

Winnipeg  Police Board



2023 COMMUNICATION PLAN

OVERVIEW

The legislated mandate of the Winnipeg Police Board is to provide civilian governance respecting the enforcement of law, the maintenance of the public peace and the prevention of crime in the City of Winnipeg. The Board also provides the administrative direction and organization required to ensure an adequate and effective police service in the City. It is important to reinforce that The Police Services Act, Manitoba, 28(4) explicitly states that “The police board must not give orders or directions on specific operational decisions, individual investigations or the day-to-day operation of the police service.”

The Winnipeg Police Board’s (Board) communication goal is to provide more opportunities for the public to contribute to the Board’s strategic priorities for the Winnipeg Police Service (Service). The strategic priorities are informed by meaningful and inclusive consultations to incorporate citizen perspectives and reinforce the vision, mission and objectives of the Board and Service. This communication plan outlines the Board’s plan for communicating and connecting with its stakeholders during the 2023 calendar year.

Objectives

In 2023, the Board's communications will:

- Promote an understanding of civilian police governance, the Board and its mandate
- Encourage citizens and stakeholders to connect with the Board to inform the multi-year strategic plan and annual updates
- Incorporate citizen perspectives and priorities into the strategic priorities of the Service



Strategies

The Board seeks to improve its communications capacity and the effectiveness of its communications with the public and stakeholders in 2023 using the following strategies:

- Continue improving the Board's website, adding new feedback tools so that citizens have the opportunity to provide feedback throughout the year
- Continue to meet with citizens in the community to hear their ideas on public safety
- Conduct pop up events in the community to get input on specific questions in an informal setting
- Encourage Board members to suggest organizations that they personally would be willing to present to, and use their personal networks to promote the Board's consultation efforts
- Schedule the Board Chair and Secretary to the Board to deliver public presentations when authorized by the Board
- Invite community organizations and groups to partner with the Board to host community forums
- Encourage citizens to attend the public board meetings and provide written submissions

The Board will continue to deliver presentations on its mandate to community organizations. Procedures for accepting delegations at regular public meetings will not change. Regular Board meetings take place during the day at City Hall and the Board plans to attend public meetings and events at locations throughout the city in the evening to make interaction convenient for citizens.

The Board will supplement consultation meetings with other methods for engaging the public such as pop up events that may include hosting a pit stop for Winnipeg Bike Week, coffee talks at various coffee shops, or an informal set up at community events. Flexible approaches allow community members to choose from different options to suit their interest and availability.

The input collected from all events with community members, will be used to inform the Board on citizen priorities.

KEY MESSAGES

In 2023, Board communications will continue to focus on key messages in order to promote public understanding of the Board's mandate:

- The Board works to develop a plan that incorporates community needs, values and expectations about public safety
- The Board shares information to inform the community and to gain public input to set strategic priorities for the Service
- The Board does not give orders or directions on specific operational decisions, individual investigations or the day-to-day operation of the police service.

Appendix

To communicate effectively, the Board will consider the following in support of the 2023 Communication Plan.

1. Risk Factors

There are a number of inherent challenges that must be addressed for the Board to be successful in achieving the objectives of this communication plan. They are identified and evaluated in the table following.

Risk	Evaluation
Low levels of public engagement and participation.	Provide residents with multiple venues and platforms for giving input.
Communications that are ineffective	Monitor reach – web hits, followers, public contact and feedback from public.
The public or interest groups do not feel their input or participation is treated seriously or respectfully.	<p>The likelihood of this occurring is high because residents have diverse and sometimes conflicting perspectives on public safety priorities. The Board can reassure residents that their input has been heard by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publishing a summary of the feedback received during public consultations. • Welcoming and inviting public presentations on matters related to the Board’s mandate at the Board’s public meetings.
Inadequate or ineffective communications on critical issues could diminish public confidence and trust in the Board and the Service.	The Board will attempt to mitigate this risk through sound governance of the Service (providing appropriate oversight).

