

# City of North Van chips in \$5K to end violence against women

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Jeremy Shepherd / North Shore News

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file photo Cindy Goodman, North Shore News

City of North Vancouver council voted unanimously to contribute \$2,500 to both a provincial and a municipal campaign aimed at ending violence against women at a Jan. 15 meeting.

The North Shore Committee to End Violence Against Women in Relationships is planning to use the money to stage a panel discussion about the prevalence of domestic violence and sexual assault, tentatively set for the end of April.

“There will be a strong emphasis on addressing violence against Indigenous women and girls,” stated North Shore Women’s Centre executive director Michelle Dodds.

Council also opted to contribute \$2,500 to the Be More Than a Bystander campaign, which is designed to help people understand the impact of men’s violence against women and give bystanders the tools to speak out to help put a stop to that violence.

The program “is about recognizing that the vast majority of men do not commit violence against women and do care about girls and women, and then asking those men to play an active role in creating positive change and breaking the silence on violence against women,” according to a release from the campaign.

Targeted primarily at young people, the campaign includes educational workshops facilitated by BC Lions players, clinics for football coaches and public service announcements during Lions games.

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As a result of the donation, the CNV logo is set to be featured on the Be More Than a Bystander website and the city is set to receive suite tickets to a Lions Game on Be More Than a Bystander night in 2018. A city school may also be selected for the Be More Than a Bystander program.

The one-year partnership also includes a donation of some of the city's advertising space.

Given the rise of Donald Trump as well as the #MeToo campaign, Coun. Don Bell said he couldn't think of a more appropriate time to address violence against women.

Bell also noted that while media coverage has focused on assault, harassment and intimidation in entertainment, the problem isn't confined to any single industry.

While Mayor Darrell Mussatto supported the two \$2,500 contributions, he questioned if the money might be better spent exclusively on a local campaign.

Bell replied that supporting Be More Than a Bystander would ultimately assist the North Shore Women's Centre.

"The greater publicity will help the efforts of our local groups," he said.

The Be More Than a Bystander program has also received \$5,000 contributions from Surrey and the City of Vancouver, as well as a \$2,500 contribution from Campbell River.

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