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December 10th, 2021

Good Afternoon Mayor Bowman and Members of the Executive Policy Committee

I am here to speak with respect to the Preliminary 2022 Operating and Capital Budget item on today's agenda on behalf of the Social Planning Council of Winnipeg. An organization with now over 100-year history of working to better the lives of Winnipeggers through research, community led and progressive policy development.

I'd like to begin by pointing out some of the positives in the budget:

- The City's contribution of $550,000 to Main Street Project's outreach van is much needed support for this essential service. The need for a variety of 24/7 services has long been identified and Main Street's van is a crucial piece in that puzzle
- The $700,000 announced for some community centres is also much needed though it is a spending shortfall in the budget.
- The marked increase to our tree canopy budget is good but we would echo Trees Please Winnipeg that given the years if not decades of undervaluing how essential the canopy is to the environment, Winnipeggers health and well being as well as our economy, $53 million in savings a year, we encourage you to find the additional $6 million a year needed. We simply cannot afford to continue to lose the roughly 2000 more trees than we plant in a year.
- My colleague from Immigration Partnership Winnipeg, Reuben Garang, will speak more to the positive steps taken in building a more inclusive Winnipeg through the Long-Term Commitment Plan on Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Anti-Racism. As IPW's host organization, we echo his sentiments and conclusions on the need for more tangible commitments in the form of more dollars though.

I would like to take note that today is International Human Rights Day. Therefore, it is timely that we are all here, virtually and in person, to discuss our City's budget which represents our choices – what we choose to value more or less.

As I did in my last presentation to you in November on the proposed adoption of the first ever poverty reduction strategy for the City of Winnipeg, I congratulate you on recognizing that this level of government has a role to play on combating poverty. Now, we have to work out the casting details. Is it a bit part, a supporting role or lead? Not

allocating any actual resources to implementing the strategy indicates the role this Council seems willing to take on.

Again, though, I do want to point out the existing investments made in trying to address poverty. The above mentioned Main Street van, free access to some recreation opportunities, the social procurement plan though we are concerned that this seems stalled according to media and other such investments. But the whole point of the Winnipeg Without Poverty report that led to the creation of the poverty reduction strategy, was that piecemeal, small and unstable grants etc... were not getting us to where we needed to be. Just as a solely charity driven model will not end poverty, given that Manitoba routinely ranks as the province with highest percentage of charitable donors, yet we still rank highest in child and family poverty rates.

Last time I mentioned that Winnipeg Centre remains the urban federal riding with the highest rates of child poverty in Canada. Our most recent Campaign 2000 report, Manitoba: Missed Opportunities, which you all should have received, demonstrates the breadth and depth of child and family poverty throughout Winnipeg:

Winnipeg Centre 40%
Winnipeg North 31%
Elmwood-Kildonan 21%
Winnipeg South 20%
St-Boniface-St-Vital 20%
Winnipeg South Centre 18%
Kildonan-St-Paul 16%
Charleswood-St-James-Assiniboia-Headingly 15%

The good news is that we have growing public opinion on our side. As I mentioned and forwarded to you in November, our Probe Research report demonstrates that 76% of Manitobans want governments to do more to end poverty. 48% want much more done while 28% want more done. A further breakdown of the numbers for Winnipeg demonstrates that 55% of Winnipeggers want much more done. And further to that when asked what they wanted governments to do, jobs, education and housing were prioritized which should indicate public support for the two life poles of the poverty reduction strategy: Affordable Housing and Indigenous Children, Youth and Families. I have once again attached the Manitoba Community Data Portal maps that demonstrate that the areas with the highest rates of poverty are also where the majority of Indigenous and other racialized communities live in Winnipeg.

Given that I mentioned small and unstable grants as not being the solution to poverty earlier, I did want to clarify that I am not calling for community grants to end or be further cut in any way shape or form. For revenue sources to fund the poverty reduction strategy, the newcomer inclusion strategy which will help address poverty in newcomer

communities, and the Long-Term Commitment Plan on Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Anti-Racism here are our recommendations:

As a member of the Police Accountability Coalition, the now more than $319 million dollar proposed police budget would be a good place to start. It is yet another increase and I note that there is an indication that the Winnipeg Police Board anticipates coming back for more later in 2022. As a reminder, a recent Angus Reid poll found that only 13% of Winnipeggers wanted more spent on policing. We also have to remember that the province also directly and indirectly funds the Winnipeg Police Service so Winnipeg taxpayers pay twice. The recent announcement of the WPS new approach to calls for people in mental health crisis, that is incorporating mental health workers within the service, is a move in the wrong direction. The WPS has adopted the model within the Harvard Bloomberg approach the City has taken that keeps them in control as the mental health workers will be part of the police response and not the other way around. The latter would be better as police would then only be called if necessary. This was a missed opportunity to reallocate funds away from the service to a more community driven response. PAC's call for a 10% reduction to the police budget would mean $31.9 million available to be spent elsewhere.

