Minutes – Executive Policy Committee – November 17, 2021

REPORTS

Item No. 6 Winnipeg Poverty Reduction Strategy (2021 – 2031)

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

The Executive Policy Committee concurred in the recommendation of the Winnipeg Public Service, as amended, and recommended to Council:

1. That the Winnipeg Poverty Reduction Strategy (2021 – 2031), attached as Appendix A, be adopted to serve as the guide for City of Winnipeg partnerships, actions, and investments, particularly related to the Strategy's Life Poles (i.e. fundamental priorities) of Affordable Housing and Indigenous Children, Youth and Families.

2. That the Poverty Reduction Strategy Implementation Plan (2021 - 2023), attached as Appendix B, be received as information.

3. That delegated authority be provided to the Chief Administrative Officer to apply and accept individual grants and enter into partnerships and agreements of up to $500,000 each, to support implementation of Council approved strategies, policies, and action plans such as, but not limited to, the Winnipeg Poverty Reduction Strategy, the Newcomer Welcome and Inclusion Policy and Strategic Framework, and the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and Strategy.

4. That the Public Service report back in spring 2023 with a status update and the next implementation plan for the Winnipeg Poverty Reduction Strategy, including recommendations for actions to be considered in the 2024-2027 budget process.

5. That the Winnipeg Public Service be directed to refer to the City of Winnipeg Poverty Reduction Strategy, and consider and advise as a part of every report, whether the recommendation is consistent with the City of Winnipeg's objectives and targets with respect to reducing poverty around the goals and objectives in the eight key areas as outlined in the said strategy.

6. That the Proper Officers of the City be authorized to do all things necessary to implement the intent of the foregoing.

DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

Moved by Councillor Rollins,

That the recommendation of the Winnipeg Public Service be concurred in, with the following amendment, and forwarded to Council:

- Add the following new Recommendation 5 and renumber the remaining recommendations accordingly:

  "5. That the Winnipeg Public Service be directed to refer to the City of Winnipeg Poverty Reduction Strategy, and consider and advise as a part of every report, whether the recommendation is consistent with the City of Winnipeg's objectives and targets with respect to reducing poverty around the goals and objectives in the eight key areas as outlined in the said strategy."

Yea:	Bowman, Allard, Browaty, Gillingham, Gilroy, Mayes, Rollins	7
Nay:		0

Carried

Jason Whitford, CEO, End Homelessness Winnipeg, submitted a presentation dated November 17, 2021, in support of the matter.

Kate Kehler, Social Planning Council of Winnipeg, submitted a presentation dated November 17, 2021, with respect to the matter, together with a document titled "Manitobans' Views on Solutions to Poverty December 2020".

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On September 21, 2021, the Executive Policy Committee granted a further extension of time of up to 60 days for the Winnipeg Public Service to report back with a City of Winnipeg poverty reduction strategy, including a detailed implementation plan for the additional measures to further reduce poverty as outlined in Appendix C, all within existing resources.

Al Wiebe submitted a communication with respect to the matter.

On February 17, 2021, the Executive Policy Committee granted an extension of time of up to 180 days for the Winnipeg Public Service to report back with a City of Winnipeg poverty reduction strategy, including a detailed implementation plan for the additional measures to further reduce poverty as outlined in Appendix C, all within existing resources.

DECISION MAKING HISTORY (continued):

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE DECISION:

On September 21, 2020, the Executive Policy Committee received the verbal update from the Winnipeg Public Service as information.

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

On April 28, 2020, the Executive Policy Committee granted an extension of time to February 2021, for the Winnipeg Public Service to report back with a City of Winnipeg poverty reduction strategy, including a detailed implementation plan for the additional measures to further reduce poverty as outlined in Appendix C, all within existing resources, and further directed the Winnipeg Public Service to provide a verbal update at its meeting in September 2020.

On April 30, 2019, the Executive Policy Committee passed the following motion:

WHEREAS on June 13, 2018, the Executive Policy Committee directed the Public Service to return within 180 days with a report cataloguing all current measures taken by the City of Winnipeg with respect to poverty reduction and recommendations on specific measures to further reduce poverty in Winnipeg within existing budgets;

AND WHEREAS Appendix C of the current report lists additional measures to further reduce poverty in Winnipeg within existing budgets, subject to the approval of the Executive Policy Committee;

AND WHEREAS poverty reduction is best achieved with a strategy informed by goals and objectives;

AND WHEREAS implementation of the approved additional measures to further reduce poverty would be best carried out through a coordinated effort;

AND WHEREAS there is sufficient overlap between poverty reduction efforts and the work of the Winnipeg Housing Steering Committee;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Winnipeg Public Service report back within 365 days with a City of Winnipeg poverty reduction strategy, including a detailed implementation plan for the additional measures to further reduce poverty as outlined in Appendix C, all within existing resources;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, in addition to the existing duties of the position, the new Housing Policy Coordinator be tasked to lead the development of a City of Winnipeg poverty

DECISION MAKING HISTORY (continued):

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION (continued)

reduction strategy as well as the implementation plan for the additional measures to further reduce poverty, as outlined in Appendix C, all within existing resources.

