Winnipeg

City of Winnipeg Sustainable Procurement Action Plan

Stakeholder Engagement Summary

By Buy Social Canada

March – May 2022

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Thank you

We would like to thank every person and organization who gave their time and care in helping co-create and shape City of Winnipeg's (City) Sustainable Procurement Action Plan. The success of the Sustainable Procurement Action Plan relies upon a collaborative, cross-sectoral approach. The work done in this engagement process lays the foundation for ongoing engagement, collaboration and relationship building across stakeholders, Indigenous Rightsholders, community, social enterprises, industry, businesses and City staff and departments.

Engagement Process

During April – May 2022, the City and Buy Social Canada engaged with a Main External Working Group, three Sub-External Working Groups, Indigenous Rightsholders, internal subject matter experts and City departments to gather information and feedback on the Sustainable Procurement Action Plan (SPAP). Engagement was done through a two-round approach.

Round 1 had participants envision what could be possible with the SPAP and provide input on the development of the plan, while Round 2 had participants review and provide feedback on the updated SPAP. A two-round approach was taken to ensure that the City's Sustainable Procurement Program continues to be built on a foundation of shared vision and goals.

For both Round 1 and Round 2, engagement with the Sub-External Working Groups and Indigenous Rightsholders occurred prior to the Main External Working Group engagement. The Main External Working Group heard what was shared from the Sub-External Working Groups and Indigenous Rightsholders and had the ability to further reflect and discuss that feedback and have an opportunity to provide feedback into the next steps of the project.

Participants

The stakeholders and Indigenous Rightsholders that were engaged with had an existing connection to City procurement or could have a connection to future City sustainable procurement opportunities.

Main External Working Group

The Main External Working Group was established in 2021 with the goal to work with the City to develop sustainable procurement plans and processes. It includes eleven representatives from the City, construction industry, social enterprises and Indigenous procurement.

Participants:

1. Corinne Evason, City of Winnipeg (Chair)
2. Brett Andronak, City of Winnipeg
3. Jessica Paley, City of Winnipeg
4. Chris Lorenc, Manitoba Heavy Construction Association
5. Darryl Harrington, Winnipeg Construction Association
6. Loren Remillard, Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce
7. Tanya Palson, Manitoba Building Trades
8. Michael Barkman, Canadian CED Network
9. Sean Hogan, BUILD Inc.
10. Jessica Floresco, Mother Earth Recycling and Indigenous Chamber of Commerce
11. Damon Johnston, Winnipeg Indigenous Executive Circle

Indigenous Rightsholders

The original intention was to create an Indigenous Sub-External Working Group. Based upon the response to requests for engagement and feedback from Indigenous Rightsholders and City staff, this plan shifted to reach out to Indigenous Rightsholders directly and meet with them one on one.

It was repeatedly suggested for City staff to engage with Indigenous Rightsholders in person and at events that were already occurring. These recommendations formed the foundation for the implementation action to host a semi-annual engagement event to build relationships with Indigenous businesses.

Participants:

1. Chabot Enterprises
2. Clayton Sandy
3. Dreamcatcher Promotions
4. Indigenous Chamber of Commerce
5. Manitoba Metis Federation

Sub-External Working Groups

Three Sub-External Working Groups were established with the goal that each be able to provide feedback on key areas of sustainable procurement implementation and design.

The Construction Sub-External Working Group comprised of thirteen participants, the Social Enterprise Sub-External Working Group comprised of fifteen participants, and the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Sub-External Working Group comprised of twelve participants.

Social Enterprise

1. Corinne Evason, City of Winnipeg (Chair)
2. Jonathan Hildebrand, City of Winnipeg
3. Daniel Waycik, Persons Community Solutions Ltd.
4. Ian Vickers, Diversity Food Services
5. Jessica Floresco, Mother Earth Recycling
6. Kalen Taylor, Purpose Construction
7. Laura Pelser, Fireweed Food Co-op
8. Lauren Kroeker-Lee, Resource Assistance for Youth
9. Lucas Stewart, Encompass Co-op
10. Michael Barkman, Canadian CED Network
11. Michelle Launch, Canadian Black Chamber of Commerce
12. Monica Enica, Frontier Accessibility Solutions
13. Rachael Howgate, SEED Winnipeg
14. Robin Bryan, Green Action Centre
15. Sean Hogan, BUILD inc