Then there are property taxes. In the lead up to the 2019 four-year budget process, when the pandemic was merely looming, we proposed, based on the last Alternative Municipal budget, a more equitable approach to property taxes. The City's own budget presentation lists Winnipeg as having the lowest among residential tax rates among 12 major Canadian cities. Winnipeg spends $823 less than the average of major Canadian cities on a per capita basis. The planned 2.33% tax increase for 2022 will not even keep pace with inflation, which has increased. Overall, inflation has reached 4.7% in the past year, with non-residential construction costs for things like municipal infrastructure even higher at 6.8%. Cost increases, combined with a planned tax increase lower than the rate of inflation will mean an erosion of services in the future along with an ever increasing infrastructure deficit that will saddle future generations. The planned residential tax increase leaves the city at least $17 million behind just in terms of basic inflation this year alone.

An additional 5% increase in this year's budget in residential taxes would raise an additional $31.5 million dollars in 2022. Part of this revenue could be dedicated to a targeted rebate for low income homeowners as well as a tax deferral program for seniors whose income is not able to keep up with increases in property taxes. A table is attached to my written submission. No one would be made homeless under this plan. Those who can afford less, would pay less then they do now. Those who can afford more, would pay more.

This budget will continue to freeze business taxes. The city will raise less revenue from businesses than any year in the current century. In 2001, the City collected $3 million more from businesses than it will next year. In inflation adjusted terms, if business tax

rates had not been cut by fully 50% over the past 20 years, the City would have at least $30 million in further revenues to address poverty. A 5 percent increase in business tax rate, while maintaining a small business tax exemption would raise $30 million in additional business tax revenues. What about the pandemic and its effect on business? Both the federal and provincial governments have invested heavily in protecting businesses throughout the pandemic. The province also contributes to businesses by keeping the minimum wage at poverty wage levels.

These are all options to either re-allocate or increase city resources.

In closing, as I mentioned earlier today it is International Human Rights Day. The maps we supplied demonstrate just how racialized poverty is in Winnipeg. To quote my Campaign 2000 colleague and SPCW board member, Sid Frankel, on the release of last week's child and family report card Manitoba: Missed Opportunities, "what we don't change, we choose." It is my hope that with this budget still being only preliminary, you will look to make the necessary changes to put Winnipeg on the path for a better future for all.