On June 13, 2018, the Executive Policy Committee directed the Public Service to return within 180 days with a report cataloguing all current measures taken by the City of Winnipeg with respect to poverty reduction and recommendations on specific measures to further reduce poverty in Winnipeg within existing budgets.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Title: Winnipeg Poverty Reduction Strategy (2021 – 2031)

Critical Path: Executive Policy Committee - Council

AUTHORIZATION

Author	Department Head	CFO	CAO
T. Knowles Yarnell	C. Fernandes	N/A	M. Jack

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report recommends adoption of the first Winnipeg Poverty Reduction Strategy (2021 - 2031), attached as Appendix A (the Strategy). The Strategy was developed in collaboration with community partners and involved robust stakeholder engagement. It will serve as the City's guide for priority actions over the next decade across eight Goal areas: Implementation and Systems Change; Affordable Housing; Employment & Income; Community Well-being; Transportation Equity; Equity in City Services; Food Security; and, Community Safety. The Strategy also identifies two areas for priority focus and action (termed Life Poles): Indigenous Children, Youth and Families and Affordable Housing.

The first Implementation Plan, attached for information as Appendix B, identifies 80 priority actions across the eight Goal areas. These actions are achievable within existing budgets and implementation will begin over the next 18 months. As partnerships and coordination of efforts are key to reducing poverty, the report also recommends that delegated authority be provided to the Chief Administrative Officer to pursue grants and partnerships to support implementation of Council approved policies and strategies, including the Winnipeg Poverty Reduction Strategy, the Newcomer Welcome and Inclusion Policy and Strategic Framework, and the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and Strategy.

Finally, the report recommends a report back be made in spring 2023, which would include a status update on implementation and recommendations for actions for consideration in the 2024-2027 budget process. By adopting the Strategy and recommendations of this report, the City of Winnipeg will launch a new framework for reducing poverty in our city, and will be better positioned to work on strategic priorities with other governments, community partners, and residents aimed at ensuring all Winnipeggers are cared for and can flourish.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Winnipeg Poverty Reduction Strategy (2021 – 2031), attached as Appendix A, be adopted to serve as the guide for City of Winnipeg partnerships, actions, and investments, particularly related to the Strategy's Life Poles (i.e. fundamental priorities) of Affordable Housing and Indigenous Children, Youth and Families.

2. That the Poverty Reduction Strategy Implementation Plan (2021 - 2023), attached as Appendix B, be received as information.

3. That delegated authority be provided to the Chief Administrative Officer to apply and accept individual grants and enter into partnerships and agreements of up to $500,000 each, to support implementation of Council approved strategies, policies, and action plans such as, but not limited to, the Winnipeg Poverty Reduction Strategy, the Newcomer Welcome and Inclusion Policy and Strategic Framework, and the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and Strategy.

4. That the Public Service report back in spring 2023 with a status update and the next implementation plan for the Winnipeg Poverty Reduction Strategy, including recommendations for actions to be considered in the 2024-2027 budget process.

5. That the proper officers of the City be authorized to do all things necessary to implement the intent of the foregoing.

REASON FOR THE REPORT

On April 30, 2019, the Executive Policy Committee recommended:

1. That the Winnipeg Public Service report back within 365 days with a City of Winnipeg poverty reduction strategy, including a detailed implementation plan for the additional measures to further reduce poverty as outlined in Appendix C, all within existing resources.

2. That, in addition to the existing duties of the position, the new Housing Policy Coordinator be tasked to lead the development of a City of Winnipeg poverty reduction strategy as well as the implementation plan for the additional measures to further reduce poverty, as outlined in Appendix C, all within existing resources.

Subsequent to April 30th, 2019 the decision was made by the Public Service for the Community Services Department (Community Services) to lead the development of the Poverty Reduction Strategy.

Note: The disposition above references Appendix C of the April 2019 report, which is a table of additional actions the City could take within current resources. These actions have been incorporated into the recommendations of this report, making the former Appendix C from the April 2019 report redundant, and unnecessary to refer to or further report upon.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS

There are no financial implications arising from the Recommendations of this report.

