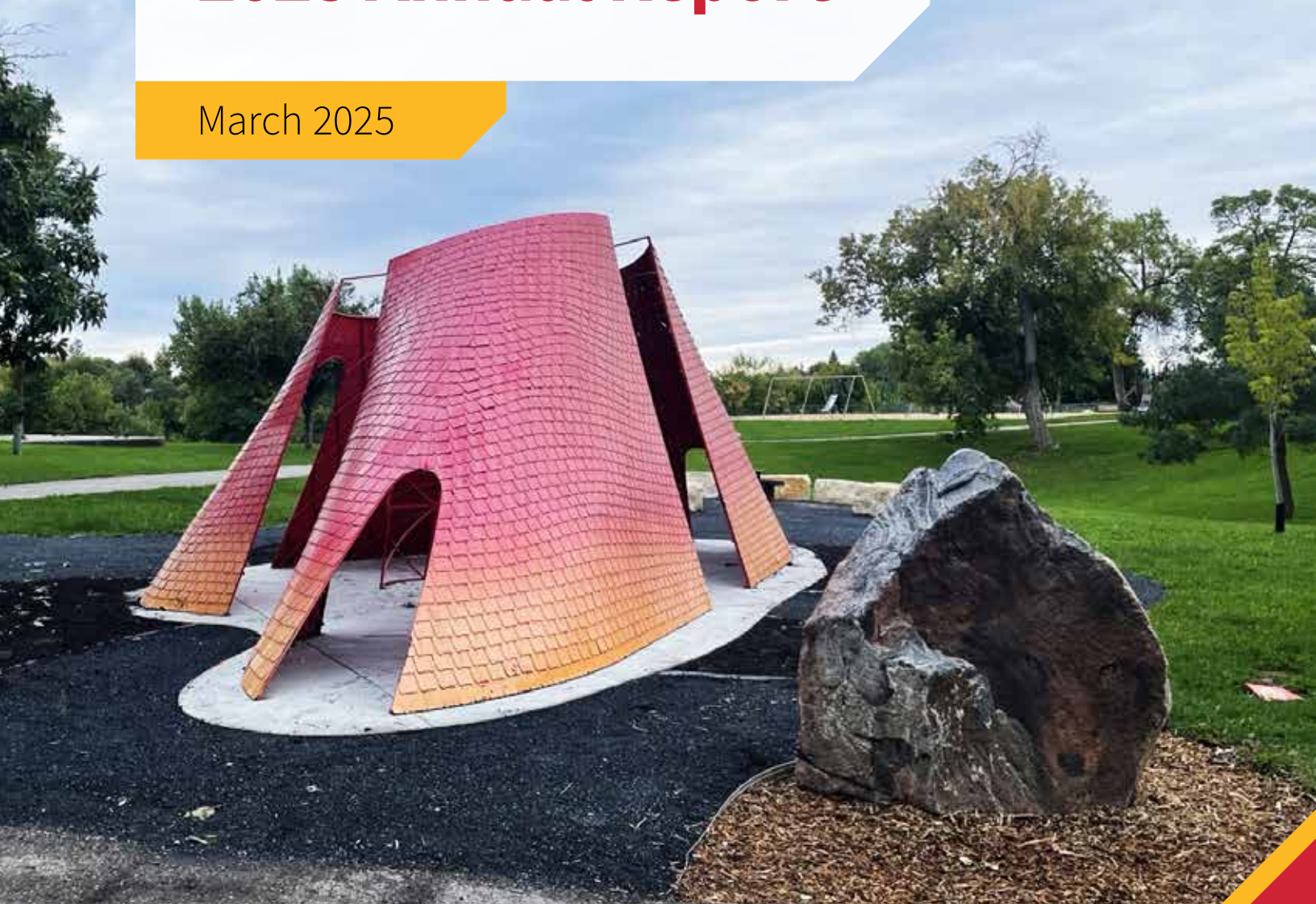




Indigenous Relations Division **2025 Annual Report**

March 2025





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About Us

The City of Winnipeg strives to be a vibrant and healthy city which places its highest priority on quality of life for all its citizens. The City has supported Indigenous specific projects and initiatives since 2000. The Indigenous Relations Division (IRD) was created in 2013 to coordinate Indigenous specific programs and initiatives.

Our Vision: A vibrant and healthy Winnipeg in which all Indigenous peoples and communities achieve the highest quality of life grounded in the spirit of truth, understanding, reconciliation, equality, and self-determination.

Our Mission: The Indigenous Relations Division establishes and maintains meaningful relationships and partnerships with and between Indigenous peoples, communities, and governments to assist the City of Winnipeg in our commitments to reconciliation.

Our Values:

Trust – We build trust and credibility through respect, accountability, transparency, and transformation.

Respect – We grow and maintain respectful relationships rooted in honesty, empathy, kindness, generosity, and reciprocity.

Learning – We embrace ongoing learning to seek and share truth, understanding, knowledge, and experiences.

Courage – We are courageous in leading (influencing) meaningful change within the organization because it is the right thing to do.