2. Audiences

The Board will direct its communications toward the following audiences:

- Residents of Winnipeg
- Members of the Service
- Winnipeg Police Service Executives
- Elected civic, provincial and federal officials and administration
- Manitoba Police Commission
- Winnipeg Police Association and Winnipeg Police Senior Officers Association
- Local media (mainstream and community-based)
- Community organizations and government agencies with mandates related to community safety, crime prevention and justice
- School boards
- Business community

3. Audience Needs

There are many commonalities in the information and engagement needs of each audience. Each audience needs to be able to access information about:

- The Board’s scope and mandate
- The Board’s operations and activities
- How to engage with the Board

The table on the following pages indicates the knowledge base and needs of each of the Board’s target audiences.

Target Audience	Existing Knowledge (on policing, public safety, crime prevention, civilian oversight)	Information and Engagement Needs
Residents	Varies significantly by individual and is dependent on direct need for services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessible information about the Board’s scope, mandate, operations and activities • Information on how to contact the Board • Encouragement to connect with the Board and/or attend public meetings • Public consultation meetings at convenient times and locations • Information on the environment for policing in Winnipeg and opportunities and challenges for the Service, sufficient to enable informed and meaningful engagement
Members of the Service	Experts on policing, public safety, crime prevention; knowledge of Board and civilian governance function varies depending on the member and his/her position in the organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessible information about the Board’s scope, mandate, operations and activities • Understanding of strategic objectives
Winnipeg Police Service Executive	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timely information about the Board’s operations and activities • Timely information about the Board’s plans, particularly where they have resource or reporting implications for the Service

Target Audience	Existing Knowledge (on policing, public safety, crime prevention, civilian oversight)	Information and Engagement Needs
Elected civic, provincial and federal officials and administration	High familiarity with issues related to policing, public safety, crime prevention; for City Councillors, knowledge of civilian oversight may depend on individual Councillor's committee involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orientation to the Board and its mandate • Accessible information about Board operations and activities • Accessible information on the Board's role in submitting budget estimates for the Service • Accessible information on how the City of Winnipeg and the Board interact
Manitoba Police Commission	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timely information about the Board's operations and activities
Winnipeg Police Association and Winnipeg Police Senior Officers Association	Winnipeg Police Senior Officers Association includes members that work directly with the Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessible information about the Board's scope, mandate, operations and activities • Information on how to contact the Board • Encouragement to reach out to the Board • Understanding of strategic objectives
Local media	Varies: for journalists reporting on City Hall, crime and public safety, knowledge typically exceeds that of the general public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessible information about the Board's scope and mandate • Accessible information about Board operations and activities, with interest in a level of detail that likely exceeds the needs of other community audiences • Access to Board spokesperson(s) for questions, interviews on agreed upon Board positions
Community organizations and government agencies with mandates related to community safety, crime prevention and criminal justice	Varies by organization and agency depending on its size and mandate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessible information about the Board's scope, mandate, operations and activities • Information on how to contact the Board • Encouragement to engage with the Board and/or attend meetings • Relevant partnerships and presentations are welcomed • Opportunities to contact the Board by phone or electronically
School boards	Varies, with low level of awareness of the Board and its civilian governance function	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessible information about the Board's scope, mandate, operations and activities • Information on how to contact the Board • Encouragement to reach out to the Board
Business community	Varies, with low level of awareness of the Board and its civilian governance function	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessible information about the Board's scope, mandate, operations and activities • Information on how to contact the Board • Encouragement to reach out to the Board

4. Eliciting Community Input and Connection

The Board will provide opportunities and events for community members to offer input on priorities for public safety, law enforcement, and crime prevention. The Board will focus on planning events that community members may use to give the Board feedback and will take steps to promote awareness of these events.

Regular meetings of the Board: The Board holds regular public meetings throughout the year, and these meetings are livestreamed for viewing via the City of Winnipeg website. The Board encourages community members and organizations who would like to attend a meeting as a delegation to contact the Secretary to the Board. If their concerns or input fall within the Board’s mandate, they will be invited to make a presentation at one of these public meetings. The Board provides this information on its website.