HISTORY/DISCUSSION

BACKGROUND

At its June 13, 2018 meeting, the Executive Policy Committee (EPC) directed the Public Service to return with the measures the City of Winnipeg was currently taking with respect to poverty reduction, as well as recommendations for additional measures to further reduce poverty in Winnipeg within existing budgets. The Public Service reported back on April 30, 2019 with a Catalogue of Current Measures Relating to Poverty Reduction and identified several additional actions that could be taken within budgets (referred to as Appendix C in the April 2019 report).

The Public Service also reported on the status of poverty in Winnipeg using the Census 2016 data (Low Income Cut-offs – After Tax (LICO-AT) measure of low-income that considers the percentage of income a person or family spends on basic necessities compared to the average), and the Winnipeg Street Census (2018), the most recent demographic data available, to help illustrate its impacts on residents. This analysis showed that:

- Thirteen percent (13%) of Winnipeg residents live in poverty (over 90,000 people), with 1 in 4 Indigenous (28%) and newcomer (27%) residents experiencing poverty.
- Winnipeg has double the national average of child poverty, with poverty affecting over 1/3 of all Indigenous and Newcomer children.
- 66% of people experiencing homelessness are Indigenous
- 68% of youth experiencing homelessness spent time in the care of Child and Family Services
- 87% of children in care are Indigenous
  (see the previously submitted report Poverty in Winnipeg - By the Numbers (Poverty Snapshot, Census 2016), for additional information and analysis of low income data for Winnipeg).

In addition to the above data, poverty can also be considered in terms of economic, social, cultural or political exclusion or the lack of/being denied the needed resources for a good quality of life. There are many different conditions of poverty, which require different interventions and solutions, as described in Appendix A beginning on pg. 24.

This analysis clearly illustrated the racialized nature of poverty in Winnipeg, with Indigenous people, racialized groups, and newcomers experiencing poverty in far greater numbers than non-racialized residents. People experiencing poverty live throughout the city, however based on mapping and analysis undertaken we know that there are geographic areas of the city where almost half (44%) of all residents are living in poverty, and even more striking is that 61% of all children and all Indigenous residents in these areas are living in poverty.

After receiving this report on April 30, 2019, EPC asked that the Public Service prepare a Poverty Reduction Strategy and a detailed implementation plan, all within current resources. Community Services has led the process to develop the Strategy, on behalf of all departments.

On April 28, 2020, the Executive Policy Committee granted an extension of time to February 2021 and requested a mid-term verbal update on the Strategy, which occurred on September 21, 2020. An additional extension of time of up to 180 days was granted on February 17, 2021, in light of delays and other critical work related to the COVID-19 pandemic and impacts to the community.

City Role in Poverty Reduction

A critical aspect to the Strategy is to clarify the City's role in poverty reduction. While other governments may have more direct oversight to social factors that connect to poverty (e.g. income assistance, health, education, housing) the City does have a direct responsibility for the health, safety and welfare of inhabitants.

Per Section 5(1) of the City of Winnipeg Charter Act, initiatives to reduce poverty are within the jurisdiction of the City as they directly relate to (c) viable and sustainable communities and (d) the health, safety and welfare of inhabitants:

5(1) The purposes of the city are

(a) to provide good government for the city;
(b) to provide services, facilities or other things that council considers to be necessary or desirable for all or part of the city;
(c) to develop and maintain safe, orderly, viable and sustainable communities; and
(d) to promote and maintain the health, safety, and welfare of the inhabitants.

With Section 5(1) of the Charter as the foundation for the City's role in poverty reduction, Goals, Objectives, and Actions that achieve these purposes, including those presented with this report, should be considered as part of City service delivery planning. While the Strategy sets the stage for increased action by the City on issues related to poverty, this does not detract from the need for action and investment by the Provincial and Federal governments in these areas. The Strategy sets clear objectives for advocacy, collaboration and partnerships with other governments, knowing the City cannot alone end poverty. The Strategy will assist the City in discussions with the Provincial and Federal governments, Indigenous rightsholders, and community stakeholders, so that we can better collaborate and work together productively on reducing poverty in Winnipeg.

Highlights of Recent City Activities Relating to Poverty Reduction

As shown in the Catalogue of Current Measures Relating to Poverty Reduction, presented to EPC on April 30, 2019, the City of Winnipeg undertakes a wide range of activities to support people in need in our community. This work is ongoing and an essential part of equitable service delivery to residents (note: some activities listed in the 2019 catalogue are not currently taking place). Since that catalogue was prepared, the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted additional vulnerabilities in our community, and recent global and national events related to the ongoing impacts of racism, to which the City showed leadership by taking responsive action to address needs and gaps. The following list highlights more recent actions the City of Winnipeg has taken that relate to poverty reduction and supports for community members in need:

Support for unsheltered and low-income Winnipeggers:

- Supporting community needs during the COVID-19 pandemic through:
    - Redeployment of City staff to Harvest Manitoba
    - Opening a day-time shelter in partnership with Salvation Army to respond to public space closures (spring/summer 2020)
    - Providing drinking water stations and cooling sites in high poverty areas
    - Providing temporary washrooms in seven key locations in high poverty areas
- Providing grant funding for 24/7 Safe Spaces (Ka Ni Kanichihk and WE24 at Spence Neighbourhood Association) and Mobile Outreach for Unsheltered Winnipeggers (Main Street Project and St. Boniface Street Links)

- Installing sharps containers in select City parks (summer 2020)
- Establishing the Non-Emergent Encampment Support Process

Equity & Anti-Racism Initiatives:
- Adopting the Newcomer Welcome and Inclusion Policy & Strategic Framework (February 2020)
- Hiring of Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Coordinator (October 2020)
- Holding the City's first Anti-Racism Week (March 2021)
- Providing mandatory anti-racism training for all City staff (to begin fall 2021)

Affordable Housing Initiatives:
- Making surplus City land available to non-profit housing developers through the William Whyte Housing Pilot Project and follow-up initiatives in Housing Improvement Zones
- Commissioning the Comprehensive Housing Needs Assessment study (2020)
- Rapid Housing Initiative – administering and underwriting access to federal funds to fast track the development of affordable housing for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness ($12.5M in Round 1, $12.8M in Round 2)
- Requesting reports back on additional supports for affordable housing projects

Transportation:
- Launching the WINNpass program (low-income bus pass) (May 2020)
- Removing transit fares for children under 12 years of age (2021)

Accessible City Services:
- Implementing a Third-Party Referral process for the Recreation Fee Subsidy Program
- Removing fines on Winnipeg Public Library materials

Income and Economic Opportunity:
- Endorsing a Living Wage for all City employees (to begin 2023)
- Requesting a report back on Social Procurement policies and practices

Co-creating the Strategy with the Community

Preparation of the Strategy got underway in early 2020, and included the establishment of a Core Working Team (CWT) to prepare and guide the Strategy's development. The Community Services Department provided overall leadership of the Strategy on behalf of the Public Service, with significant contributions by the Planning Property and Development (PPD) and the Indigenous Relations Division (IRD). The Core Working Team was established with all three departments noted above, along with representatives of Make Poverty History Manitoba, the Winnipeg Poverty Reduction Council/United Way, and Ka Ni Kanichihk - an Indigenous-led, community-based organization. The Core Working Team guided the overall development of the stakeholder engagement process, as well as the Strategy and implementation plan.

Impact of COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic showed how fragile we are as a society. Many people faced sudden financial hardship, as businesses closed, jobs were lost, public spaces closed and people were ordered to stay home. The public health orders impacted many services that people already in poverty, or experiencing marginalization depend upon, including municipal services.

Provincial reports indicate that the spread of the disease more significantly impacted racialized communities, including Indigenous and racialized people. The increased rate of infection in these communities is related directly to poverty, as well as structural barriers, including systemic racism, as noted by the Province of Manitoba:

> *"This is not about race, people in these communities making bad choices or people not following public health guidance. People in BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Colour) communities are more likely to live in low-income neighbourhoods, to live in over-crowded and/or multi-generational households, have low wage occupations, and to be employed in higher-risk occupation (food manufacturing, service industry, transportation and accommodation/food services/retail). This is systemic and is seen in every jurisdiction, resulting in very similar patterns of disproportionate impacts of COVID-19."* https://www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/surveillance/docs/rei_brief.pdf

We also learned during the pandemic that increased coordination on interjurisdictional social issues and greater interdepartmental collaboration is critical to address the complex challenges faced by those without shelter in our city. Increased support became needed to help those living in encampments, to provide shelter during extreme weather, and access to public toilets and drinking water. The pandemic showed that dealing with these issues requires coordination in order to find improved solutions and develop partnerships to address complex challenges. It was also learned that more efficient and greater positive impact could be achieved with dedicated City resources to these matters in the Public Service.

Long-term impacts of the pandemic on our neighbourhoods and communities are unknown, and will continue to be monitored. By incorporating equity and a culture of caring into all aspects of City work, the Poverty Reduction Strategy will aim to ensure the that we build back better for everyone, especially those most reliant on our services and programs.

Stakeholder Engagement Summary

To develop the Strategy the Public Service undertook an extensive community and stakeholder engagement process, despite the challenges posed by the pandemic. This included 20 engagement sessions held virtually, with over 230 participants engaged over three phases. Numerous other meetings and conversations were also held to discuss the draft Strategy and potential actions.