Thank you,



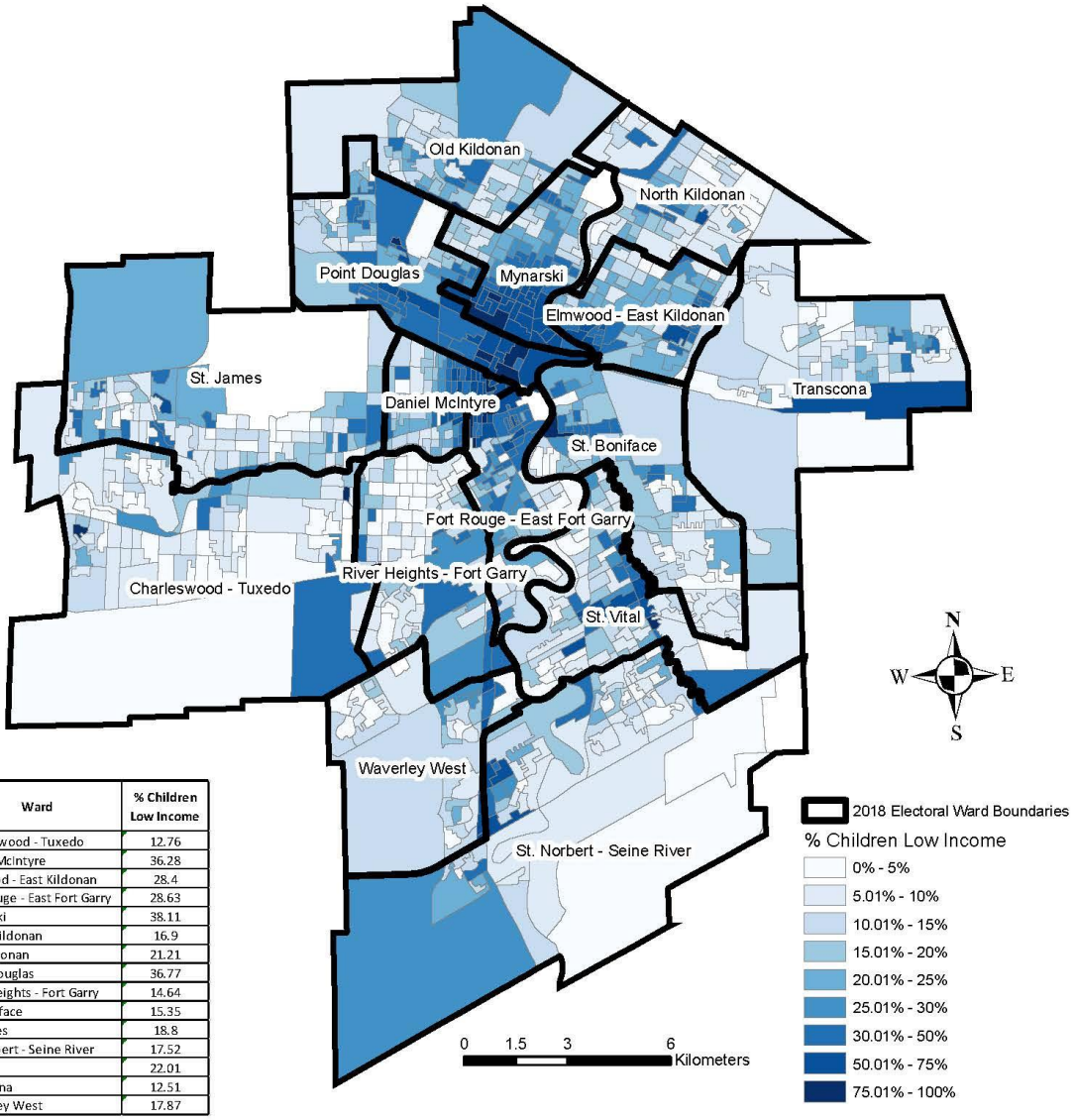
Table 1. Effect of Property Tax and Rebate at Various Property Value Levels

Home value	100,000	$200,000	**$300,000 (Average value)**	$500,000	$1,000,000
2022 Property tax*	$606	$1,212	$1,818	$3,030	$6,061
2.33% increase	$14	$28	$42	$71	$142
5% increase	$30	$60	$90	$150	$300
Total increase	$44	$88	$132	$221	$442
5% increase with $100 rebate	-$56	-$12	$32	$121	$342

1. *Based on current mill rate of 13.468 and 0.45 portion for residential. Does not include Frontage Levy or Education Tax.

Table 1 demonstrates the effect of the City's proposed 2.33% tax as well as our proposal of a 5% additional increase and a $100 rebate. Under this plan, an average priced home valued at $300,000 would pay less in taxes than under the current preliminary budget plan. That is, they would pay $32 more than last year, compared with a $42 increase as is currently planned. Homes valued less than $218,000 would have no tax increase or a tax decrease under this plan.

% of Children (0-17 yrs) Living in Low Income Households (LIM-AT)
City of Winnipeg, 2015



Ward	% Children Low Income
Charleswood - Tuxedo	12.76
Daniel McIntyre	36.28
Elmwood - East Kildonan	28.4
Fort Rouge - East Fort Garry	28.63
Mynarski	38.11
North Kildonan	16.9
Old Kildonan	21.21
Point Douglas	36.77
River Heights - Fort Garry	14.64
St. Boniface	15.35
St. James	18.8
St. Norbert - Seine River	17.52
St. Vital	22.01
Transcona	12.51
Waverley West	17.87

Low Income Measure (LIM-AT) Definition

The Low Income Measure (LIM-AT) is calculated as 50% of the median adjusted after-tax income of private households in Canada, using 2015 tax-filer data as reported in the 2016 Census. The low income measure thresholds are listed below:

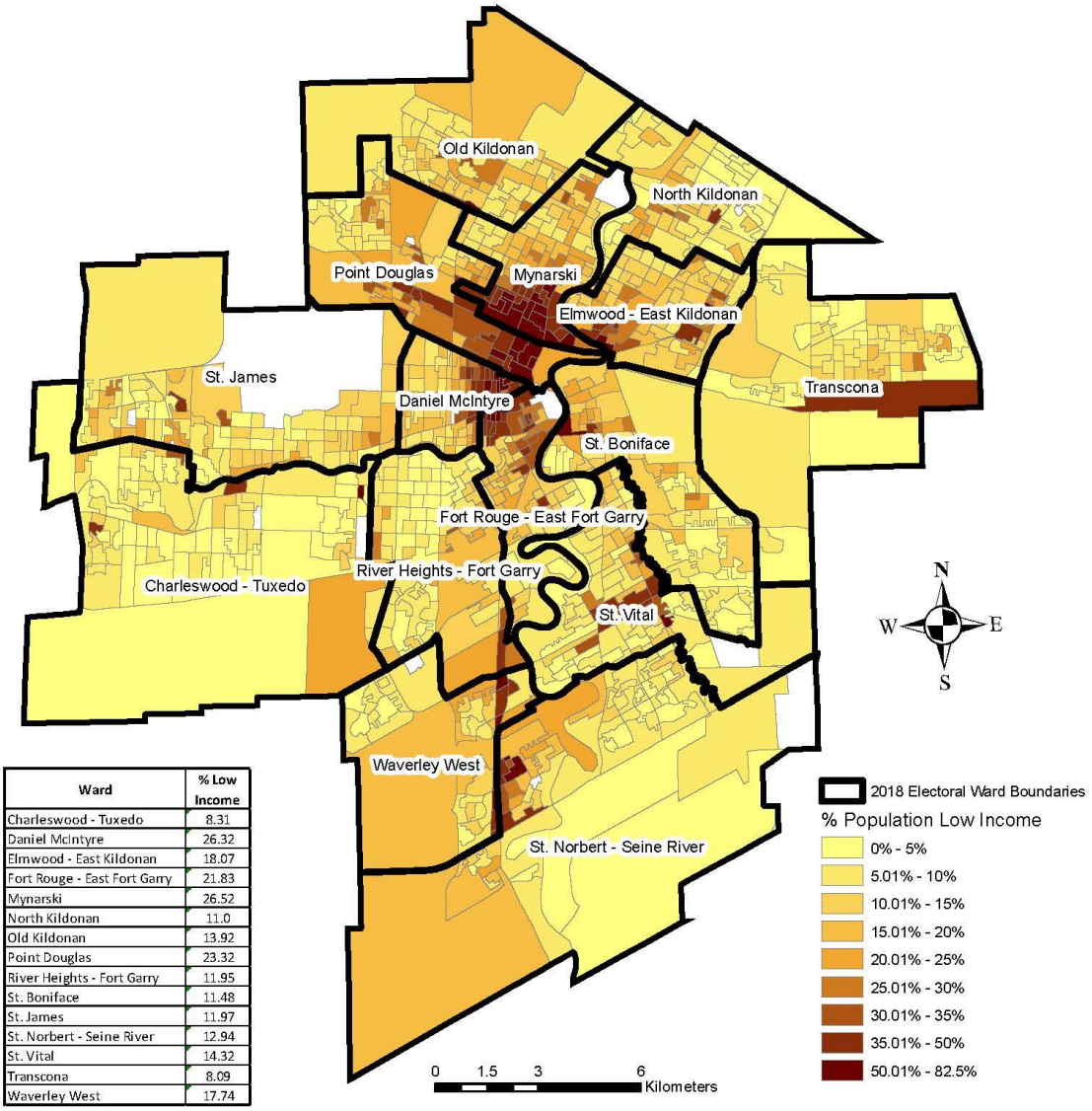
Household size	After-Tax Income	Before Tax Income
1 person household	$22,133	$25,516
2 person household	$31,301	$36,084
3 person household	$38,335	$44,194
4 person household	$44,266	$51,031

Note: Income data is presented using dissemination areas (DAs), the smallest geographic scale at which Statistics Canada releases detailed income data. DAs do not line up exactly with Electoral Ward boundaries. Reported low income percenages are estimates, calculated by aggregating DA level data to Electoral Wards