Relationships – We form, build, and maintain relationships rooted in honesty, empathy, kindness, generosity, and reciprocity.

Indigenous Relations team



Carole Frechette



Cecil Sveinson



Danielle Carriere



Heaven-Lee Lundberg



Jacquie Lylyk



Jessica Paley



Tracey Cechvala



Trevor Prystupa

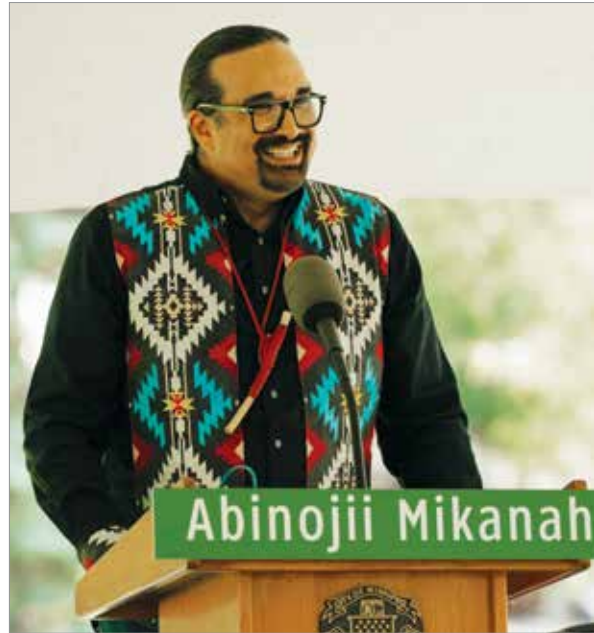
Message from the Manager

While continuing our collective journey towards reconciliation, the City of Winnipeg has made many positive steps forward in 2025. One of which is that Brookside Cemetery is now home to a medicine space with tobacco, sage and sweetgrass. The Indigenous Relations Division continues to work with City staff on how to expand and enhance the space for future ceremonies and healing. In the meantime, the public can now access three sacred medicines while visiting the site.

Thanks to the implementation of the City's Indigenous youth strategy, Oshki Annishinabe Nigaaniwak, the Indigenous Relations Division was able to offer some unique opportunities for Indigenous youth living in Winnipeg. In collaboration with Red River College, IRD hosted two Post Secondary practicums and one paid internship in 2025. IRD also saw its' largest intake of Post Secondary Scholarship applications ever, with over 200 students having applied and 15 applicants being awarded \$1000.00 each. These programs and supports continue to provide Indigenous youth with positive opportunities to engage with civic systems as they strive to build their futures. As the needs of community continue to grow and evolve, it is becoming more evident just how crucial these supports are to the Indigenous youth living in the city.

Our team also collaborated with community in creating the Can You See Us campaign. This campaign was created to disrupt the normalization of sexual exploitation and human trafficking in Winnipeg. The campaign prioritized survivor voices, systemic accountability, and survivor leadership. Grounding actions in lived experience will better allow Winnipeg to disrupt the cycles of exploitation while honoring the strength of families and survivors.

2025 has also been a time for reflection and change. As the Welcoming Winnipeg policy and process is still a new concept in Canada, our division was tasked with creating a unique template that ensures equitable representation of First Nations, Red River Métis, and Inuit be reflected truthfully in our city's landscape. As with all journeys, sometimes a period



Cecil Sveinson
Manager,
Indigenous Relations Division

of reflection is needed to ensure that we continue to move forward on the correct path. 2025 has been our time to pause and reflect, as the Indigenous Relations Division conducted a wider review of the policy to identify areas of improvement.

As we move into 2026 and with many of our staff having moved on to new ventures, I would like to take the time to thank the amazing members of my team here at the Indigenous Relations Division. Thank you to those who walked with us on this path in 2025 and to those that continue to walk this journey with us into 2026. The work that we do is not easy and my team often faces hostility and outright racism each and every day that they come in to do their job. Despite all of this, my team continue to be change makers and have never stopped striving to ensure that their work honors their families, clans, communities and Nations.

On behalf of the Indigenous Relations team – Ekosani, Miigwech, Marsi and Thank You.

Journey of Reconciliation



Tobacco, sage and sweet grass planters at Brookside Cemetery 2025

Medicine Space at Brookside Cemetery

In 2025, Indigenous Relations collaborated with staff from Brookside Cemetery and Parks in the planning and installation of a traditional medicine space. On July 14th, three gardening pots were placed in Brookside Cemetery, where they were blessed by an Elder and sacred medicines were planted. Three of Brookside's staff participated in the blessing and medicine teachings were shared by the Elder. The public now has access to sage, sweetgrass and tobacco onsite to use for healing and ceremony when visiting Brookside Cemetery.

Indigenous Gardens at City Hall

2025 marked the tenth year of the Indigenous Medicine Gardens at City Hall. These gardens were planted for employee's personal use, offerings to community and for cultural workshops to raise awareness of Indigenous knowledge and worldview.