Stakeholder engagement was undertaken in three phases, with guidance and support provided by the Office of Public Engagement and the Core Working Team (CWT). Throughout the process, hearing from people with lived experience of poverty, as well as intersectional voices, was prioritized and supported through the provision of meeting supports and choices for how to provide input.

The following provides a brief overview of each phase of engagement, with additional detail provided in the summary reports attached to this report.

Phase 1 Stakeholder Engagement – Fall 2020

This phase helped to set overall directions and prioritized themes for the Strategy. A series of meetings were hosted with stakeholders to gather input on draft content, including:

- Vision and mission

- Potential approaches and Indigenous worldview framing
- Guiding principles
- Key themes and areas for action

Six engagement meetings were held in Phase 1, with 65 stakeholder attendees. This phase provided the CWT with information on where efforts to reduce poverty are needed most and highlighted key areas for action. See Appendix C – Phase 1 Stakeholder Engagement Summary for full details on the engagements and input received during this phase.

Phase 2 Stakeholder Engagement – Winter 2020

This phase of engagement confirmed the direction of the draft strategy and gathered feedback on potential actions for the eight themes and input on:

- Gaps in the proposed objectives and actions
- Priorities for implementation
- Potential partnerships for implementation

Twelve engagement meetings were held in Phase 2, with 145 stakeholder attendees. The project team refined and prioritized the potential actions using the opportunities, gaps, and other feedback from stakeholders. The priority potential actions were also circulated to internal City departments for review and feedback, and to help craft the first implementation plan. See Appendix D – Phase 2 Stakeholder Engagement Summary for full details on the engagements and input received during this phase.

Phase 3 Stakeholder Engagement – Spring/Summer 2021

Phase 3 of stakeholder engagement confirmed the draft actions that were refined with stakeholder feedback in Phase 2 and feedback from internal City departments. Meetings with stakeholder organizations and residents with lived experience of poverty were held on an as-needed basis where additional information was required to finalize the draft actions and where gaps were identified.

Three lived experience advisors were also engaged, to ensure that perspectives of residents who have lived experience with poverty and/or homelessness were included in the Strategy. These advisors were asked to review the draft actions, participate in a stakeholder session, and provide input and additional feedback through one-on-one follow-up meetings or written submission. Two engagement meetings were held in Phase 3, with 21 stakeholder attendees, and several follow-up meetings. See Appendix E – Phase 3 Stakeholder Engagement Summary for full details on the engagements and input received during this phase.

Indigenous Rightsholder Engagement

Formal outreach to Indigenous rightsholders was initiated in December 2020 regarding the development of the Strategy. This was done via letters from the Chief Administrative Officer to seven (7) Indigenous organizations and rightsholders, including the Métis Nation, First Nations and Inuit in Winnipeg, inviting them to discuss the City's role in poverty reduction, potential partnership opportunities, and how they wish to be engaged. See the Indigenous Rightsholder Engagement section of the Strategy for more information.

In response to its letter, City staff met with the Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF) in August and received feedback that additional work is needed to appropriately incorporate Métis Nation views and perspectives into the Strategy and implementation plan. Suggested revisions from the MMF have been reflected in the Strategy, and an action has been added to the Implementation Plan regarding an ongoing process for meaningful engagement and collaboration on poverty reduction to ensure successful implementation of the Strategy.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The Public Service makes the following recommendations for the adoption and implementation of the Poverty Reduction Strategy as the City of Winnipeg's overarching guide towards reducing poverty.

RECOMMENDATION 1: Adopt the Winnipeg Poverty Reduction Strategy (2021 – 2031)

The Winnipeg Poverty Reduction Strategy (2021 - 2031), attached as Appendix A, is presented for Council's consideration as the strategic guide for the City's efforts in reducing poverty over the coming decade. The Strategy will serve as a framework for considering poverty reduction and equity in all City decision making, and aims to mobilize City efforts in key areas over the next decade. A Mission Statement, Overarching Principle, and Guiding Principles also form the foundation of the Strategy and reflect Indigenous worldviews provided members of the project's Core Working Team. Guiding Principles, are based in the concepts of human rights, reconciliation, anti-racism, and partnerships – all tenets which the City of Winnipeg has embraced.

