



## Memorandum

To: Melrose City Council  
From: Karen Blackburn, Chair of the Commission on Women  
Re: FY25 Budget  
Date: May 6, 2024

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In preparation for the review of the Fiscal Year 2025 budgets, I am pleased to provide the Honorable City Council with a summary of the Commission's request.

The Commission on Women's FY25 operating budget (542) is projected to be level funded. Most of our expenses will be event related—venue rentals, food and beverage, collateral, and subject-matter experts—with a majority, if not all, being spent on women-owned businesses to further our goals.

With new Commissioners in place, we focused inward and worked together to refine our mission statement and to develop a short-term strategic plan focused on raising awareness and educating the community on issues that matter most to women and women-identifying individuals. Some highlights from the year include:

- **Revised Mission Statement.** The Melrose Commission on Women ("MCW") works to investigate, understand, educate, and promote constructive action in areas of interest and concern to all women and girls, including trans women and girls, in our community. As a central voice in the community, MCW promotes opportunities, fosters equity and belonging, and provides the community with a vehicle for information, advocacy and action on issues affecting all women. Understanding that our community is open to all, we advocate and support diversity across all aspects of our lives - gender, race, sexual orientation, religion, culture, age, abilities, and socio-economic background.
- **Increased Awareness.** We partnered with Follow Your Art to commission a mural to celebrate International Women's Day. Supporting the theme of "Inspire Inclusion," the mural featured colorful silhouettes of a diverse group of women. The mural unveiling took place on March 8th and in addition to current and past Commissioners, Mayor Grigoraitis and interested community members also attended the event.

We also mapped out our programming for the upcoming fiscal year. Plans include a quarterly interview series featuring local women with interesting and inspiring stories (kicking off in June 2024), a panel discussion on the issues of most importance to women this election season and another panel discussion in

Spring 2025 featuring local women who leveraged the pandemic to make significant career shifts. Unfortunately, we once again have several vacancies to fill, but our future Commissioners will be joining a group with a clear and achievable plan for the year.