

The word "HALIFAX" in a bold, white, sans-serif font, positioned in the upper right quadrant of the slide. The background features a dark blue geometric shape in the top right and a light blue shape in the bottom right, meeting at a diagonal line that runs from the top left towards the center.

HALIFAX

Safe City & Safe Public Spaces Program

**Women and Gender Equity
Advisory Committee
Orientation Session
June 5, 2025**

UN Safe Cities & Safe Public Spaces Global Flagship Initiative



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

Halifax's Safe City & Safe Public Spaces Program

- In August 2019, Council approved a motion to join the UN Women SC SPS Global Initiative. NS Status of Women is a supporting partner
- Coordinated by the Public Safety Office, with key support from the Office of Diversity & Inclusion/African Nova Scotian Affairs Integration Office (D&I/ANSAIO)
- There are two staff responsible for overseeing and managing the program
- The program is guided, supported and advised by two committees: the Implementing Committee and WGEAC

What do we do?

- Focused on changing municipal physical and social environments to respond to and prevent sexual harassment and other forms of gender-based violence in HRM public spaces (such as in parks, libraries, transit, on sidewalks, etc.).
- Through collaboration with municipal staff, community organizations and other partners, we aim to shift policies, programs, and practices to better support the safety of women and gender-diverse residents in public spaces.

Strategic Directions/ Priority Areas of Work

Partnership for Community Level Change

Support public education and community-level capacity building efforts that:

- address social norms that perpetuate and normalize sexual and other forms of gender-based violence in public spaces
- deepen healthy and equitable understandings of gender, sexuality, relationships, and masculinity
- provide residents with the information and resources they need to feel safer in public spaces
- empower bystanders to safely recognize and respond to instances of street harassment

Partnership for Community Level Change

Develop, facilitate, and champion community-based decision-making models and programs that centre lived experience and support women, girls, and non-binary residents to contribute to tangible changes in municipal policy, practices, and programs such as:

- **Community Safety Assessments (formerly Women's Safety Assessments)**

Supporting Change Within HRM (the organization)

Foster a culture that integrates women's, girls' and gender diverse people's safety in municipal plans, capital projects, strategies, and services, and develop processes to track, measure and report on these efforts.

Support Business Units to take action to make public spaces safer for women, girls, and gender-diverse residents through changes in built, natural and social features of municipal public spaces.

Building Collective Knowledge and Capacity

Foster and facilitate connections and relationships in and between partners to respond to and prevent sexual and other forms of gender-based violence in public spaces (e.g., collective impact efforts, hosting community learning and exchange sessions on these issues/work).

Seek opportunities to build our collective understanding of and capacity to respond to safety issues in public spaces, emphasizing the voices and experiences of women, girls, and non-binary residents.

Community Safety- Programs & Partnerships

- The Safe City and Safe Public Spaces Program sits within the Programs & Partnerships division of Community Safety
- We also work very closely with Community Safety's Research & Development division
- Other areas of work in Programs & Partnerships:
 - Community Mobilization Teams
 - Youth community safety, violence prevention and intervention
 - Alternative responses (stabilization centre, outreach and crisis diversion)
- Our work is guided by the Public Safety Strategy

Duties of WGEAC related to the Safe City & Safe Public Spaces Program

- receive and review municipal policies, priorities and decisions using a gender lens;
- provide information and resources about women's gender-based issues to Council, including the use of Gender-Based Analysis Plus; and
- advise and make recommendations about strategies designed to achieve the objectives of the Committee.

Duties of WACH related to the Safe City & Safe Public Spaces Program

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

Thank you!

Don't hesitate to reach out with any questions, comments, or to discuss anything presented here today.

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