Construction

1. Barb D'Avignon, City of Winnipeg
2. Catherine Mitchell, Manitoba Heavy Construction Association
3. Chris Lorenc, Manitoba Heavy Construction Association
4. Collen Munro, The Munro Group
5. Corinne Evason, City of Winnipeg (Chair)
6. Darryl Harrington, Winnipeg Construction Association
7. Jeremy Read, UWCRC & UWCRC 2.0
8. Kalen Taylor, Purpose Construction
9. Nathan Koslowsky, CLAC
10. Ramon Coey, MCAM and ECAM (Mechanical and Electrical)
11. Sara Atnikov, Purpose Construction
12. Sean Hogan, BUILD inc
13. Tanya Palson, Manitoba Building Trades

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

1. Al Wiebe, Of no fixed address//Lived exp circle
2. Alex Masi, Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work
3. Anthony Smith, CCRW YTF Winnipeg
4. Claudia Gass, Inclusion Winnipeg – Ready, Willing and Able
5. Clayton Sandy
6. Corinne Evason, City of Winnipeg (Chair)
7. Diane Burelle, City of Winnipeg
8. Jennifer Swanson, CCRW
9. John Perry, CCRW
10. Michelle Meghie, Canadian Black Chamber of Commerce
11. Sara Atnikov, Purpose Construction
12. Anne-Lydie Bolay, The Cutting Edge

City Staff and Subject Matter Experts

City staff holding subject area expertise and relationships helped support the development of the SPAP, provide feedback on the design and make connections to stakeholders and Indigenous Rightsholders.

1. Brett Andronak, Office of Public Engagement
2. Diane Burelle, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion
3. Janelle Harper, Office of Sustainability
4. Jason Ruby, Public Works
5. Jerritt Lipski, Legal Services
6. Jessica Paley, Indigenous Relations Division
7. Laura Rempel, Urban Planning
8. Noelle DePape, Community Development
9. Randy Bernard. Winnipeg Fleet Management Agency
10. Ryan Sokolosky, Animal Services Agency
11. Sadia Aslam, Audit Department
12. Susanne Dewy-Povoledo, Universal Design
13. Tanis Knowles Yarnell, Strategic Management & Business Support Services

What We Heard

Themes emerged in the discussions with working groups, City staff and Indigenous Rightsholders. Below is a summary of the themes shared during the engagement sessions and which have shaped the development of the SPAP.

The language in the SPAP must be **clear and direct.**

- The recommendations are good, but I would urge it to be more specific.
- We need to have clear definitions for all terms.
- From a union perspective, members prefer specificity in Requests for Proposals (RFPs) rather than open-ended questions, especially if it's a fixed price project. They would rather not see "What can you do", but rather see "Requirement is X, how will you fulfill". If there is lack of clarity, there may be contractors delivering different things.
- The project delivery method can make a world of difference in approach.
- The community benefit agreement tactic should be more about defining a process of engagement versus targets.

There must be acknowledgement that many suppliers are already **providing positive benefits** in the community and that is often missing in the current procurement practices of the City.

- The program needs to be reflective of the impact businesses have on community wealth building.
- This won't succeed if the value of sustainable procurement business practices is not recognized.

The City must continue to be **open, fair and transparent** in its procurement practices.

- There will need to be lots of work done around the verification of whether businesses meet certain criteria outlined in the SPAP.
- It could be challenging if the bid and decision process is not fair and a level playing field.
- The successful policy needs to be balanced, sensitive, and aware.

Offering **training and resources** to suppliers, staff, stakeholders and Indigenous Rightsholders will ensure the long-term success of the SPAP.

- Training for City staff will be helpful to ensure they understand these recommendations fully as they work on increasing social impact.
- Educate businesses so they know what the City wants so that they can start connecting with agencies and are ready for bids.
- Switching from MERX to a platform where you don't have to pay to view documents would help (most social enterprises are non-profits and don't have a line item for this subscription).
- The MERX bid system is a barrier to small businesses including small Indigenous businesses and social enterprises. The cost to participate is a barrier.
- Procurement readiness training should be made available to businesses.
- There will need to be support on helping businesses get on the radar for these opportunities. Other municipalities have put out Requests for Information, reverse trade shows, made use of existing directories, etc.
- The creation of a database and intelligence of what organizations and businesses are out there that do or could provide social value.
- Training for businesses around cultural sensitivity towards newcomers, languages, etc. will be key to the recommendation of "supporting education and employment".
- Use resources like supplier lists that already exist.