MBCDP Community Data Matters

Manitoba Collaborative Data Portal
www.mbcdp.ca
June 25, 2018

% of Population Living in Low Income Households (LIM-AT)
City of Winnipeg, 2015



Ward	% Low Income
Charleswood - Tuxedo	8.31
Daniel McIntyre	26.32
Elmwood - East Kildonan	18.07
Fort Rouge - East Fort Garry	21.83
Mynarski	26.52
North Kildonan	11.0
Old Kildonan	13.92
Point Douglas	23.32
River Heights - Fort Garry	11.95
St. Boniface	11.48
St. James	11.97
St. Norbert - Seine River	12.94
St. Vital	14.32
Transcona	8.09
Waverley West	17.74

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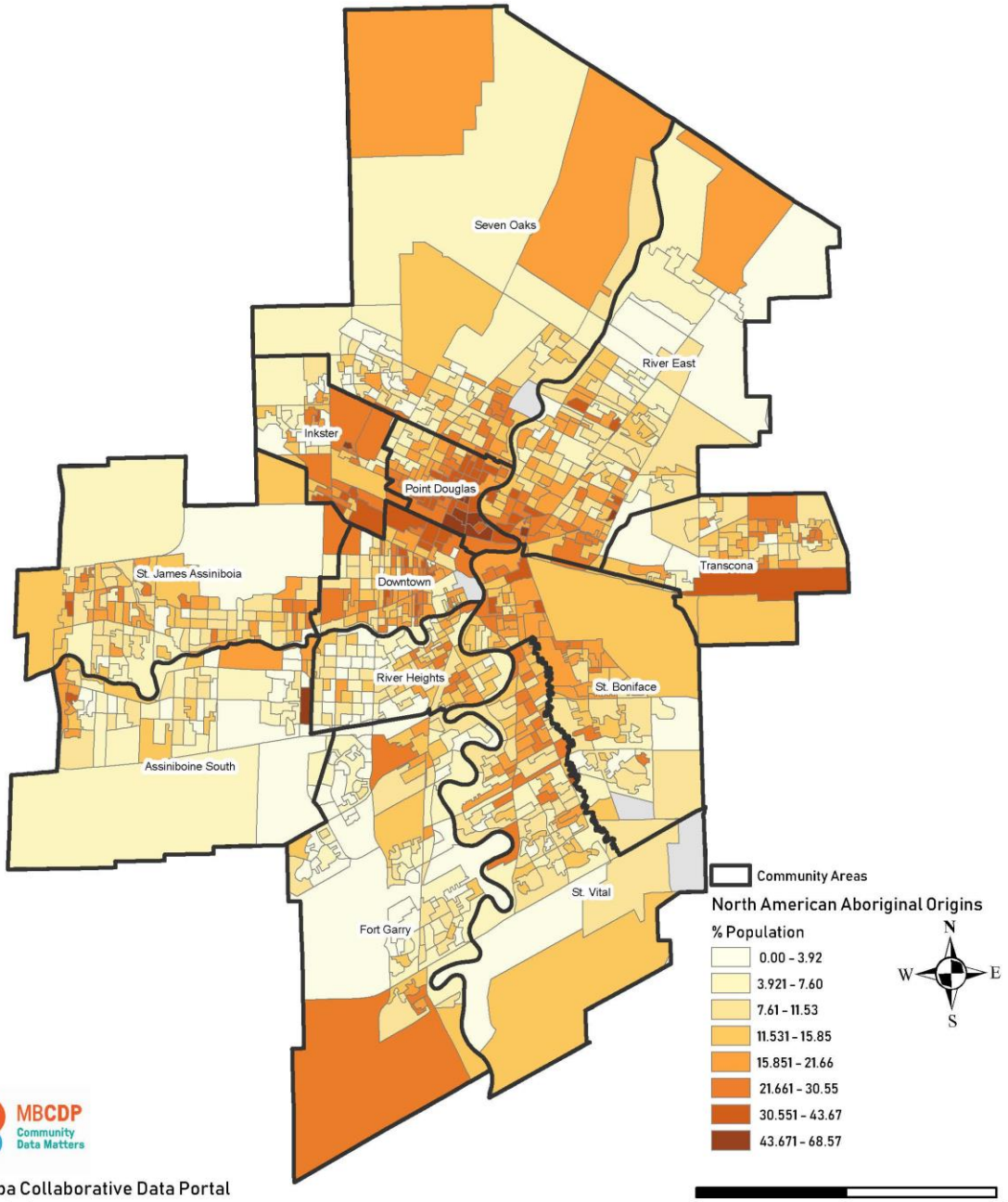
MBCDP Community Data Matters

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Manitoba Collaborative Data Portal
www.mbcdp.ca
July 25, 2018

