

2025 Community Consultations

Land and Water Acknowledgment

Winnipeg is located in Treaty One Territory, the home and traditional lands of the Anishinaabe (Ojibwe), Ininew (Cree), and Dakota peoples, and in the National Homeland of the Red River Métis. Our drinking water comes from Shoal Lake 40 First Nation, in Treaty Three Territory.

The Winnipeg Police Board recognizes the importance of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples connected to Winnipeg's history, and the vibrant, diverse people who make up Indigenous communities today.

The Winnipeg Police Board acknowledges the harms and mistakes of the past, and is dedicated to upholding Indigenous rights, and to moving forward in partnership with Indigenous communities in a spirit of truth, reconciliation and collaboration towards a safe community for all.

Executive Summary

The Winnipeg Police Board (the Board) is the governance body for the Winnipeg Police Service (the WPS). The Board, in consultation with the Police Chief, establishes priorities and objectives for the WPS that reflect the needs, values, and expectations of the community.

In the summer of 2025, the Board sought feedback from the public who live, work, or visit the City of Winnipeg on their visions for policing, the areas where policing is effective or where it could be done differently, and what changes they recommended to bring transformational impacts to policing and public safety in Winnipeg.

This "What We Heard" report summarizes key themes captured during the community engagement process. Hundreds of submissions were received from individuals, community organizations, local and provincial governments, rights holders, stakeholders, and community leaders representing Winnipeg's diverse community.

During the community engagement process, the following key themes were raised:

- Collaboration with community, health, and social service partners is critical to addressing root causes of crime.
- Relationships with Winnipeg's diverse community are important to build trust and confidence.
- Visible and accessible services are expected across the city.
- Crime prevention and deterrence efforts promote perceptions of safety.
- Equitable and professional treatment of persons and organizations builds trust.
- Enforcement should target violence, dangerous behaviours, illicit drugs, guns, and gangs.
- Police are a valuable source of public education, communication, and outreach.

The Board will use the input received from the community to develop actionable priorities and objectives for the WPS for the next five years.

Introduction

The legislated mandate for the 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, and to provide the administrative direction and organization required to provide an adequate and effective police service in the City.

The Board acts as a liaison between the community and the WPS. Through the implementation of a strategic plan for the WPS, the Board ensures that community needs, values, and expectations are reflected in policing priorities, objectives, programs and strategies.

The Board's community engagement process focused on hearing from the community on areas where policing is effective, where it could be done differently, and what changes are recommended to improve policing and public safety in Winnipeg.

It is acknowledged that a significant overlap exists between socio-economic inequalities and contact with police. Many people coming into contact with police face challenges that may include mental health crisis, addictions, homelessness, poverty, and/or the residual and ongoing impacts of colonization.

Police have a role to play in addressing circumstances such as those but are not equipped to resolve the interconnected issues in isolation. Marginalized populations often feature complex experiences, and addressing those challenges must be done in tandem with efforts across all systems to promote public safety and wellbeing in the community.

Throughout the community engagement process, the Board has taken note of these and other factors with the intent of developing a strategic plan that transforms the way policing is delivered in Winnipeg to meet the needs of the community. The strategic plan developed out of this process will be in place from 2026 through 2030 and updated annually to ensure it continues to be effective.

Community Consultation Process

In May 2025, the Board announced the launch of the community consultation process on the development of the 2026-2030 Strategic Plan for the Service. The process focused on five key questions to inform the development of actionable strategies, priorities, and objectives:

1. How would you describe your level of trust and confidence in policing, and what could the Winnipeg Police Service do differently that would increase your trust and confidence in policing?
2. What do you think the Winnipeg Police Service does well?
3. What would you like to see the Winnipeg Police Service accomplish over the next five (5) years?
4. What changes do you believe are needed to achieve those accomplishments?
5. What role do you believe police should play in contributing to public safety and wellbeing?

The Board received input and responses from:

- Community members through an online survey.
- Organizations and individuals that attended focused roundtable discussions representing a significant array of the diverse community.
- Written submissions from individuals, organizations, and businesses.
- Open house forums for community members.
- Municipal government leaders.
- Indigenous organizations and rightsholders.
- Youth with lived experience.