Community consultation meetings: The Board plans to attend public forums and may arrange up to two meetings in 2023 which all community members and organizations are invited to attend. The locations will be selected with convenience for community members considered. Opinions and concerns are noted by board members and staff in attendance and incorporated into monitoring and planning strategies.

Contacting the Board via its website: The Board offers visitors an online form that may be used to contact the Board. Queries or comments made using this form are directed to Board staff and prompt replies are provided. The Board’s e-mail address for general inquiries is wpb@winnipeg.ca Surveys are posted that visitors to the website can participate in.



5. Delivering Board Messages

How and when the Board delivers its messages through an advertising plan is partly dependent on when the Board holds its 2023 public consultation meetings. A key function of paid advertising will be to encourage the public to attend open meetings.

Advertising Plan

Objective: To promote public awareness of the Board and to drive public connection with the Board.

Duration: Advertising campaign will focus on sharing key results of the strategic plan and informing the next iteration of the strategic plan. The period and degree of media saturation will depend on the resources the Board has available for issuing media releases, speaking with media outlets, and through paid advertisements.

Advertising Goal: The Board's goal is to increase attendance at its public meetings, invite more electronic submissions, and increase the number of visitors to the Board's website.

Recommended Advertising Activities

- Update content on the Board's websites to reflect the current cycle of public consultation
- Update the Board's websites to contain information on the dates and locations of the Board's public meetings
- Upload the Board's strategic plan and environmental scan to the websites for public review
- Contact community organizations, government agencies and other stakeholders who have engaged with the Board in the past year and inform them of the upcoming public consultation meetings, encouraging them to come and to share the invitation with their own networks
- Share information on the public consultation meetings with any community newsletters or networks that may be able to share the information with their own contacts
- Schedule opportunities for the Board Chair and the Chief of Police to promote the public consultation meetings through appearances on, or interviews with, local media outlets
- Run paid advertisements promoting the Board and its public consultation meetings
- Ask the Service and City of Winnipeg to promote the public consultation meetings to Twitter followers
- Issue a media release commenting on the conclusion of the public consultation meetings and notifying the public of the deadline for online submissions
- Post a summary of the feedback received as part of the public consultation process for the strategic plan update on the Board's webpage



6. Criteria for issuing news releases

The Board has developed the following criteria to determine when news releases shall be issued:

- The news release must be related to a significant accomplishment that:
 - Pertains to the publication of a public document or report that is a unique, standalone release or is a regular publication that the Board releases on, at most, an annual basis; or,
 - Constitutes a milestone because it is the first time the Board has completed a new task or project that will be continued in the future; or,
 - Involved the participation of at least four Board members; and,
 - Profiles the Board's fulfillment of some aspect of its mandate.
- Alternately, the media release may be issued to share information or state a Board position for the record where:
 - The Board has identified a significant risk to public confidence and trust in the Board and/or the Service; and,
 - The issue which the Board seeks to address relates directly to some aspect of its mandate; and,
 - The Board needs to address an oversight or misrepresentation of the Board and its activities in the media; or,
 - The Board needs to address an oversight or misrepresentation of the Service and its activities or operations in the media and has consulted with the Service in this regard.

The Board may host a press conference, when warranted, to emphasize the significance of certain announcements. The Board has therefore developed the following criteria to determine when a press conference should accompany a news release:

- The news release pertains to a particularly significant accomplishment that:
 - Initiates a project that has considerable value to the public, or,
 - Establishes a best practice for police governance, or,
 - Enhances the Board's capacity to fulfill its mandate, or,
 - Addresses an issue of widespread public concern.
- The Board identifies a critical need to share information or state a Board position for the record in the most visible way possible or in as many ways as possible; and,
- The Board determines that understanding and coverage of its news release will benefit from providing reporters with an opportunity to ask questions; and,
- The Board determines it has visual elements, display materials or the presence of community partners to make full use of the press conference format.

7. Required Resources

For 2023, the Board plans to select venues (accessible locations/public transit availability) and meeting formats (in person or virtual) that make it more convenient for citizens to participate in the consultation process.

