WINNIPEG FOOD COUNCIL

2021 ANNUAL REPORT



LAND AKNOWLEDGEMENT

TREATY 1 TERRITORY

The Winnipeg Food Council conducts its work in Treaty No. 1 Territory, the traditional lands of the Anishinabe (Ojibway), Ininew (Cree), Oji-Cree, Dene, and Dakota. Treaty No. 1 Territory is the birthplace and homeland of the Red River Metis Nation.

We respect the Treaties that were made on these territories and acknowledge the harms and mistakes of the past and present. We acknowledge that our water is sourced from Shoal Lake 40 First Nation. In the spirit of reconciliation, we value the ways these communities nurtured the land and honour the legacy and wisdom of the ancestors who made this place home.

WINNIPEG FOOD COUNCIL

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



IT CONTINUES TO BE MY HONOUR TO SERVE AS CHAIR OF THE WINNIPEG FOOD COUNCIL.

The Winnipeg Food Council is fortunate to have dedicated volunteer members that bring energy and expertise from across the food system to this committee. Our membership includes food entrepreneurs, dieticians, farmers, non-profit leaders, politicians, academics, and community organizers, but no matter our backgrounds we all have a common goal to make Winnipeg's food system better. Over the course of 2021 we have continued to work toward that common goal, and I am grateful to all our members for their continued dedication to this committee. We are also fortunate to continue having the tenacious Jeanette Sivilay as our Food Council Coordinator.

One success highlighted in this report was the establishment of our second community garden at the West Kildonan Arena. Space to grow food continues to be in high demand due to the pandemic and rising food costs, and we were happy to support newcomer families to begin growing at this location in 2021. Thanks to Councillor Eadie and the West Kildonan Community Centre for helping make this a reality.

I am also happy to report that through the City's 2021 multi-year budget update, the Winnipeg Food Council will have its first operating budget beginning in 2022.

Given the many challenges that lie ahead as we recover from the pandemic, face climate change, and weather the impacts of inflation and rising food prices, the work of the Winnipeg Food Council remains critical. I am happy to support this work as outlined in this Annual Report, and continue working toward a better food system for all.

Thank you,

Councillor Brian Mayes
Winnipeg Food Council Chair



OUR MISSION

THE WINNIPEG FOOD COUNCIL IS A COMMITTEE OF VOLUNTEER CITIZEN EXPERTS ADVISING ON A RANGE OF MUNICIPAL FOOD SYSTEMS ISSUES THROUGH RESEARCH AND COMMUNITY CONSULTATION.

VISION

ALL WINNIPEGGERS HAVE WHAT THEY NEED TO EAT WELL, ALL OF THE TIME.

MISSION

WORK WITH THE MAYOR, COUNCILLORS AND CITY STAFF TO FIX FOOD SYSTEMS ISSUES BY ADVISING ON POLICY, RELAYING RESEARCH, AND SHARING LESSONS LEARNED THROUGH CONTINUAL CONSULTATION.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

ENSURE THAT CURRENT CITY OF WINNIPEG BYLAWS AND PROGRAMS ARE BEING USED TO THEIR FULL ADVANTAGE FOR FOOD EQUITY; AND THAT THE CITY PRIORITIZES FOOD IN ITS PLANNING AND INITIATIVES.

The function of the Winnipeg Food Council is to:

(1) Advise the Mayor and Council on food system related issues;
(2) Support the work of the community on food issues, enhance public health and local food security, and increase food literacy and access to food by encouraging multi-sector and strategic approaches, fostering coordination and networking, and supporting ongoing consultation; and
(3) Initiate the development of and support the implementation, maintenance and evaluation of a City of Winnipeg Agricultural and Food Strategy to address municipal food security and food system issues. The City of Winnipeg Agricultural and Food Strategy will:

(a) include policy directions identified through community engagement, focused research, innovative initiatives, and other actions to identify proven practices;
(b) include evaluation and implementation components; and
(c) be operationalized in partnership with the Winnipeg Public Service, the local food movement, businesses, community agencies, stakeholder groups, and private citizens.



OUR MISSION

The Winnipeg Food Council operates through the work and guidance of its two subcommittees:

1. The research and policy subcommittee undertakes projects and research activities on food systems related issues and policy.
2. The development and communication subcommittee advises and aids in committee longevity, communications and public engagement.





