

You Can Help

- Vote for women and encourage others to vote for them. **Boost the power of your vote by choosing only your top few candidates and leaving the rest blank.** This prevents candidates who are popular but not leading change in your community from coming out ahead of new voices. The fewer you choose, the greater their chances of election.
- Support women in office. Call to ask how they're doing. Learn which issues need community support. Attend meetings or write to Council about those issues.
- Stand up for elected leaders when people make personal attacks and unfair comments about them, especially in social media.
- Ask your government to adopt policies to remove barriers for women and foster a positive environment on Council, such as Childcare Reimbursement and Parental Leave for elected officials, and mandatory leadership and team-building training. Use our *Elect Her!* policy briefs on these topics in your presentation.
- Encourage women to participate in public engagement on government policy, to seek appointments on government advisory committees, and to run for elected office.
- Question assumptions about leadership - what backgrounds and personalities styles make good leaders, and who belongs, or doesn't belong at the Council table.
- Be trauma-informed. Create safe spaces for diverse people to discuss important issues in your community.



"Light Work" by Autumn Skye

Join the *Elect Her!* Northwest BC Movement

Email: info@tsw.ca

Mighty Networks Online Community and Resources:
<https://elect-her-northwest-bc.mn.co>



Let's make our vision a reality!

*This initiative is funded by Women and Gender Equality Canada
in partnership with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities.*

Elect Her! NORTHWEST BC

THIS IS WHAT
LEADERSHIP
LOOKS LIKE



Elect Her!

Women are underrepresented at all levels of Canadian government, and especially at the Band Council and Municipal government levels.

Despite making up over 50 percent of the population, less than 20 percent of Chief Councillors and Mayors are women, and less than 30 percent are Councillors.

Elect Her! Northwest BC wants to change these statistics.

We are a movement of community members and elected officials who share the vision that, one day soon, it will be commonplace for women to hold an equal share of elected positions in indigenous and local governments in our region.

We want to normalize the role of women and nonbinary people of all ages, ethnicities, sexual orientation and lived experiences as elected community leaders.

We value the contributions of the dedicated men who serve as elected leaders. Their voices will remain important as we work towards a future in which the diversity in our communities is reflected in the diversity at our council tables.

Women's Voices Matter

Band Council and Local Government tables are powerful places. The community members elected to those tables make all policy and budget decisions for the community.

Elected officials must decide how to allocate limited resources. Competing priorities include asset management, economic development, environmental protection, recreation, arts, culture, mental health and social wellbeing.

Life experiences shape our perspectives and priorities. Working women in Canada are responsible for more childcare, eldercare and housework every day than working men. Canadian women are more likely to experience sexual violence and online harassment. Elected women are influenced by these and other unique aspects of their lived experiences.

Consider your elected leaders. Do their priorities reflect the diverse needs of your community?

How might your Council's policy and budget priorities, leadership style, and community engagement be different if there were more women at the table?

The System Needs Change

Increasing the percentage of women in elected leadership is likely to improve not only the lives of women, children and elders, but society as a whole.

Research consistently shows that increasing the number of women in a leadership team improves relationships, processes and productivity for the whole organization.

Why don't more women run for office?

Women are underrepresented in elected leadership because systemic barriers discourage them from running for office, and staying in office once elected.

Barriers for women in Band Council and Local governments include:

- lack of childcare
- timing of meetings
- perception of local politics as an "old boys club"
- lack of inclusive policies and practices
- intimidation against women in elected office
- personal attacks and unfair or irrelevant criticism
- burden of family responsibilities
- low pay and no benefits