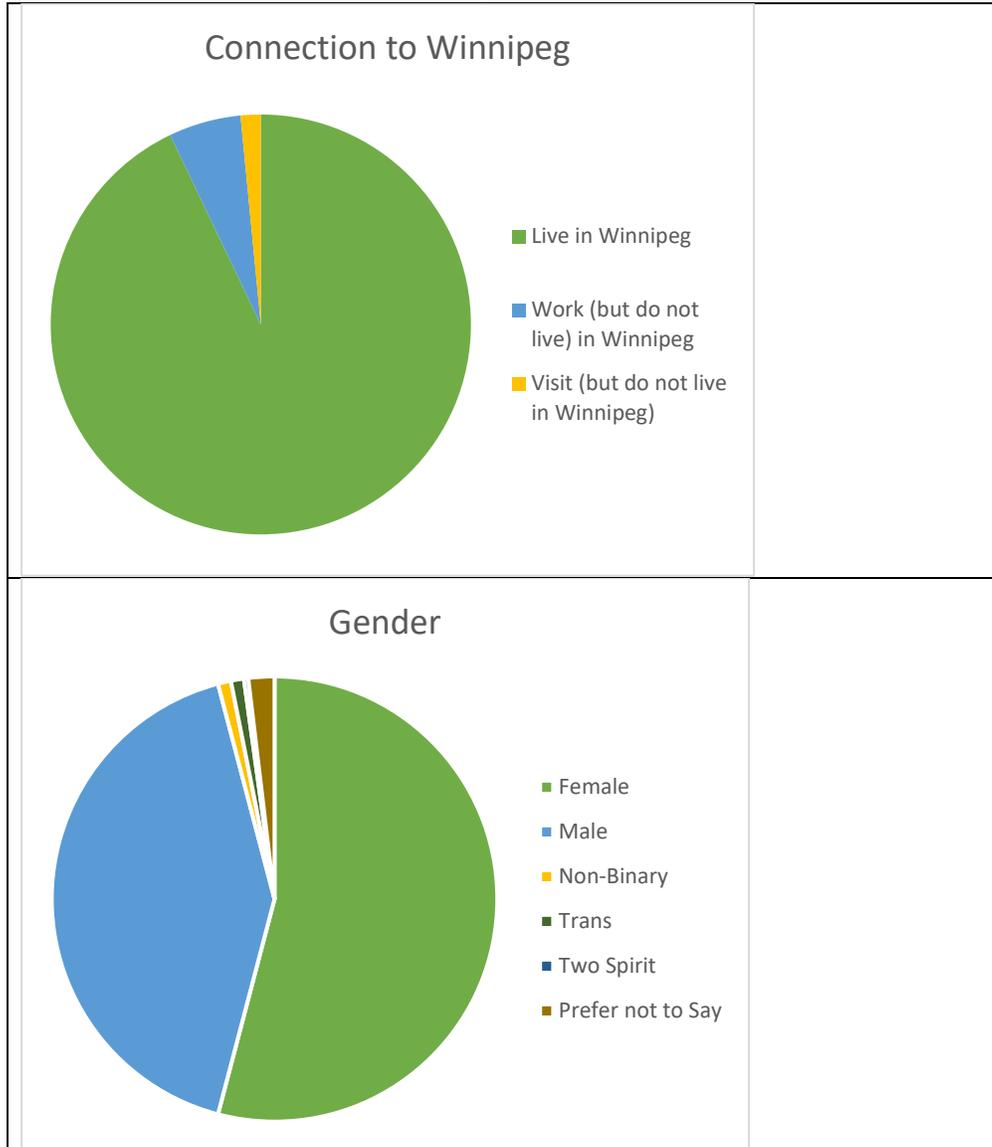
The Board hosted focused roundtable discussions with:

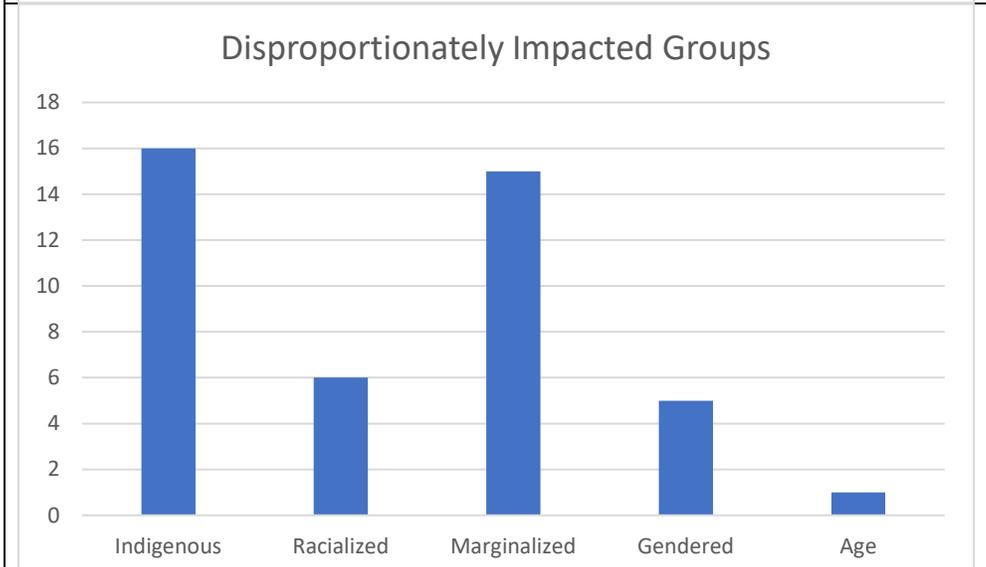
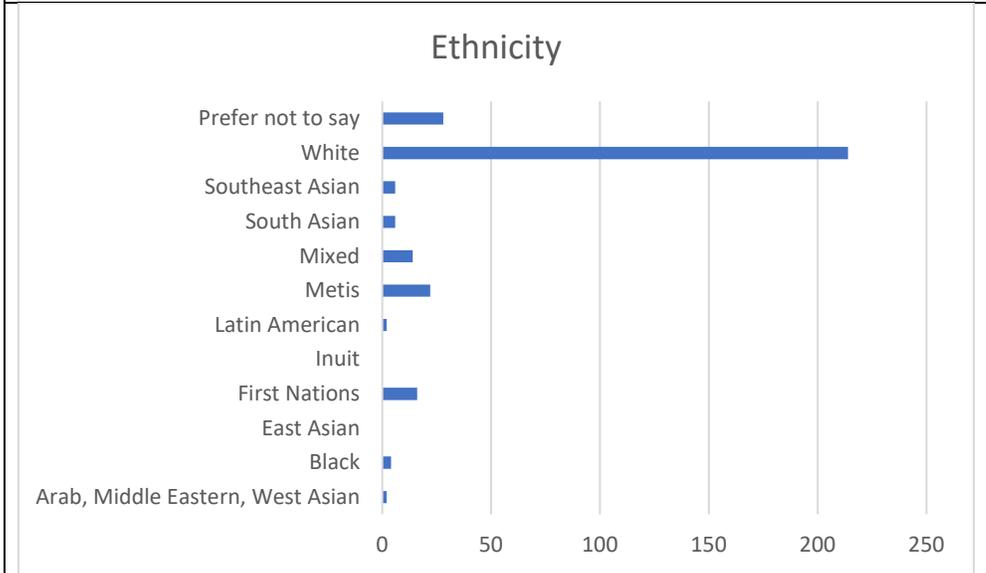
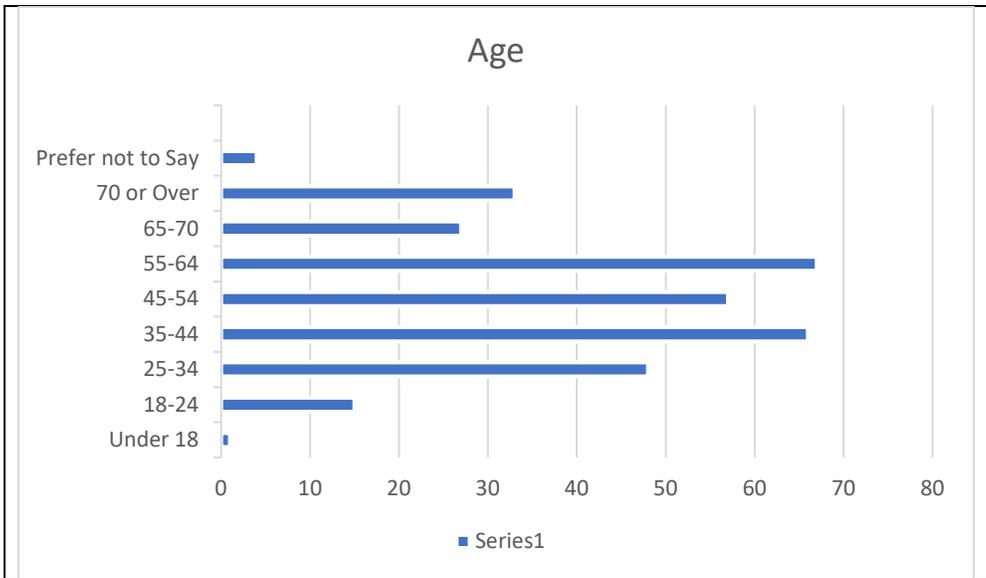
- Newcomer, cultural, and faith organizations.
- Indigenous leadership, organizations, businesses, and community members.
- Child, family, and youth serving organizations, education, and student representatives.
- Community organizations practicing or advocating in social services, health, and community safety and wellbeing.