WINNIPEG FOOD COUNCIL MEMBERS

OUR MEMBERS BRING SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE IN AREAS SUCH AS COMMUNITY FOOD SECURITY, RESEARCH AND COMMUNICATIONS, AND STRATEGIC PLANNING WHICH ALLOWS US TO CONTRIBUTE TO POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND INFLUENCE CHANGE.

- COUNCILLOR BRIAN MAYES (CHAIRPERSON)
- COUNCILLOR JASON SCHREYER
- ABBY LEGASPI – COMMUNITY GROUP
- ASHA NELSON – CITIZEN MEMBER
- BLAIR YAKIMOSKI – FOOD BUSINESS
- JAMES BATTERSHILL – FOOD PRODUCTION
- KELLY JANZ – RESEARCH
- BRUCE BERRY – FOOD PRODUCTION
- MARTINA GORNIK-MARION – HEALTH (NOMINATED BY THE WINNIPEG REGIONAL HEALTH AUTHORITY)
- JASMINE TARA – CITIZEN MEMBER
- NITA SHARDA – CITIZEN MEMBER

The Winnipeg Food Council has a maximum of 12 members. Members represent the local food system from the following sectors:

- City Council, Health, Food production, Food businesses, Academia and research
- Community groups or networks connected to food issues
- Citizen members at large with specific skills, experience and interests to increase diversity and add value to particular initiatives
- The Province of Manitoba (non-voting)

Food Council Members are chosen based on their knowledge and expertise with food systems work. With the exception of the non-voting member, Food Council members' participation on the Food Council remains independent of their place of employment or other citizen involvements.



COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

IN 2021, DESPITE THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, THE WINNIPEG FOOD COUNCIL WAS ABLE TO PARTICIPATE AND ENGAGE IN COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES IN ORDER TO EXPAND AWARENESS OF THE FOOD COUNCIL, FOSTER CONNECTIONS WITH COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS, AND PARTICIPATE IN CONSULTATION:

- January 21: Presentation of the Winnipeg Food Atlas at the Manitoba Planning Conference with Dr. Joyce Slater (University of Manitoba), Dr. Chris Greene (Winnipeg Regional Health Authority), and Albert Boakye (Social Planning Council of Manitoba)
- January 27: Attended the Prairie Regional Adaptation Collaborative webinar entitled "Building Resilient Food Systems across the Prairies", part of their Climate Resilient Communities series
- June 22 & 27; September 22, October 19, November 16, December 14: Invited to United Way Winnipeg food security network meetings – Designing Immediate Solutions to Hunger
- June 30: Attended the Food Matters Manitoba Food Action Hub event
- July 22: Attended the World Bank Cities on the Frontline Speaker Series webinar entitled “Building Effective Food Systems for Cities”
- July 31: Co-hosted the West Kildonan Rainbow Community Garden launch at the West Kildonan Memorial Arena
- September 2: Invited to Fireweed Food Hub food security meeting of the Lateral Root Network
- September 21: Invited to ProBono Students Canada season launch event with Chief Judge Margaret Wiebe of the Provincial Court of Manitoba, and Law Society of Manitoba Access to Justice Coordinator Natasha Brown



COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- October 31: Participated in Food Communities Network of municipal food policy councils online event launching the food strategy toolkit

- November 9: Organized Cereals Canada and Cigi tour with Mayor Bowman, Councillor Mayes, Councillor Schreyer, Economic Development Winnipeg, Yes! Winnipeg and Winnipeg Food Council members

- December 2: Presentation of municipal food policy to University of Manitoba Agriculture students, Exploration of Agri-food production and processing opportunities for Brokenhead Ojibway First Nation class, School of Agriculture, Faculty of Agriculture

- December 9: Organized Harvest Manitoba tour with Councillor Mayes, Councillor Chambers, Winnipeg Food Council members, and the Public Service





WEST KILDONAN RAINBOW COMMUNITY GARDEN

In 2021 the Winnipeg Food Council supported the development of a new community garden at the West Kildonan Memorial Arena in response to increased demand for garden space during the COVID-19 pandemic. In its first year, the West Kildonan Rainbow Community Garden was tended by 10 newcomer families. "Gardeners were organized by Raymond Ngarboui, a community organizer with Community Education Development Association (CEDA), on behalf of the Refugee Immigrant Farming & Integration Manitoba (RIFIM).





