
3. Seeking connection and collaboration with work already being done by members of our Implementing Committee, the WACH, and other organizations and networks in HRM, considering the ways in which our participation in this program could build on, support and enrich this work.

Priority Areas



A gender-safety lens across HRM Business Units & strategic interventions

- Working with various HRM Business Units to make changes to services, programs and policies that will directly impact the safety of women, girls and non-binary people in the HRM.

Working together

- Working alongside individuals, organizations and networks who are already doing this work.
- Supporting efforts already underway and shaping our own efforts based on what we can offer/have a responsibility to offer as a municipality.

Priority Areas



Addressing housing insecurity and homelessness

- Women, girls and non-binary people who do not have access to affordable, safe and appropriate housing are put at higher risk of being subjected to sexual and gender-based violence and experience more barriers to escaping situations of violence.



Transportation and mobility

- The risk of sexual and gender-based violence on public transit or when moving from one place to another were highlighted throughout the scoping study.
- Women, girls and non-binary people need safe options for transportation and mobility– to be able to fully access all their needs, participate in their communities and to be free from the threat of violence when doing so.

Priority Areas

Responding to and preventing human trafficking and the commercial sexual exploitation of youth in the HRM

- The HRM UN SC SPS program will continue to be a member of the TESS HRM Regional Group.
- A key area in which the municipality can act and support already ongoing work.

Education

- Education as an avenue to address misogynistic social norms, empower bystanders to safely recognize and respond to instances of street harassment and support all people, especially men and youth, in developing healthy understandings of gender, sexuality and healthy relationships.



Priority Areas



Understanding local experiences

- In response to the lack of information available about diverse women's, girls' and non-binary people's experiences of safety in public spaces in the HRM, seeking out opportunities to gather both quantitative and qualitative data that tells the stories of all women, girls and non-binary people and sheds light on actions we can take to support them.

Next Steps

Concrete Action Items

- Map out HRM projects, policies and initiatives that impact women's, girls' and non-binary people's safety in public spaces with an eye for opportunities for collaboration.
- Starting to respond to the lack of data and information available about diverse women's, girls' and non-binary people's experiences of safety in public spaces in the HRM.
- Collaborating with TESS and YWCA Halifax to facilitate training for HRM staff on recognizing and responding to instances of human trafficking and the commercial sexual exploitation of youth.
- Continuing to develop the WSA tool as a means for women, girls' and non-binary people to contribute to shaping public spaces in the HRM.
- Organizing skill-sharing and learning opportunities between stakeholders and the HRM, focused on implementing innovative initiatives for safer public spaces and services for women, girls and non-binary people.

Next Steps

**Present scoping study to
Implementing Committee**

**Create the program's
theory of change**

Create a project plan

Questions?

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Thank you!

Please feel free to contact us if you have any further questions and comments:

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