There was also an additional flower garden planted at City Hall that honors the Medicine Wheel, which is used as a holistic teaching tool. It consists of four quadrants that relate to the cardinal directions: East, South, West, and North. Each direction is represented by specific teachings and emblems, such as four colors, four seasons, and the four stages of life.



JOURNEY OF RECONCILIATION
LES CHEMINS DE LA RÉCONCILIATION

A medicine garden was also planted to honor the teachings of the Medicine Wheel and to grow Sacred Medicines associated with the directional teachings. There are four Sacred Medicines that were planted: tobacco, cedar, sage, and sweetgrass. These traditional medicines have physical qualities for medicinal purposes and a spiritual aspect used in traditional healing and ceremonies. In June, a workshop was held to bless the grounds of the sacred medicines under the direction of a Knowledge Keeper, and 10 City employees participated.



Medicine Wheel plants grown in the City Hall medicine garden

For the fourth consecutive year, an orange heart garden was planted within the courtyard at City Hall. This garden was planted in honor and memory of the survivors and family members of the residential school system, and in memorial for all the children who didn't make it home. These gardens will continue to be replanted annually at City Hall for City staff and Winnipeg residents to enjoy.

National Indigenous Peoples Day

Held annually, National Indigenous Peoples Day is a day of celebration where we recognize and honor the achievements, histories, and languages of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples in our

city and across Canada. In 2025, the City of Winnipeg marked this occasion on June 20th with an event at City Hall for employees, with City staff getting to enjoy various cultural performances and activities. This year's activities included tea making with natural medicine mixtures by Medicine Garden Society, as well as the offering of medicine water and bannock! The event also showcased performances by Kinew Metis Council Youth Dancers and fiddle player Kieran Meeches, Inuit throat singers Chasity and Caramello Swan, drum songs by the Walking Wolf Singers and a pow wow troupe led by Ray "Coco" Stevenson.



JOURNEY OF RECONCILIATION
LES CHEMINS DE LA RÉCONCILIATION

Welcoming Winnipeg

On January 30, 2020, Council passed a motion to adopt the Welcoming Winnipeg: Reconciling our History Policy, this initiative works to ensure that the contributions, experiences, and perspectives of First Nations, Red River Métis, and Inuit are reflected truthfully in our city's stories, historical markers, and place names. The policy proactively utilizes a lens of balance, inclusion and Indigenous perspectives.

The City of Winnipeg's Welcoming Winnipeg Committee of Community Members (CCM) is responsible for reviewing requests and providing recommendations for consideration by the Executive Policy Committee (EPC) and then final decision by Council. The CCM remains a crucial resource to the implementation of the Welcoming Winnipeg Policy; without a group of subject-matter expert volunteers, the City would not be able to implement the policy as it was envisioned.

The Welcoming Winnipeg policy and process is still relatively new and unique in Canada. There is no roadmap or best practice to replicate; all forms,

resources, protocols and processes have had to be developed from inception, with many co-created by Indigenous Relations and the CCM.

2025 Welcoming Winnipeg Policy Review

Indigenous Relations has been monitoring the process and policy for areas of improvement, and a wider review of Welcoming Winnipeg is in progress. Movement on this matter has been delayed due to competing priorities and changes in leadership, but an updated policy will be presented to City Counsel in the upcoming year.

Installation of Abinojii Mikanah Panels

On June 21, 2024, the Indigenous Relations Division hosted a formal unveiling celebration for the renaming of Bishop Grandin Boulevard to Abinojii Mikanah. To document this historic renaming project, permanent interpretive panels were installed along Awasisak Mēskanōw (east of River Road) in the Fall of 2025.



Abinojii Mikanah Pannels at Awasisak Mēskanōw 2025

Winnipeg Indigenous Accord

Unanimously adopted by Council in 2017, the Winnipeg Indigenous Accord sets out the vision, commitments and principles in building an ongoing process of reconciliation in Winnipeg. One of the City of Winnipeg's key actions in supporting reconciliation was creating the Accord so that organizations and individuals can come together to share their journey of reconciliation, engage in continuous learning to build greater understanding, and actively contribute to making our city a better place to live based on mutual respect, equal opportunity, and hope.

2025 Recommendations

In 2025 the Indigenous Relations Division reviewed the process for annual reporting from all Accord partners and provided City Council with a few new recommendations. One of the recommendations was to discontinue the annual process of IRD collecting and compiling progress reports from external partners of the Winnipeg Indigenous Accord, enabling these partners to prepare and publish annual reports independently through their own public platforms.

IRD also recommended that the division move forward with producing an annual June Accord report to EPC-Council dedicated exclusively to the progress of the municipal implementation of the TRC Calls to Action and the MMIWG2S+ Calls for Justice. These changes will allow the Indigenous Relations Division to better identify barriers to advancing TRC Calls to Action and MMIWG2S+ Calls for Justice within our civic systems that require further Council consideration through annual budget processes or senior management review.

Annual Accord Partner Goals and Progress Report

From June 2017 to December 2025, 252 organizations, groups and individuals have become signatories and partners to the Winnipeg Indigenous Accord involving a commitment to identify goals and report on progress annually involving the Truth and Reconciliation (TRC) Calls to Action and the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and Two-Spirited (MMIWG2S+) Calls for Justice.