According to Raymond, there was an overwhelming request for garden space from new Canadian families because of increased food prices during the pandemic. Newcomer families want to learn about growing food in the prairie climate and grow cultural foods that can be hard to find in Winnipeg. We were happy to support and celebrate the garden this summer, helping fulfill outcomes the City's Newcomer Welcome and Inclusion Policy to find space for newcomer activities at City facilities.



WEST KILDONAN RAINBOW COMMUNITY GARDEN

On July 31 RIFIM held a celebratory barbeque at the community garden to commemorate the space and the efforts of all partners involved.

The garden received strong support from the area Councillor Ross Eadie, and the President of the West Kildonan Memorial Community Centre, Bryan Huen. The garden was further supported by Winnipeg Food Council Chair Councillor Brian Mayes, the Community Education Development Association, and Tracy Jenson from Lawson Sales.

The West Kildonan Rainbow Community Garden is the second community garden established by the Winnipeg Food Council. In 2020 the Winnipeg Food Council helped establish the Meadowood Victory Garden at the St. Vital Arena, also in response to the pandemic.





HOUSEHOLD FOOD WASTE

In April 2021 the Winnipeg Food Council, in partnership with the City of Winnipeg and Love Food Hate Waste Canada (LFHW), launched a household food waste reduction campaign. LHFW Canada is a national organization that works with businesses, governments and community groups across Canada to promote food waste reduction by Canadians, using traditional and social media campaigns, with key messaging around what we can all do on a personal level to reduce our food waste.

The April campaign explained how the average Canadian household throws out more than $1,100 of food every year, and 63% of wasted food could have been eaten. Key messages focused on simple tips and tricks to reduce food waste at home, such as how to meal plan and how to make food last longer (i.e., re-using/freezing leftovers), to help save money and combat climate change at the same time.

The campaign was driven mainly through the Winnipeg Food Council's webpage and social media channels, as well as through digital and radio ads, print ads, micro-influencers (coordinated by LFHW Canada), and City of Winnipeg social media.





HOUSEHOLD FOOD WASTE

The partnership with LFHW Canada addressed a sub-strategy of the City's Comprehensive Integrated Waste Management Strategy, which recommends the development of a food waste reduction strategy and licensing of the Love Food Hate Waste (or similar) campaign. The partnership also supported the City's Climate Action Plan goal of advancing waste reduction and diversion initiatives to reduce the City's greenhouse gas emissions, by encouraging more diversion of organic waste from the landfill.

In June 2021, a three-year partnership agreement was signed with Love Food Hate Waste Canada to continue to support Winnipeg residents in reducing their food waste using a variety of communications methods.







MEADOWOOD VICTORY GARDEN: SEASON TWO

The Meadowood Victory Garden had a fantastic second year under the watchful eye of Harvest Manitoba staff and volunteers. In total, the community garden grew over 168 lbs of produce, which was distributed in over 70 boxes to community members from July 9th to September 10th. Excess produce was distributed through Harvest Manitoba's Breakfast 2 Go program located at Victor Wyatt school across from the garden, the Woodydell Family Centre also in the area, and the North End Stay and Play Daycare.

In the Spring of 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic had huge impacts on the food supply chain. It was not rare to see empty grocery store shelves and increases in food costs. In response to these food system disruptions, The Winnipeg Food Council urged Mayor and Council to act quickly on food security issues due to the pandemic and into the future. To answer these calls to action, Winnipeg Food Council Chair Councillor Brian Mayes worked to establish the Meadowood Victory Garden to raise awareness on the importance of community gardens and encourage others to produce food to feed themselves and their communities.







MEADOWOOD VICTORY GARDEN: SEASON TWO

In the Spring of 2021, the Winnipeg Food Council asked Harvest Manitoba to oversee the growing season for the summer, to which they agreed.

Based on the positive feedback from the community and Harvest Manitoba partners, Harvest reported that the project demonstrates the importance of accessible public gardens. Not only do these gardens address food insecurity within households, but they also serve as a community meeting place where knowledge sharing, and community building can take place.





OTHER INITIATIVES

"BIKE TO GARDEN" SELF-GUIDED TOURS

In 2021 the Winnipeg Food Council partnered with Bike Week Winnipeg to develop two family friendly bike route loops featuring community gardens around the city.
On Sunday, June 13, Winnipeggers were encouraged to bike to community gardens and share photos of their trip on social media to win prizes as part of Bike Week Winnipeg festivities. The Spence Neighbourhood and Wolseley bike loop took riders past gardens organized by Spence Neighbourhood Association and the Wolseley Residents Association. The Lord Roberts and Churchill Drive bike loop showed riders gardens run by Sustainable South Osborne Community Co-op and the Riverview Garden Society.