- Businesses, retail, and labour representatives.
- Members of City Council

The Board is grateful to all those who took part in this process. A complete list of all organizations recorded in taking part in this process can be found at [Appendix A](#).

Overview of Individual Respondents





Note: In addition to those groups listed on this chart, 88 indicated they were a member of a community disproportionately impacted by crime and/or policing based on their geographic location (i.e. neighbourhood).

Question 1: Trust and Confidence

How would you describe your level of trust and confidence in policing, and what could the Winnipeg Police Service do differently that would increase your trust and confidence in policing?

Key Themes

- Individual interactions with police, particularly in moments of need or vulnerability, have significant impacts on perceptions of trust and confidence.
- Building trust comes from engagement with the community, interacting and getting to know each other.
- Equitable treatment of young people, racialized and marginalized groups must be real, perceived, and meet the needs of individuals.
- The visibility and accessibility of police officers and services improve perceptions of police.
- The police service's capacity to promptly respond to calls for service influences trust and confidence.
- Collaborative working relationships with police depend on continuity of individuals who are the right person for the right role.

Sample Quotes

- "I trust the police very much, I think they do their job very well and with integrity. They don't have an easy job and there is too much crime and calls for service to keep up. They need more boots on the ground."
- "WPS should support more community-based solutions to safety. This can look like implementing violence prevention programs, mental health crisis teams, and restorative justice initiatives. Building trust requires police to listen to the voices of those who are historically marginalized, understand and respect their lived experiences, and invest in the wellbeing of our communities."
- "By prioritizing prevention, partnership, and accountability, police can help build resilient, connected communities where people feel safe and empowered, shifting from reactive policing to proactive support that fosters trust and reduces reliance on punitive measures."
- "Police should allow everyone the [to] feel safe, seen, and heard. Police can be involved in community and to create relationships with community. It's important that there is equality in how people feel treated and that all communities are having strong relationships with police that build more trust."
- "When the right person is in the right role, there needs to be a way to keep them there beyond the mandatory transfer period."
- "I trust that I will be kept safe by police, but I don't think I can trust that I will be treated with respect."

Question 2: What is Working Well

What do you think the Winnipeg Police Service does well?

Key Themes

- Respond promptly to urgent incidents and emergencies.
- Investigative and enforcement efforts are effective in responding to crime trends.
- Customer facing technologies (i.e. criminal record check service) is expedient and efficient.
- Proactive engagement outreach with community members, businesses, and organizations improve safety and perceptions of safety.
- Participate in multisectoral prevention initiatives (Community Mobilization) and restorative justice programming provide avenues to resolve risk factors for individuals without the extensive involvement of the criminal justice system.
- Visible presence, particularly foot patrols, improve perceptions of police and safety.

Sample Quotes:

- “They are committed to their jobs and it shows. They are empathetic in most situations and would like to help but often their ability to respond is the issue. Too many high priority calls = competing priorities and not enough staff to deal with it all.”
- “What the Winnipeg Police Service does well at times is enforcement and crisis response. But trust, prevention, and meaningful relationships require a different kind of effort—one rooted in accountability, transparency, and cultural safety. What’s needed is the leadership and willingness to shift from a force-first model to a service-oriented approach grounded in community needs and human rights. Building on what works must include confronting what doesn’t.”
- “The positives that the police are doing either as volunteers or on the job need to be made public to help us understand just how many good people are police and how hard they are trying to make a difference. This day and age news is always negative and I feel for the Frontline staff who generally only get called out for something negative.”
- “I think the WPS is a great organization, I think one of the best things it does is that the majority of times I have interacted with an officer they have been friendly, professional and I get the sense they want to help.”