In 2025, 116 reports were received from Accord partners and compiled in the eighth annual report of progress. This includes twenty reports from City departments and Members of Council related TRC Calls to Action 43, 47, 57, 75, 77; and a progress update on the City's commitments to the MMIWG2S+ Calls for Justice.



Highlights from the report



67,063
Students

from 6 school divisions in Winnipeg are participating in age-appropriate curriculum on residential schools, Treaties, and First Nations, Métis, and Inuit histories and contemporary contributions to Canada.



21,879
Employees

from 71 partner organizations, are continuing to build knowledge and competency related to the history and legacy of residential schools, Treaties, UNDRIP, and present-day experiences of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples in response to TRC Calls to Action 57 and 92.



Over
1,400
Students

employees, children in care, or members are participating in an Indigenous language class, in response to TRC Calls to Action 10, 14; and supporting the National Inquiry's "principles for change" towards creating cultural safety that at minimum requires the inclusion of Indigenous languages, laws, protocols, governance, and spirituality.



40
Partners

reported, 125 amended or new, practices or policies adopted by their organization that recognize Indigenous rights, respond to the priorities of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit, and increase access and inclusion of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit, including the rights, priorities, and inclusion of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people.



30
Partners

reported, 173 instances where services or processes were established for the purpose and necessity of creating cultural-safety through inclusion of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit languages, laws and protocols, governance, or spirituality.



108
of 116 (93%)

Accord partners submitted quantitative data along with a narrative report of progress as featured in the 2025 Partner Goals and Progress Report at legacy.winnipeg.ca/indigenous/wia/

Oshki Annishinabe Nigaaniwak

Oshki Annishinabe Nigaaniwak, (pronounced Awsh-kay Anish-a-nob-bay Nee-ganee-walk) which means "Young Indigenous People Leading" in Anishinaabemowin (Ojibwe), is the City of Winnipeg's Indigenous Youth Strategy. The mission of Oshki Annishinabe Nigaaniwak is to give Indigenous youth positive opportunities in the community and civic system by providing culturally appropriate programs and supports. These include opportunities related to employment, education, training, literacy and recreation. The Indigenous Relations Division's goal in providing these opportunities is for Indigenous youth in Winnipeg to be able to increase their resiliency, self-sustainability, and personal strengths, and to achieve their goals and dreams for the future!

Sign up to our email distribution list for the latest updates and opportunities that Oshki Annishinabe Nigaaniwak and partner organizations have to offer at winnipeg.ca/indigenous/oan

Post-Secondary Scholarships

Oshki Annishinabe Nigaaniwak funds a Post-Secondary Scholarship to assist Indigenous youth aged 15-30 with their post-secondary tuition expenses. Scholarships in the amount of \$1,000.00 were awarded to Indigenous students who are enrolled in full-time post-secondary education at a recognized post-secondary institution in Winnipeg. In 2025, 283 applications were received and 15 applicants were selected to receive \$1,000.00 scholarship.

"I wanted to extend my deepest gratitude for this scholarship. To say I am appreciative is an understatement. I am beyond grateful for this scholarship and for the work of the Indigenous Relations Division. This really means the world to me. I cannot recreate the joy, appreciation, and sense of

gratitude that filled my spirit when I opened this letter. Moments like these give me and other youth the ability to keep our spirits high. This allows us to continue to give our education every ounce of energy that we have and supports us immensely. I needed to reach out and say that, and to thank you and your team for all the great work!" Marsii/miigwech, Hunter



First Aid and CPR Training

As part of a past OAN Train the Trainer event, one of IRD's staff was trained as a First Aid and CPR instructor. This was done to enable IRD to provide free First Aid and CPR training to youth that participate in programs offered by our community partners. The goal of this project was to continue supporting the professional development of Indigenous youth living in Winnipeg and to help develop

relationships that foster positive interactions with civic systems. As of 2025, 14 youths have completed free training and have received certificates in First Aid and CPR.

Focused Mass Recruitment

The City is committed to attracting and retaining a diverse and skilled workforce that is representative and reflective of the community we serve, and this is the heart of our recruitment efforts for Focused Mass Recruitments. In 2024 the Indigenous Relations Division began collaborating with the City's Talent and Acquisition department to host an annual Focused Mass Recruitment Fair. This is a hiring event that focuses on the assisting and recruitment of Indigenous youth and new commers for various municipal jobs. What makes this event unique from other City mass hiring events is the recognition that there may be some financial barriers that these individuals may have. The departments participating in the event assist these individuals with the cost of the Police Record Checks, Child Abuse and Vulnerable Persons Check, CPR/First Aid

training and even work boots. For this event, IRD works with our community partners to assist the youth in applying to the job postings prior to the event and then preparing them to be interviewed for various positions at the City on the day of the fair. We have been fortunate that City departments continue to participate in the Focused Mass Recruitment Fair; Community Services, Assets and Project Management, and Public Works are just a few departments that have participated throughout the years.

Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre's – The Future Is Yours Program

Through participation in the Future Is Yours youth programing, youth achieve meaningful, personal, professional and cultural outcomes. Youth participate in cultural programing workshops that support identity, positive relationships with peers and mentors, and reduce social isolation. This program also provides youth with a sense of belonging and connection to enable a better understanding of how to make a positive impact within the community. The youth developed practical employment skills, including resume writing, interview preparation and job search strategies. Participants built up their confidence in applying for jobs, communicating in professional settings, and learning to step outside their comfort zones. Youth also obtained employment related certificates, such as: First Aid CPR-Level C, Nonviolent crisis Intervention, Manitoba's Safe Food Handlers and Safe TALK. These training courses strengthened their employment readiness for the workforce. Indigenous youth were better prepared to seek employment, return to school and do further training because of this program. Overall, the program reduced barriers to employment and supported positive outcomes for inner-city Indigenous youth.

In their own words:

“When I first initially started The Future is Yours Program, I was practically a shell of a human being, or just a shell version of myself. With all the confidence, reassurance, encouragement and inspiration this program has offered me I can finally shout from the rooftops that I've successfully been released from that “shell of a human being”. Not only have I finally become the confident version of myself I've always dreamt of being, but this program also highly motivated me to become that better version of myself on my own. So much so I recently got fully employed at a job I love, I've formed long lasting relationships, formed a healthy lifestyle for myself. Overall, this program has helped me in all aspects of my life emotionally, mentally, and spiritually. I'd hope more young native youth are inspired and encouraged to come to programs like The Future is Yours. I will forever be grateful for the unique experience I was given here.”



Work Practicum Student

Internships and Practicums

In 2025, IRD collaborated with Red River College Polytech's Administrative Assistant Certificate program to offer two practicum placements for Indigenous students. The division was also able to extend one of these placements into a paid internship that lasted a few months. Providing opportunity to garner work experience within the civic system, these practicum placements offered a unique combination of administrative experience as well as collaboration with Indigenous community organizations. We appreciate all the students that came to work with us and are grateful for the many unique and wonderful gifts that they brought to our division.

Renee's Experience

My name is Renee Harper, and I grew up in a northern community called Garden Hill Anishinew Nation. I am 25 years old, I'll be 26 this year in 2025, and I'm the only sister of 6 kids. Growing up I had to take up responsibilities that weren't mine. At 17 I was the main caregiver to my 4 younger brothers. I learned at an early age that I had to work to provide for my family, so at 18 I looked for odd jobs, it wasn't



Work Practicum Student

until I was 19 that I got a custodian position at my previous workplace and I worked my way up to office assistant. I worked there until I was 25, then I decided to pursue my education after learning about administrative work and the career I could build in that field.

I attended Red River College Polytech's Administrative Assistant certificate program in the fall semester of 2024 and graduated in 2025. Coming from my rural community in the northern Manitoba lakes to the city of Winnipeg was a big change. I was coming from a place that had tall forest trees and lakes that spanned miles to a place with tall buildings and city lights that also went for miles. A place with scarce work opportunities and resources to this huge place with ample opportunities and so many resources for young Indigenous people.

Working as an Intern practicum student at Oshki Anishinabe Nigaaniwak has opened my eyes to the amazing work that's being done and being fought for, for all Indigenous youth in the city. The community partners are a huge part of the work OAN does, and going out there to meet and talk with the community has been one of my favorite parts of my work placement. I feel so grateful that I had the opportunity to learn about the work that each portfolio in the Indigenous Relations Division puts their whole hearts into. My experience has truly been amazing here at the Indigenous relations division.

My goals moving forward is to work to gain more knowledge and experience, grow as a young indigenous person and further my education when I can. Most importantly, hopefully when I am able to, I can go back to my community and help make it a more vibrant, healthier and safer place for the children and youth to grow up in. – Renee

Grant Program & Community Partners

Adopted by Winnipeg City Council in 2008, Oshki Anishinabe Nigaaniwak has provided grant funding to community-based organizations serving Indigenous youth in Winnipeg. Since then, the Grant Program has supported urban youth programs and services aligned to the focus areas of (i) employment and employment development; (ii) physical, culture, and leisure; (iii) literacy and lifelong learning;

and (iv) community connections. This Request for Proposals process invited applications from community-based organizations that respond to the needs and priorities of urban Indigenous youth in Winnipeg, and is aligned to the focus areas of the Grant Program, and the priorities identified in the Final Reports of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and Two-Spirited peoples.

Highlights from the report

• **5**

partners

(Ka Ni Kanichihk, Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata, Tunngasugit, Urban Circle, WASAC) provided job readiness resources.

• **6**

partners

(Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata, Tunngasugit, Urban Circle, WASAC, Ka Ni Kanichihk) assisted in furthering education. (back to school/ certificate training)

• **7**

partners

(Ndinawemaaganag Endaawaad, Tunngasugit, Urban Circle, WASAC, Zoongizi Ode, Ka Ni Kanichihk, Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata) provided cultural connections.