PROBONO STUDENTS CANADA LEGAL RESEARCH PROJECT

In 2021 the Winnipeg Food Council engaged ProBono Students Canada (PBSC) to conduct a study assessing how Winnipeg compares to other Canadian jurisdictions urban agriculture policy. PBSC provides free legal advice to organizations by matching volunteer law students with projects in the community. Each project is supervised by a practicing lawyer.

The Food Council tasked PBSC students with comparing Winnipeg polices to those of other jurisdictions regarding the ability of people to sell or otherwise benefit from produce grown on public lands.



OTHER INITIATIVES

The legal research project was designed to examine City of Winnipeg bylaws and lease agreements relating to the use of produce grown on public land within the context of other Canadian municipal jurisdictions. Law students were also asked to examine different local examples where public lands are used to produce food including Manitoba legislation on leasing crown land for agricultural uses and policies and/or lease agreements with Manitoba Hydro and Winnipeg based school divisions regarding lands used for food production.

The project will be completed in 2022 with a research memo to provide information on how public lands may be used for food production with regards to how groups my benefit from sales of items grown on public lands.

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE AND URBAN AGRICULTURE

In 2021 the Winnipeg Food Council continued to examine the possibilities of urban agriculture in green infrastructure projects. Emma Tamlin from Raised Roots Consulting presented at the February meeting of the Winnipeg Food Council. Using policy examples from municipalities across North America she discussed how urban agriculture is being incentivized as an option for managing stormwater. Specifically, community gardens and intensive green roofs have a place in planning for stormwater management. These initiatives protect and improve permeable urban areas while providing important co-benefits such as building sustainable food systems for social equity, wellbeing, and climate change resilience.





OTHER INITIATIVES

CEREALS CANADA TOUR

On November 9 Mayor Bowman, Councillor Mayes, Councillor Schreyer, Yes! Winnipeg staff, and Winnipeg Food Council members toured Cereals Canada with CEO Dean Dias. During the tour, we visited the milling, baking, noodle and pasta production facilities along with the pulse flour area and the Canadian Malting Barley Technical Centre.

Agriculture is a key driver of Canada's economy. Canada's cereals sector led the country's agriculture exports with annual exports averaging $8.5 billion dollars to over 70 countries. Winnipeg is known as the heart of the continent and agriculture has a long history and home in our city. Typically, Cereals Canada welcomes over 200 local and international customers to Winnipeg to participate in technical learning programs at the Cereals Canada facilities annually.





OTHER INITIATIVES

TOUR OF HARVEST MANITOBA

On December 9 Winnipeg Food Council Chair Councillor Mayes, along with Councillor Chambers, Winnipeg Food Council members and members of the public service toured Harvest Manitoba with CEO Vince Barletta. Harvest Manitoba feeds on average 80,000 people across the province each month. Around the holidays the need for donations and volunteers increases.

GROWING FOR OUR COMMUNITY DONATION GUIDE

Community gardeners can donate extra produce to organizations in the city who work with local communities to provide groceries or healthy meals. As an outcome of a research project in 2021 with Dr. Fabiana Li at the University of Manitoba, Dr. Li developed a guide of organizations accepting fresh fruits and vegetables to share with community gardeners.





2021 FINANCIAL STATEMENT

REVENUES:	2021 BUDGET	2021 ACTUAL	BALANCE
Council Funding	$50,000.00	$50,000.00	
Total:	$50,000.00	$50,000.00	
EXPENDITURES:			
Coordinator Contract Fee	$50,000.00	$12,500.00	
Total:	$50,000.00	$12,500.00	$ 37,500.00*

*In 2021 coordination services for the Winnipeg Food Council were subsumed by the Winnipeg Public Service. As a result, the balance of the Coordinator Contract Fee ($37,500.00) was put toward revenues for that position.

The Winnipeg Food Council is an ad hoc committee established by Winnipeg City Council. As such, the committee also has a Chair budget to be used for Food Council activities, at the Chair's discretion.



CONTACT US!



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"FOOD IS OUR COMMON GROUND,
A UNIVERSAL EXPERIENCE."

- JAMES BEARD

WINNIPEG FOOD COUNCIL