There must be formal partnerships and communication channels established with organizations that represent First Nation, Red River Métis and Inuit Rightsholders to ensure success in increasing **Indigenous procurement**.

- Building capacity within the Indigenous business community is a goal.
- There should be a mandatory minimum for Indigenous content.
- Set asides are very contentious in construction. I've been unsuccessful in set asides and not even invited. The parameters have to be well-defined. Growth can be propelled through set asides. Some people need that opportunity to present themselves for that growth opportunity. The federal government has set a target percentage of their budget. When you set that out for everyone to see no one will argue because it's public. Indigenous set asides have the benefit of growing your bidder pool.
- Work with Manitoba Métis Federation on an ongoing basis to utilize existing resources like supplier lists and communication channels and to collaborate on implementation tools like the Menu and Questionnaire
- Be careful about verification of Indigenous businesses. This needs to be done well and have follow through. A good example is Canadian Council of Aboriginal Businesses (CCAB), who put in more effort to verify, and businesses have to maintain 55% of staff is Indigenous.

This work needs to be supported by the City through **clear communication, meaningful and ongoing engagement and resources** to fund the supports.

- Community engagement is critical to success.
- Contractors sometimes have difficulty getting quality debriefs right now, so the industry would want strong commitment from the City to give good quality feedback.
- It is important for the for-profit sector to be involved, as they are a part of this process too. They need the place and space to 'do better'. We need to encourage relationships and collaboration between non-profit social enterprises and the for-profit world.
- We need to hear early on about opportunities.
- Give more advance warning so organizations can scale to meet; they need time to apply for funding and to scale.
- Equity work needs to continue even after an RFP is won and the City needs to support this. The work cannot stop after contract is won but must continue.
- This can be successful if intelligence on the market is gathered, an inventory is created, and knowledge of services and expertise that exist in Winnipeg is generated.

- The City should connect with community employment groups and host a job fair for vendors.
- If the industry doesn't have time to prepare then there will be difficulty. It will be helpful to know ahead of time of projects and what the threshold will be, so that we can plan with our signatories appropriately.
- Coordination of timing, money, and training must happen to make sure this is successful.
- It is recommended that Buy Social Canada are re-engaged for the evolution and implementation of the SPAP.

Having **one point-of-contact** at the City for Sustainable Procurement will ensure the long-term success of the SPAP.

- This must be resourced to be successful.
- A City liaison that communicates between the City and with industry and community will be key to ensuring the success of SPAP.
- There should be a social procurement office who can be the key point of contact for suppliers' questions, feedback and to relay opportunities.
- Having a one-stop shop or an individual at the City tasked with connecting social enterprises and City procurement could be very beneficial. This structure has worked very well in Manitoba Housing.
- The City should put resources towards staffing to have the capacity to analyze the data that will come from the implementation of the SPAP.
- The City hires a community liaison that connects and provides education, relationships, and awareness around social procurement.

Reporting and measurement must occur to ensure a truly iterative learning process, as Winnipeg's market is much smaller than other jurisdictions and what has worked in our area may not work in Winnipeg.

- We recommend that standard working group exists, such as a social procurement advisory group. Sustainable procurement can be a path to workplace development and can address labour shortages if the working group is aware of opportunities.
- There needs to be accountability through the Sustainable Procurement Advisory Table.
- We are concerned about a mismatch between what is desired and what is achieved.

What could success look like

Stakeholders and Indigenous Rightsholders have a variety of ideas of what success for sustainable procurement could look like in Winnipeg. Here are some examples.

- Success would be having a culture that doesn't stop at accomplishing bare minimum but goes further. (For example, local procurement is at 80% right now).
- Success is the accommodation and retention of persons with disabilities and diversity in the labour force.
- Apprenticeship opportunities are increased, as they require mentorship, and this is what helps people enhance their skills and gain meaningful employment.
- Focus on increasing apprenticeship opportunities and ability to advance, as that is key for meaningful employment.

This vision for success was shared by The Cutting Edge program at Canadian Muslim Women Institute.

A newcomer woman to Winnipeg has the opportunity to work on a product for the City of Winnipeg while she is enrolled in the sewing machine operator training program.

A few weeks later as she is on her way home, she sees a City of Winnipeg employee wearing the item (a toque?) that she had sewn.

Or perhaps she sees another Winnipeg citizen riding Winnipeg Transit holding a branded tote bag that they had received at a City of Winnipeg function.

*This newcomer women feels an incredible sense of pride and thinks "**I made that, I contribute towards this city, and I belong here in this city**"*