

# Cherie Tellier-Klassen

## Executive Director | Nonprofit Leadership & Community Development | Government Affairs & Stakeholder Relations | Strategic Advocacy

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### EXECUTIVE PROFILE

Strategic nonprofit leader and change agent with 24 years driving organizational growth, community development, and stakeholder engagement. Proven track record securing \$700,000+ in grants, leading crisis response initiatives, and building coalitions across government, business, and community sectors. Recognized with Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee Medal for significant contributions to Alberta.

### CORE COMPETENCIES

- **Leadership & Management:** Two decades of executive leadership in nonprofit and business association management. Proven ability to guide organizations through crisis, lead strategic planning, and build high-performing teams. Expert in board governance, change management, and operational excellence with consistent budget adherence
- **Government & Public Relations:** Extensive experience building relationships across all government levels. Skilled in stakeholder engagement, public policy advocacy, and political campaign strategy. Expert spokesperson with hundreds of media interviews and proven ability to influence policy decisions
- **Business Development & Economic Strategy:** Demonstrated success securing \$700,000+ in grants and funding. Expert in economic development planning, revenue generation, sponsorship development. Specialized in Business Improvement Area management with proven ability to deliver complex, multi-stakeholder projects
- **Communications & Marketing:** 24 years developing comprehensive communications strategies including crisis management, brand development, and digital marketing. Successful track record leading rebranding initiatives, managing social media growth, and creating compelling content

### KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- **Pandemic Leadership & Economic Recovery:** Steered organization through COVID-19 crisis and secured \$75,000 City of Edmonton matching grant to drive economic recovery strategy
- **Developed Placemaking Initiative:** Led a \$250,000 urban revitalization project, delivering 50+ custom street furniture pieces, Edmonton's first initiative of its kind, with 75% funding secured from Prairie Economic Development Canada's Community Revitalization Fund (nominated for national tourism award)
- **Strategic Funding Success:** Generated \$700,000+ in grants and funding through targeted applications and high-level government relations
- **Provincial Recognition:** Awarded Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee Medal (2023) by Opposition Leader Rachel Notley for significant contributions to Alberta, selected as 1 of only 7,000 recipients
- **Business Advocacy Leadership:** Chaired Edmonton Business Improvement Area Council, championing policy and growth initiatives for 4,000+ businesses across the city
- **Major Event Development & Growth:** Conceptualized & launched a new winter festival that grew presence from a few hundred to several thousand, with nearly 50% of its budget secured through competitive grants & aids
- **Safety & Security Advocacy:** Successfully advocated for and secured \$367,000 in targeted funding (\$167,000 vandalism relief grant + \$200,000 for street team) to enhance public safety and provide direct support to local businesses

- **National Recognition & Placemaking:** Led a \$250,000 urban revitalization project; one parklet gained national celebrity attention (featured on Jimmy Kimmel), over 1 million social media views, and a nomination for a Canadian Tourism Award
- **Strategic Advocacy Campaigns:** Led two targeted letter-writing campaigns (2023, 2024) to all levels of government, mobilizing 85+ letters to Council, generating significant media coverage, and securing City Council motions for strategic studies and funding

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

### Leadership Development Strategist

Parodos | Edmonton, Alberta

April 2026 - current

Facilitate leadership growth within non-profit organizations, foster stakeholder engagement and relationship building.

### Principal Consultant

[Cherie Tellier-Klassen Consulting](#) | Edmonton, Alberta

Oct 2025 – current

As an independent consultant, I assist clients in building stakeholder relationships, advancing government relations, leading non-profit organizations resulting in high-impact advocacy.

### Executive Director

Old Strathcona Business Association | Edmonton, Alberta

Oct 2017 - Oct 2025

Led one of Edmonton's largest Business Improvement Areas (BIA) representing 600+ businesses. Reported to Board Chair and collaborated with 11-member Board on strategic priorities

#### Leadership & Strategic Planning

- Led organization through global pandemic, establishing Economic Recovery Task Force and securing \$75,000 matching grant for 2.5-year economic development strategy that included innovative sidewalk expansion pilot project, market research, business recruitment package, and CRM implementation
- Directed strategic planning, operational planning & policy development in collaboration with Board of Directors
- Managed BIA tax levy funding and organizational budget, consistently delivering within fiscal parameters
- Enhanced board diversity through strategic recruitment, improving governance and gender parity

#### Economic & Community Development

- Led a first-of-its-kind \$250,000 placemaking project creating 50+ custom street furniture pieces, securing 75% funding from Prairie Economic Development Canada. One parklet (the "Nathan Fillion Civilian Pavilion") generated national attention, over 1 million social media views, a feature on Jimmy Kimmel, and a nomination for a Canadian Tourism Award (Innovator of the Year)
- Secured \$367,000 in targeted funding a one-time \$167,000 window repair/vandalism relief grant for businesses (2023-2024) and \$200,000 for a safety-focused street team (awarded 2025) through direct advocacy to address critical community needs
- Launched annual winter festival growing from a few hundred to several thousand attendees over 6 years, partnering with 10+ community organizations and securing nearly 50% of budget through grants & sponsorships
- Developed 7-year summer ambassador program that increased member engagement from 25% to 75%, reaching 500+ businesses door-to-door and securing annual grants covering 25-60% of program costs
- Secured \$700,000+ in grants and funding through strategic applications and government relations