Question 3: Goals

What would you like to see the Winnipeg Police Service accomplish over the next five (5) years?

Key Themes

- Mutually beneficial collaboration and integration with other agencies and service providers working in the community.
- Implement the recommendations and calls to action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Inquiry.
- Improve the diversity and representation in the Service through proactive outreach and accessible recruitment policies.
- Develop joint training opportunities with health, child welfare, mental health, community-serving organizations, and improve training in cultural sensitivity, trauma-informed services, mental health, and addictions.
- Enhance accessibility and visibility by opening district stations and proactively engaging with the community.
- Collect race-based data.
- Report on the outcomes of inquest recommendations.

Sample Quotes:

- “Police need to be accessible to the public and seen to be part of the communities & neighbourhoods that they work in.”
- “There needs to be more collaborative approaches with other sectors of the government to form a better approach to navigating complex social issues... [T]he police need more resources to intervene in order for crime rates to significantly decline. Police need to be able to focus on major crimes that put the community at risk. In order to do that, they need social support systems to work in collaboration.”

Question 4: Areas for Change

What changes do you believe are needed to achieve those accomplishments?

Key Themes

- Increase information sharing with the public and enhance information sharing with partnering community services.
- Increase representation of racialized, gendered, and marginalized peoples amongst WPS personnel.

- Review of policy, funding, and training structures to ensure that the service is continually able to meet the needs, values, and expectations of communities in a manner that is flexible and adaptable to trends and influential factors.
- Promote transparency and accountability through the timely release of information and implementation of technologies such as body-worn cameras.
- Greater effort to ensure that marginalized people, including young people, have a voice in policing systems.
- Instill a greater emphasis of collaboration between front-line resources with those in community, health, and social services.
- Develop specialized services to meet the needs of youth who come into contact with police.

Sample Quotes

- “Given the impact of trauma, mental health and substance use on violence and crime, the Service should look to expand and create new and innovative partnerships with other sectors like health and social services.”
- “Hiring more indigenous officers or BIPOC officers or increasing the requirements for them to have taken indigenous cultural safety training, including elements of the effects of residential schools and systemic racism and poverty on social and economic disadvantages.”
- “We have dedicated youth sections of all of the other aspects of the justice system – the Manitoba Youth Centre, Youth Courts, Youth Corrections – but no dedicated policing program for young people.”

Question 5: Role of Police

What role do you believe police should play in contributing to public safety and wellbeing?

Key Themes

- Provide education for the public on the root causes of crime and actions necessary to bring crime rates down.
- Define core police functions and promote the use of alternative service providers in areas that exceed police expertise.
- Be a positive collaborator with community, health, social, and police services.
- Disrupt the trade and prevalence of harmful drugs, guns, and gangs in the community.
- Imbed policing in the community to foster trust and confidence.
- Advocate for changes necessary in legislation, funding, and social priorities to improve public safety.

Sample Quotes

- “If the police are going to play any role in contributing to public security, they need to be observed as being part of the community.”
- “Police should serve as collaborative partners in public safety and community well-being, working alongside other public sectors such as social services, health care, education, and local community organizations to address the root causes of crime such as poverty, mental health issues, and substance use. The role of police should extend beyond enforcement of law to include supporting prevention programs, coordinating timely interventions, and responding respectfully and appropriately to crises. By prioritizing prevention, partnership, and accountability, police can help build resilient, connected communities where people feel safe and empowered, shifting from reactive policing to proactive support that fosters trust and reduces reliance on punitive measures.”
- “Police should work to keep the peace, respond to emergencies and investigate crimes. They are not social workers, truant officers, mental health professionals or drug treatment specialists, yet we expect them to act in those capacities much of the time.”
- “I fell [feel] that police should not be fully responsible for public wellbeing and should be working in concert with various organizations that can help ease the burden, especially when it comes to mental health issues.”
- “I believe the WPS has to continue to press upon our justice system to make changes where needed to better serve our communities and for their safety.” Police Funding and Social Priorities

It is important to acknowledge that through this process, the Board heard feedback from some regarding the level or way government funding is spent on policing and other priorities in Winnipeg. Below is a sampling of those comments:

- “Defund and dismantle the police system in Winnipeg.”
- “Make its budget smaller and redistribute to expanding social services that address the root of crime.
- “More funding for joint efforts with community mental health workers. Education for the public on what changes are happening in this regard, including what the public can do to improve restorative justice outcomes.”