• **5**

partners

(Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata, Ndinawe, Tunngasugit, Urban Circle, WASAC) supported Networking opportunities.

• **2**

partners

(Ndinawemaaganag Endaawaad, Tunngasugit) addressed Addictions prevention

• **2**

partners

(Ndinawemaaganag Endaawaad, Urban Circle) addressed Social Structures – homelessness, CFS, welfare

• **3**

partners

(Ndinawemaaganag Endaawaad, Tunngasugit, Zoongizi Ode) addressed Mental Health challenges/ wellbeing

• **7**

partners

(Ka Ni Kanichihk, Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata, Ndinawemaaganag Endaawaad, Tunngasugit, Urban Circle, WASAC, Zoongizi Ode) addressed day-to-day challenges and social skills/independence with Indigenous youth.

• **1**

partner

(Tunngasugit) supported community members in financial workshops (budgeting).

• **1**

partner

(Zoongizi Ode) focused on community empowerment

Our community partners have a common goal to improve youth access to positive opportunities in Winnipeg. Our partners are experts in helping youth explore and tap into their own unique strengths. This year saw a total of 6,080 youth participate in the programs listed below, highlighting the continued need to support and fund these programs. All youth in our city deserve the opportunity to gain valuable skills, grow to their full potential, and be engaged and involved in our community. Please see below to learn more about our partners' programs!



Ka Ni Kanichihk Inc. – Honouring Gifts

Honouring Gifts provides mothers on Employment and Income Assistance with the opportunity to learn Life Skills and Essential Skills. These skills assist the mothers in overcoming challenges and barriers in order to work towards opportunities such as further education, employment and bettering of their lives. It is a 40-week full-time program that provides various professional experiences (exposure to various work fields, certifications such as Food Handlers/WHIM IS, CPR, MB Best Customer Service) and focuses on the 9 essential skills for the workplace which are reading, writing, numeracy, digital skills, problem solving, communication, creativity & innovation, adaptability and collaboration. The program is designed to educate and empower Indigenous mothers and support them in unlocking their potential whilst providing programming which is tailored to them, and emphasizes importance of Indigenous cultural practices within everyday life.



Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre Inc. – Future is Yours

The program aims to address the socio-economic challenges faced by Indigenous youth in the city. The program recognizes the importance of education and employment in overcoming barriers and improving outcomes for Indigenous youth. The program is designed to provide Indigenous youth with a range of activities that support their development of skills and knowledge necessary to participate in the labor market. By focusing on culturally appropriate, trauma informed approaches, the program aims to empower Indigenous youth and promote the value of peer mentorship and education.

The Future Is Yours program will provide pre-employment training, personal development opportunities and supports to obtain employment. Activities will range from employment preparation training, work experience, volunteer opportunities, certificate training and personal supports.



Ndinawemaaganag Endaawaad Inc.

Programming and recreational activities will be provided to all youth of Ndinawe and will be based out of Tina's Safe Haven.

Program Objectives:

- Youth will rediscover a sense of identity through reclaiming our culture.
- Indigenous youth in our community will feel support in accessing tradition and culture in a non-judgmental, and barrier free environment and space they feel comfortable in.
- Youth will build self-confidence, coping skills, independence, and an increased sense of belonging as a result of access to programs and services.
- Through their connection to the land, culture, and traditional ways of knowing and being, youth will feel supported to participate and reconnect with their culture that will contribute to a sense of identity and belonging.
- Youth will develop positive relationships within their community that will lead to a sense of connection thereby reducing the social isolation they experience.
- Through their connection to Ndinawe, youth will be connected to supports and resources to assist them in addressing different risk factors in their lives.



Tunngasugit Inc. – Urban Inuit Youth Employment Readiness Program

The program will address the unique challenges faced by Inuit youth living in urban environments by providing them with comprehensive job readiness training and support. The program will focus on developing essential skills, fostering cultural identity, and connecting participants with employment opportunities. By empowering Inuit youth, the program seeks to reduce disparities and enhance their prospects for success in the job market.

The Program will equip Inuit youth between the ages of 15 and 30 with the necessary skills, knowledge, and resources to thrive in the job market. The program aims to address the challenges faced by urban Inuit youth, including the impacts of colonization, cultural disconnection, and limited access to employment opportunities.

Program activities will provide a comprehensive and holistic approach to job readiness, equipping participants with the skills, knowledge, and confidence needed to succeed in their chosen career paths. Through a combination of interactive workshops, hands-on experiences, and community engagement, participants will develop a well-rounded skill set and a strong foundation for future employment success.



Urban Circle Training Centre Inc. – Apprenticeship Training and Employment Program

The Program will prepare participants for employment in the construction and skilled trades industry through training and experience. Participants will achieve their Mature Grade 12 Diploma, an Apprenticeship Certificate, safety training and other training certificates related to their chosen Apprenticeship field, while benefiting from essential Life Skills training and Indigenous Cultural Awareness teachings.