The Strategy is structured with the following Mission statement as the driving force to guide City efforts in the coming years:

> *By implementing the Poverty Reduction Strategy, the City of Winnipeg will demonstrate leadership by taking a proactive and responsive role in reducing poverty with community partners, including residents, businesses, community-based organizations and with government bodies, including Indigenous, Federal, and Provincial governments to ensure that the basic needs of all residents are met. City services will be developed and delivered using a poverty reduction lens and in a manner that fosters an inclusive, equitable, healthy, and vibrant city where everyone is cared for and can flourish.*

Guiding Principle for Poverty Reduction - Amik (The Beaver) - Using Our Shared Wisdom

From the outset, it has been a priority that the Strategy be balanced and respectful, and that it reflects Indigenous world-views and perspectives. The CWT identified an Overarching Principle for the Strategy based on Amik (the Beaver) of the Seven Sacred Teachings that represents Wisdom. The principle states:

> *We will Honour our Shared Wisdom, Accept Responsibility and Be Accountable for Implementing the Strategy*

The Beaver restores and creates ecosystems that support and create habitat for diversity of life. By adopting Amik as the overarching principle, it is intended that through the Strategy the City can use its knowledge to help build and expand a healthy city for all residents, that increases resiliency of our communities, and helps us use our resources most efficiently and effectively. Doing this requires a strong foundation, including a common belief on the City's role in poverty

reduction, clear vision and mission, and targeted goals and objectives. Like beavers building a dam, starting with a strong foundation is critical to ensure future actions to reinforce the overall direction and accomplish the stated purpose.

In applying this principle to Strategy implementation, the City needs to use both stakeholder input (wisdom) when making decisions, act with empathy by adopting a 'culture of caring', be proactive (which requires accepting responsibility) when there are urgent needs in the community, and allocate sufficient resources.

Eight Goals for Poverty Reduction

The Strategy sets the following as 10-year goals for poverty reduction efforts by the City of Winnipeg:

Winnipeg Poverty Reduction Strategy Goals (2021 -2031)	
Goal 1	**Equity and a Culture of Caring are Demonstrated through Strategy Implementation and Systems Change**
Goal 2	**The City Actively Plans for and Partners in Affordable Housing**
Goal 3	**Equity is Embedded in all City Employment and Income Opportunities**
Goal 4	**Community Well-Being Supports for those in Greatest Need are Increased**
Goal 5	**Transportation System Equity is Enhanced**
Goal 6	**All City Services are Equitable, Inclusive and Accessible**
Goal 7	**Food Security and Food System Resilience is Expanded**
Goal 8	**Equity in Community Safety is Increased through Collaboration**

Each Goal is supported by a series of Objectives, which indicate what the City needs to do to achieve the stated Goal. These Goals and Objectives are cross-referenced in the Implementation Plan, and will be referred to in the development of subsequent Implementation Plans, in order to continuously connect actions to the Strategy objectives, and ultimately achieve the Goals.

Life Poles – Priority Areas of Focus in the Strategy

Key to the Strategy are the concept of Life Poles - the final tipi pole that is raised that has the critical role of supporting the canvas and represents ultimate protection. The Strategy identifies two Life Poles as areas for priority focus in implementation: Indigenous Children, Youth and Families, and Affordable Housing. They were identified by stakeholders as areas requiring ongoing collaboration with partners, other governments, and the community as a whole, in order to make meaningful impact and systemic changes that will help reduce poverty in Winnipeg.

Indigenous Children, Youth and Families Life Pole

Poverty is racialized in Winnipeg. According to 2016 Census data, 28% of all residents self-identifying as Indigenous live in poverty. These numbers increase for children and youth, with 36% of all Indigenous children (aged 0 -17 yrs.) living in poverty. When looking at the youngest Indigenous children (aged 0 -5 yrs.) the poverty rates is 43%. Geographic areas of higher poverty mapping show that parts of our city have poverty rates as high as 61% for residents who self-identify as Indigenous. These numbers speak to the deep impacts of colonialism, the ongoing legacy of residential schools in our community, and the need for bold action to address Indigenous child poverty in our city.

The City has shown leadership and commitment to addressing this negative history, through commitments to Truth and Reconciliation, training of the Public Service, the Indigenous Accord, MMIWG commitments, Oshki Annishinabe Nigaaniwak – Indigenous Youth Strategy, and the Welcoming Winnipeg policy. The City's Indigenous Relations Division (IRD) leads these initiatives for the City, and provides leadership from an Indigenous perspective on a wide-range of City programs, services and initiatives. The Winnipeg Poverty Reduction Strategy (2021 -2031) builds on the foundation of these steps towards reconciliation and recommends future initiatives continue to prioritize Indigenous Children, Youth and Families.

Affordable Housing Life Pole

While affordable housing is primarily the responsibility of the provincial and federal governments, municipal governments have a key role to play in creating supportive development and regulatory environments. The City of Winnipeg has taken steps towards improving and increasing affordable housing in our city, through the Housing Investment Rehabilitation Reserve, support to End Homelessness Winnipeg and the Winnipeg Housing Rehabilitation Corporation, and facilitating access to federal funds for local projects through the Rapid Housing Initiative.