The Board also received feedback that greater spending is needed in policing:

- “Increasing staffing levels - times have changed and budgets need to reflect the reality of the new normal.”
- “I like your move to get more officers. We need more officers, which will reduce the demand for overtime. The overtime budget is what drains the coffers, placing the strain on the whole system. Having more officers will allow for a stronger response.”
- “Higher budget because our city has grown and we don't have enough police to enforce the law.”

The Board recognizes that prevention, social services, health services, mental health and addiction supports are critical components of a comprehensive community safety and well-being approach that includes law enforcement where needed. The Board supports the commitment of public funds in all of those areas to achieve positive outcomes for all.

It is also critical that the Board acknowledges its legislated mandate, 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. That mandate includes the allocation of the police service’s budget established by City Council. The Board is committed to making informed and effective decisions regarding the allocation of the police service’s budget by considering the legislated requirement to deliver the administrative direction and organization required to provide an adequate and effective police service.

The Board believes that police have a role to play in responding to social and health issues that overlap with safety and crime, however police alone cannot fully resolve those issues. The Board calls on all levels of government to adequately fund community, social, health, and police services to the extent necessary to achieve holistic community safety and well-being.

Other Sources

In addition to the community engagement process, the Board reviews recent public surveys conducted by the WPS, other information received by the board over the course of previous years, the data and factors laid out in [The Environment for Policing in Winnipeg 2025](#) report, collaborative input from the WPS, academic research, cross-jurisdictional analysis, and more.

During community engagement, participants noted certain works that the Board has taken notice of, including but not limited to:

- [Broken Trust: Indigenous People and the Thunder Bay Police Service](#), Office of the Independent Police Review Director (Ontario)
- [First Nation Experiences of Racism in Policing Survey Report](#), Southern Chiefs’ Organization
- [Independent Civilian Review into Matters Relating to the G20 Summit](#), Honourable John Morden, Toronto Police Services Board
- [Independent Review of the Manitoba Police Services Act](#), Community Safety Knowledge Alliance
- [Memengwaa Wiidoodaagewin \(Butterfly Project\)](#), Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth
- [Police Interactions with People in Crisis and Use of Force, A Systemic Review](#), Office of the Independent Police Review Director (Ontario)
- [Safer Neighbourhoods, Safer Downtowns](#), Government of Manitoba
- [Shaping the Future: Policing in Nova Scotia](#), Deloitte, Nova Scotia Department of Justice

Appendix A – Participating Organizations

The following organizations were recorded as participating in the Board's community engagement process through attendance at focused consultation sessions or by written submission:

African Communities of Manitoba Inc.	Police Accountability Coalition
Animikii Ozoson, Inc.	Rainbow Resource Centre
Astum Api Niikinaahk	Red River College Polytech
Awasis Agency of Northern Manitoba	Red River Coop
Bass Pro Shops/Cabela's	Resource Assistance for Youth (RAY)
Black History Month	Retail Council of Canada (Manitoba region)
Business Council of Manitoba	Canadian Footwear
Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives	River East Transcona School Division
Canadian Palestinian Association of Manitoba	Selkirk Biz
Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA)	Sikh Heritage Manitoba
Child and Family All Nations Coordinated Response Network (ANCR)	Sobeys
Downtown Winnipeg Biz	Social Planning Council of Winnipeg
Exchange District Biz	St Vital Centre
General Child and Family Services Authority	St. James-Assiniboia School Division
Home Depot	St. Vital Biz
Immigration Partnership Winnipeg	StreetReach
Inner City Youth Alive	The Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth (MACY)
Islamic Social Services Association	MACY Youth Ambassador Advisory Squad
Ka Ni Kanichihk	Transcona Biz
Kinosao Sipi Minisowin Agency	University of Manitoba - Administration
Klinic	West Broadway Biz
Manitoba Association of Senior Communities	University of Winnipeg Student Association
Manitoba Business Council	Welcome Place
Manitoba Multifaith Council	Tunngasuguit Inc.
Manitou House	West End Biz
Metis Child & Family Services Authority	Velma's House
Ndinawemaaganag Endaawaad	Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce
Old St. Vital Biz	Winnipeg Child and Family Services
Pembina Trails School Division	Winnipeg City Council
Point Douglas Women's Centre	Winnipeg Indigenous Executive Circle