WASAC Honours Program

The Honours Project will provide 40 urban Indigenous youth with work experience in skill development and training. Once they complete their four weeks of training, which includes lessons on time management, leadership, and teamwork, as well as a variety of workshops (CPR/First Aid, Food Handler’s Certification, and Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System) they will share what they learn and apply their skills as mentors at WASAC’s Kid’s Camp – a weeklong summer day camp offered to kids from more than 70 Winnipeg schools and featuring sports, arts and crafts, as well as Indigenous cultural teachings.

This Youth training and employment program will be geared towards providing urban Indigenous youth with their first work experience. The focus of the program will be to provide experiential learning opportunities in education, mentorship, cultural, and leadership development.

The goal of this project is to build the self-esteem and self-confidence of participants as they develop into young leaders and allow them to be mentors and role models to younger kids who participate in the summer camp. WASAC will provide support throughout this journey by addressing any potential barriers that prevent the youth from reaching their full potential.



Zoongizi Ode Youth Advocates

The program will engage Indigenous youth with lived experience in complex systems such as Child and family Services, Employment and Income Assistance, Residential Tenancies Branch and Justice Systems. We will train the youth on how to navigate in these systems and how to help other youth in the same complex situations. They will gain valuable work experience and the skills to developed to maintain good employment.



Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two-Spirit Peoples (MMIWG2S+)

The National Crisis and the Urgency for Municipal Action

The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, released on June 3, 2019, concluded that the ongoing violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQIA+ people constitutes genocide. The 231 Calls for Justice are legal imperatives directed at all levels of government, including municipalities. In 2020, the City of Winnipeg's Executive Policy Committee directed the Public Service to identify and implement actions within municipal jurisdiction and to report annually through the Winnipeg Indigenous Accord and the Journey of Reconciliation.

Since 2021, the Indigenous Relations Division has worked in close partnership with families, survivors, and Indigenous-led organizations, including Giganawenimaanaanig, to co-develop a municipal implementation approach grounded in lived experience and Indigenous leadership.

The urgency of this work continues to grow. Community-based data shared by Sandra Delaronde and partners indicates that:

- Between 2012–2019, there were approximately 180 cases of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQIA+ people in Manitoba
- Between 2019–2025, there have been over 180 additional cases

This demonstrates that the crisis is not improving — it is intensifying. Winnipeg is increasingly identified by families, advocates, and service providers as “ground zero” for MMIWG2S+. This reflects not only the concentration of cases, but the convergence of systemic factors including poverty, displacement, trafficking, housing insecurity, and systemic discrimination. This reality underscores the City's responsibility to act within its jurisdiction not only through awareness, but through measurable, structural change.

The City of Winnipeg's Role: From Awareness to Accountability

In 2025, the Indigenous Relations Division advanced a municipal implementation approach grounded in four key areas:

- Safe Transportation
- Training & Awareness
- Human Rights & Systems Change
- Safe Spaces

This work reflects a shift from symbolic commitments to institutional accountability, supported by the development of a municipal dashboard in partnership with Giganawenimaanaanig.

The dashboard will track system changes such as number of by-laws and policies amended, number of City staff trained, and implementation of the 231 Calls for Justice progress across departments.

This approach responds directly to Calls for Justice related to data, accountability, and institutional reform.

2025 Highlights and Progress

Red Dress Alert – Building a Municipal Response

In 2025, the City supported the advancement of a Red Dress Alert system through:

- Participation in community-led engagement sessions with Giganawenimaanaanig
- Hosting an internal consultation with City departments (21 staff participants)
- Supporting staff attendance at the Red Dress Alert report launch

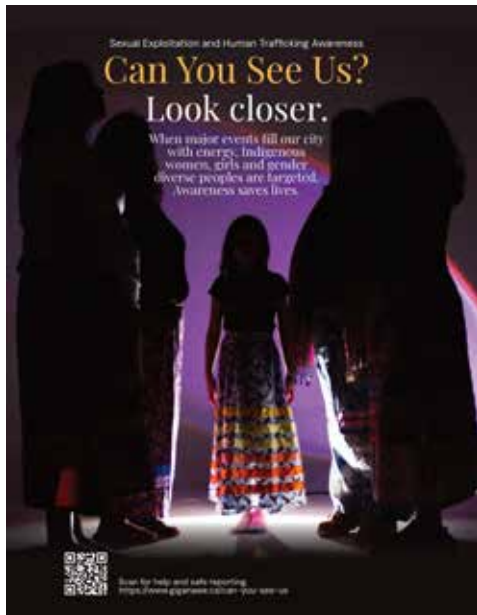
These engagements are critical. They ensure that City systems are informed by lived experience, MMIWG2S+ family perspectives and Indigenous-led solutions.

This work aligns with Calls for Justice related to emergency response, coordination, and prevention.

Safe Transportation – Prevention in Practice

Transportation systems are recognized as key points of risk and intervention. This work directly responds to Calls for Justice related to preventing exploitation and improving institutional response. The City advanced Safe Transportation in partnership with the Vehicle for Hire Department as a core safety intervention:

- Over 1800 vehicle-for-hire drivers trained to date
- Integration of human trafficking awareness and Vehicle-for-Hire responsibilities
- Collaboration with the Red Response Team to strengthen training content.