Additional opportunities to further support affordable housing, while keeping within the City's jurisdiction, are outlined in the Comprehensive Housing Needs Assessment Report (2020) prepared by the Institute of Urban Studies (U of W), and the administrative report entitled 'Menu of Options for an Affordable Housing Strategy', presented to the Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development, Heritage, and Downtown Development on November 26, 2020. Informed by these reports, building the City's capacity to partner and plan for affordable housing, including the development of partnerships, is a key goal of the Winnipeg Poverty Reduction Strategy (2021 -2031), and a critical component to addressing poverty in Winnipeg.

<u>RECOMMENDATION 2:</u> Receive for Information the Poverty Reduction Strategy Implementation Plan (2021 - 2023)

The first Implementation Plan, attached as Appendix B, is presented for information. This implementation plan includes 80 actions all achievable within existing departmental resources. These actions will be implemented as part of the first phase of Strategy implementation over the next 18 months (fall 2021 – spring 2023). As outlined in Section 8 of the Strategy, future implementation plans will be developed along timelines that align with the multi-year budget

process, such that future actions that may require resources can be considered as part of those processes.

RECOMMENDATION 3: Delegate Authority to Pursue Partnerships and Resources to Accelerate Implementation of Key Strategies

There are many other governments, rightsholders, and community organizations that have an interest in reducing poverty in Winnipeg. Recommendation 3 requests that delegated authority be provided to the Chief Administrative Officer to apply and accept individual grants and enter into partnerships and agreements that would further the work of the Poverty Reduction Strategy and actions, as well as other related strategies (e.g. Newcomer Welcome and Inclusion Policy and Strategic Framework, and the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and Strategy).

The Winnipeg Poverty Reduction Strategy intends to build the foundation within the City related to poverty reduction in a purposeful way. This means clarifying the City's role, building skills and capacity within the Public Service to deliver programs and services in a way that addresses equity and systemic barriers, and importantly, developing trusting partnerships with stakeholders and rightsholders. If approved, this recommendation would enable the Public Service to respond in a timely way to relevant granting and partnership opportunities with short application periods that will further implementation of the Strategy.

RECOMMENDATION 4: Report Back with a Status Update and Next Implementation Plan

It is recommended that the Public Service report back in spring 2023 with a status update and the next implementation plan for the Winnipeg Poverty Reduction Strategy, including recommendations for actions to be considered in the 2024-2027 budget process. This will provide Council with information on early achievements, and help continue the City's work towards meeting the Strategy's Goals and Objectives.

SUMMARY

It is well understood that many areas linked to poverty are primarily the responsibility of provincial and federal governments (e.g. income support, social housing, child care). However, it is also clear that there are many avenues for municipal governments to collaborate in these areas, as the closest level of government to residents and the localized impacts of poverty including homelessness, community safety, and well-being. The complexity of poverty and its underlying root causes necessitates collaboration by all levels of governments, the community, and people with lived experience of poverty. The Winnipeg Poverty Reduction Strategy is recommended to serve as the City of Winnipeg's commitment and guide to poverty reduction and become a catalyst for additional and increasing action and partnerships going forward.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Financial Impact Statement **Date:** November 5, 2021

Project Name:

Winnipeg Poverty Reduction Strategy (2021 – 2031)

COMMENTS:

There are no financial implications arising from the Recommendations of this report.

"Original signed by K.Lemoine"

Kelly Lemoine, CPA, CA
Manager, Finance and Administrative Services
Community Services Department

CONSULTATION

This Report has been prepared in consultation with the departments listed below, and they concur with the content:

Assessment & Taxation
Assets & Project Management
Chief Administrative Office
- Indigenous Relations Division
- Office of Emergency Management

City Clerk's Department
Corporate Finance
- Materials Management

Customer Service & Communications
- Office of Public Engagement

Human Resource Services
Innovation & Technology Services
Legal Services
Planning, Property & Development
Public Works
Water & Waste
- Office of Sustainability

Winnipeg Fire Paramedic Service
Winnipeg Police Service
Winnipeg Transit

For a comprehensive list of organizations that were engaged in the development of the Poverty Reduction Strategy, please see the attached Stakeholder Engagement summary reports.

OURWINNIPEG POLICY ALIGNMENT

OurWinnipeg (2011)

03 QUALITY OF LIFE
03-1 Opportunity
Direction 4: Work within municipal service areas as a collaborator on poverty reduction.

OurWinnipeg 2045 (Subject to Council Third Reading)

OurWinnipeg 2045 was developed with input from the Poverty Reduction Strategy team and integrated a poverty reduction lens throughout. All six of the interconnected sustainable development goal outcomes and policies can contribute to poverty reduction and equity. The following goal narrative excerpts support the Poverty Reduction Strategy intentions:

> **Economic Prosperity** "The City can directly and indirectly influence the long-term prosperity and quality of life for its residents and business community through its roles as: policy creator, land use and development regulator, public asset owner, infrastructure planner and investor, local economic development facilitator, life-long learning enabler, public safety services provider, procurer of goods and services, and

major employer. The City is in the business of public service delivery, with long-term community quality of life as its mission."