#### Government & Stakeholder Relations

- Served as primary liaison between 600+ businesses & City of Edmonton, advocating across multiple departments
- Built strategic relationships with municipal government leaders, elected officials, and community organizations
- Navigated Area Redevelopment Plans, Municipal Government Act, and civic/provincial regulations
- Led two high-impact letter-writing campaigns to municipal and provincial governments (2023 & 2024) advocating for public safety and strategic investment, securing significant media coverage and actionable City Council motions

### **Communications & Public Relations**

- Served as organizational spokesperson, conducting hundreds of media interviews and public presentations
- Developed and executed comprehensive marketing, communications, and crisis management strategies
- Led successful rebranding initiative including brand transition and website redevelopment

### **Team & Operational Management**

- Built and managed high-performing teams from recruitment through retention, professional development, and performance management
- Oversaw financial planning, operational reporting, annual reports, and audit compliance, ensuring transparent accountability to Board members, members and funding partners
- Directed program planning, implementation & evaluation including marketing, sponsorship & tourism initiatives

### **Marketing Manager**

**Business Link** | Edmonton, Alberta

*Oct 2014 - Oct 2017*

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Led marketing strategy and brand development for provincial organization supporting Alberta entrepreneurs

- Developed and executed comprehensive marketing strategies positioning Business Link as Alberta's entrepreneurial hub, resulting in increased brand awareness across the province
- Led cross-functional collaboration with management team to drive strategic initiatives and organizational growth
- Led comprehensive 500-page website redevelopment project including rebranding, complete content rewrite, and French translation after 10+ years of site stagnation
- Safeguarded brand consistency across all marketing channels and communications platforms
- Served as media liaison, managing all media inquiries and maintaining positive public relations
- Built strategic partnerships with external organizations to advance cooperation & create opportunities
- Built and led marketing team, providing coaching and professional development opportunities

### **Webinar & Marketing Coordinator**

**Business Link** | Edmonton, Alberta

*April 2014 - Oct 2014*

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- Developed and produced webinar series for small business clients, including custom solutions
- Supported organizational marketing strategies with focus on social media initiatives
- Managed presenter recruitment, coaching, and relationship development, building a network of expert facilitators and ensuring high-quality content delivery

### **Learning Services Coordinator**

**Business Link** | Edmonton, Alberta

*Feb 2012- April 2014*

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- Coordinated 100+ seminars and webinars annually for small business owners and startups
- Recruited expert presenters and provided coaching on best practices
- Developed partnership opportunities with 40+ organizations supporting small business in Alberta
- Implemented social media marketing plan and managed organizational social media presence

### **Manager**

**Meridian Health Centre** | Edmonton, Alberta

*2007 - 2012*

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- Managed operations and business development for multi-disciplinary health clinic
- Supervised hiring, training, and management of staff
- Developed operational processes, policies, and business development strategies

### **Earlier Career**

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**Communications & Programs Coordinator** | Alberta College & Association of Chiropractors | Edmonton *2002 - 2006*

**Marketing & Communication Coordinator** | BURNCO Rock Products Ltd | Calgary, Alberta | *2000 - 2002*

## BOARD & VOLUNTEER LEADERSHIP

- **Co-Chair** | People's Advocacy Voice of amiskwacîwâskahikan (PAVA) May 2026 - current
- **Policy Sub-Committee Co-Chair** | Women's Advisory Voice of Edmonton (WAVE) Jan 2025 – April 2026
- **Committee Member** | Women's Advisory Voice of Edmonton (WAVE) May 2024 – April 2026
- **Chair & Co-Chair** | Edmonton Business Improvement Area Council Jan 2019 – Sept 2022
- **Strategy and Communications Lead** | Ashley Salvador Campaign Team Feb 2021 – Oct 2021
- **President & Civic Affairs Director** | Highlands Community League May 2016 - May 2018
- **Board Member & Treasurer** | 124 Street Business Association Jan 2012 - Dec 2016

## TECHNICAL SKILLS

- **Leadership & Governance:** Board Governance | Strategic Planning | Consensus Building | Community Engagement | Conflict Resolution | Stakeholder Mapping
- **Business Operations:** Budget Management | Financial Planning | Grant Writing | Report Writing | Project Management | Event Planning & Management
- **Government Relations & Advocacy:** Legislative Monitoring | Environmental Scanning | Policy Analysis | Stakeholder Engagement Planning | Government Relations | Coalition Building | Advocacy Strategy
- **Media & Presentation:** Media Interview Management | Public Speaking | Presentation Design | Video Conferencing | Webinar Production & Hosting
- **Specialized Competencies:** Policy Analysis | Stakeholder Mapping | Conflict Resolution | Strategic Planning | Government Relations | Community Engagement
- **Marketing & Design:** Brand Development | Digital Marketing Strategy | Content Creation | Newsletter Design & Production
- **Digital & Communications:** Social Media Management (Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram) | Website Development | Content Management Systems | Email Marketing | Customer Relationship Management Systems (CRM) | Project Management Systems

## EDUCATION, CERTIFICATIONS & AWARDS

- **Alberta Board Member Essentials** 2026  
Edmonton Chamber of Voluntary Organizations
- **Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) Certificate** 2024  
Government of Canada
- **Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee Medal** 2023  
Alberta
- **Certified Webinar Planner Certificate** 2013  
Learning Resources Network
- **Public Relations Certificate** 2002  
Mount Royal University - Alberta, Canada
- **Bachelor of Arts, Communications Studies** 1994 -1998  
University of Calgary - Alberta, Canada