% Population Reporting North American Aboriginal Origins in Winnipeg*

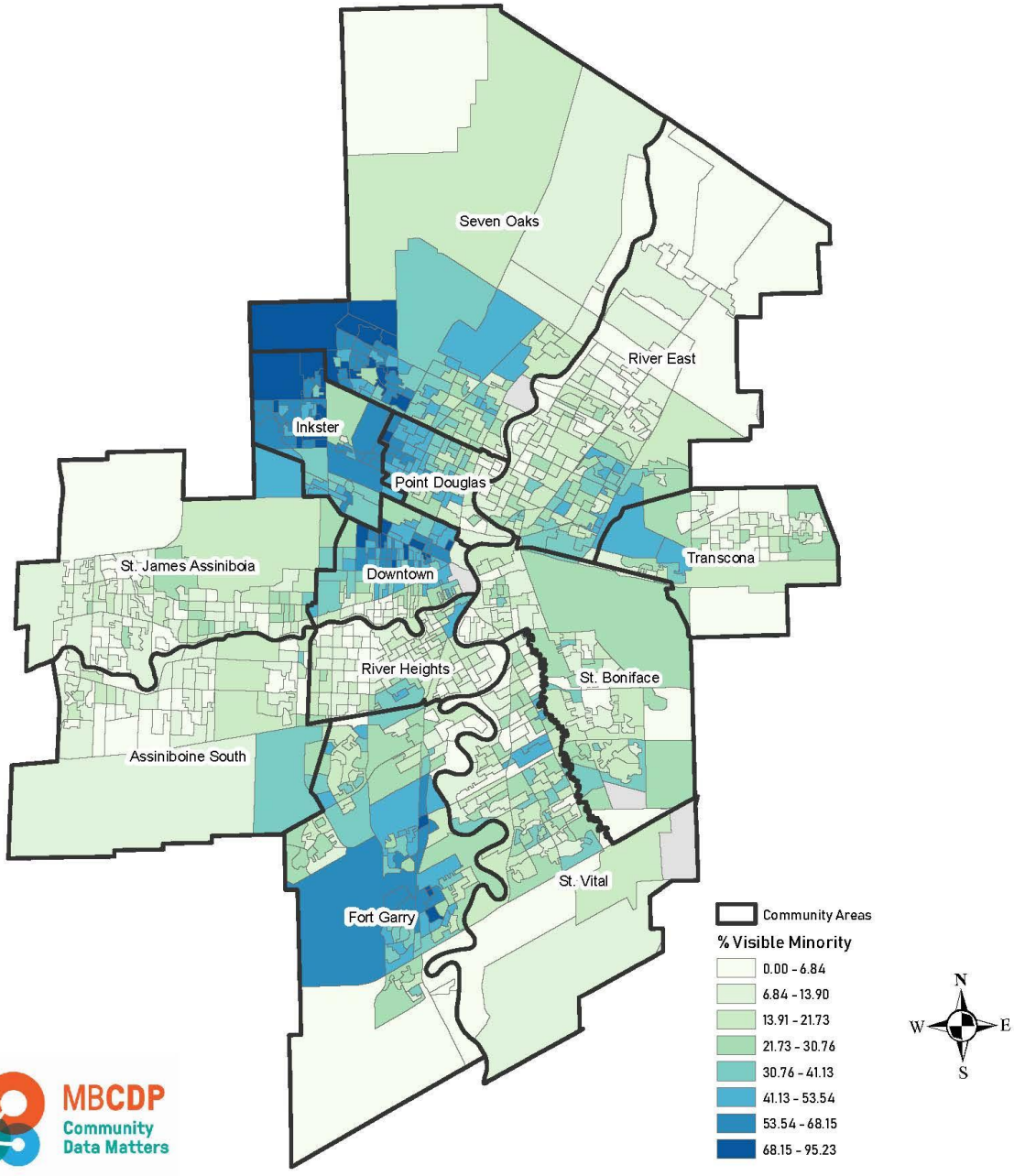
*North American Aboriginal Origins is the term used by the 2016 Census



MBCDP Community Data Matters

Manitoba Collaborative Data Portal
www.mbcdp.ca
Data Source: 2016 Canadian Census
March 28, 2018

% Population Identifying as a Visible Minority in Winnipeg



MBCDP
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Manitoba Collaborative Data Portal
www.mbcdp.ca
Data Source: 2016 Canadian Census
March 28, 2018