Health and Well-being "A healthy city supports the provision of basic needs, social determinants of health, and human rights through equitable access to food, water, housing, income, employment, transportation, recreation, literacy, and social inclusion. These needs are best addressed through effective cross-sector collaboration, promoting good physical and mental health for all."

Social Equity "A socially equitable community is one that embraces the following principles:

- People are treated fairly and municipal resources are distributed based on need rather than social or economic advantage.

- Systemic barriers are addressed and removed to provide all people with quality of life consisting of equitable access to basic needs, economic and employment opportunity, democratic participation, and sense of belonging."

Some examples of the policy that aligns with the Winnipeg Poverty Reduction Strategy include:

1.4 Integrated Knowledge and Resources- enables internal and external coordination to meet community needs.

1.7 Equitable Service Access- enables removal of systemic barriers to participation.

1.10 Representative and Participatory Democracy- enables participation from people with lived experience.

1.17 Neighbourhood Needs Assessment- enables focused revitalization and supports to areas that need it most.

2.13 Renewable Energy Production and Equity- enables reduction in energy poverty rates.

3.12 Poverty Reduction- through community economic development.

3.13 Poverty Reduction- through living wage for municipal employees and those awarded City contracts.

3.14 Strategic Enterprise Supports- enables employment opportunities through municipal procurement**.**

4.3 Proactive Health Intervention- understand social determinants of health for poverty reduction, crime prevention and harm reduction action.

4.5 Healthy Food- enables affordable access as fundamental to community health.

4.6 Community Safety- enables a culture of crime prevention and trusting relationships.

5.2 Affordable and Supportive Housing- enables an affordable housing continuum as a human right.

5.3 End Homelessness- enables a Housing First approach to housing and supports.

5.4 Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples- commits to municipal scale recommendations in UNDRIP, TRC and MMIWG.

5.5 Indigenous Lens- recognizes, respects and advances Indigenous ways of knowing to approach City activities.

WINNIPEG CLIMATE ACTION PLAN ALIGNMENT

There are many alignments between the Winnipeg Climate Action Plan (WCAP) and the Winnipeg Poverty Reduction Strategy, as both strategies aim to build a more resilient, sustainable, and equitable city for all residents. While there are no specific Goals or Objectives in the Winnipeg Poverty Reduction Strategy that connect directly to WCAP, there are many areas of intersection and synergy that will unfold as both the Strategy and WCAP are implemented.

The WCAP includes multiple actions that address poverty reduction and equity through sustainability initiatives, as well as highlight the need for a climate resiliency. The Public Service will ensure ongoing coordination of the implementation of both the WCAP and the Poverty Reduction Strategy. Both strategies aim to increase resiliency of our communities, municipal services, and the city as a whole, as well as provide increased support to residents experiencing poverty related to the effects of climate change (e.g. increased extreme heat events) and take steps to mitigate climate change and reduce our reliance on fossil fuels.

Some examples from the WCAP that demonstrate the strong interconnection between sustainability planning and poverty reduction initiatives include:

- Increase access to local and sustainable food (WCAP 1.7)
- Increase use and efficiency of public transit systems (WCAP 3.1)
- Prioritize transit-oriented development, investment in public transit and active transportation options as per WCAP Strategic Opportunity 3 (Advance Sustainable Transportation—Increasing Mobility Options)
- Ensure new growth areas are designed according to the principles of complete communities (WCAP 4.2).
- Increase energy performance of existing buildings (WCAP 5.1) includes multiple actions to increase energy efficiency of buildings and homes, which will reduce both greenhouse gas emissions and energy costs
- Build Climate Equity: Build partnerships with key stakeholders such as the local neighbourhood associations, Building Urban Industries for Local Development (BUILD) and Centre for Aboriginal Human Resource Development (CAHRD) to build local capacity and equity. (WCAP 5.4)
- Implement opportunities to improve Winnipeg's resiliency and adaptability to the effects of a changing climate (WCAP Strategic Direction 7.1)

SUBMITTED BY

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Attachments:

Appendix A: Winnipeg Poverty Reduction Strategy (2021 – 2031)

Appendix B: Poverty Reduction Strategy Implementation Plan (2021 – 2023)

Appendix C: Phase 1 Stakeholder Engagement Summary Report

Appendix D: Phase 2 Stakeholder Engagement Summary Report

Appendix E: Phase 3 Stakeholder Engagement Summary Report