'Can You See Us?' Poster 2025

'Can You See Us?' Campaign – Survivor-Led Prevention

In partnership with Giganawenimaanaanig, Wasakamon Wellness Connections, and individuals with lived experience, our office supported the Can You See Us campaign. This campaign raised awareness of human trafficking and sexual exploitation, focused on high-risk events and environments, and centered survivor voices and lived experience. Importantly, this work contributed to the development of approaches for

engaging lived experience at the City of Winnipeg, aligning with Calls for Justice that require:

- Inclusion of Indigenous women and survivors in decision-making
- Survivor-led program design
- Respect for lived expertise

Commemoration, Public Awareness, and Cultural Safety

The Indigenous Relations continued to support community-led commemorations, including May 5th which is Red Dress Day and October 4th which is the MMIWG2S+ Provincial day of Awareness. Supports for these events included:

- Event coordination and support
- Transportation access
- Honoraria for knowledge keepers and fire keepers
- Community participation support

Commemoration is not symbolic, it is part of safety infrastructure and contributes to public awareness, cultural safety and community healing.

Alexander Docks – Memory, Design, and Safety

In 2025, the Indigenous Relations Division participated in multiple engagements and consultations related to Alexander Docks, including:

- Engagement with impacted MMIWG2S+ families
- Collaboration with Giganawenimaanaanig
- Partnership with the Winnipeg Indigenous Executive Circle
- Participation in the unveiling of a new design

This work reflects an important shift from infrastructure to living memory and safety-informed design. The redesign of Alexander Docks incorporates recognition of MMIWG2S+ histories, community-informed design principles, and Space for reflection, ceremony, and awareness. This aligns with Calls for Justice related to commemoration, public education, as well as honouring lives and histories.

Human Rights & Systems Change

The City advanced integration of MMIWG2S+ priorities into broader systems. This reflects a shift toward embedding MMIWG2S+ considerations into core municipal planning and policy frameworks.:

- Housing Needs Assessment
 - Inclusion of MMIWG2S+ criteria in supportive housing planning
 - Recognition of safety, trauma, and gender-based violence in housing design
- Human Rights Committee Workplan
 - Identification of actions to support implementation of the Calls for Justice
 - Alignment with a human rights-based approach to safety

Looking Forward: Measuring What Matters

The City of Winnipeg is moving toward a model of transparency, accountability and Indigenous partnership. The development of a municipal dashboard in partnership with Giganawenimaanaanig will allow the City to:

- Track progress annually
- Identify gaps
- Adjust actions based on real-time data
- Report publicly on outcomes



Memorial Table at Red Dress Alert Service Providers Engagement Session 2025

This approach ensures that progress is not assumed but is measured. The work undertaken in 2025 reflects meaningful progress but also underscores the scale of what remains. The increasing number of MMIWG2S+ cases demonstrates that awareness alone is not enough. The City of Winnipeg has a responsibility to:

- Act within its jurisdiction
- Partner with Indigenous leadership
- Implement systemic change
- Measure progress transparently

Closing Reflection

This work is guided by the voices, experiences, and leadership of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people — including those who have shared their truths, and those who cannot.

We acknowledge the families, survivors, and community members who continue to carry this work forward, often while navigating profound grief, trauma, and systemic barriers. We also recognize those who are not present in these processes, those who cannot participate or choose not to because of lived experiences within systems that have caused harm and eroded trust. Their absence is not a gap in knowledge; it is a reflection of the very systems we are working to change.

We honour all those who came before us, those whose lives were taken, and those whose stories remain unheard. Their lives, their experiences, and their truths continue to guide this work. As the City of Winnipeg moves forward in implementing the Calls for Justice, we do so with the understanding that accountability requires more than engagement; it requires action, humility, and a sustained commitment to rebuilding trust.

Indigenous Awareness Training and Cultural Workshops

The Indigenous Relations Division offers a number of Indigenous Awareness Training and Cultural Workshop opportunities to City employees each year. These offerings are rooted in Truth and Reconciliation Call to Action #57, which calls upon all levels of government to provide education to public servants on the history of Indigenous peoples.

In 2025, workshop and training opportunities included:

- Intro to Smudge
- Ground Blessing Ceremonies



Beaded Poppies for Indigenous Veterans Day 2025

Chi Ki Ken Da Mun

Chi Ki Ken Da Mun, which is Ojibwe for "So You Should Know", is a virtual course for leaders within the City who supervise other employees. Participants in this virtual course are provided with an introduction to Indigenous people, culture, history and worldview. The primary focus of this course is the Residential School experience and the traditional role of Indigenous women.

W'daeb Awaewe

This virtual course is required for all employees and provides them with an experiential approach to understanding Indigenous culture and promoting reconciliation and the spirit of inclusion. The teachings provide insight from an Indigenous perspective on culture, traditions and historical events in Winnipeg with a focus on the Residential School System and the impacts on Indigenous peoples.



Prepared by



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