MAKE POVERTY HISTORY
MANITOBA

March 11, 2024

Make Poverty History Manitoba - City Working Group
Submission to Executive Policy Committee
Re: Living Wage

Dear Mayor Gillingham and Members of Executive Policy Committee:

I am writing to urge you to vote for the City of Winnipeg to become a Living Wage employer per hour as per the "Winnipeg Without Poverty: Calling on the City to Lead" report published in 2018. Please note the report recommends that the City of Winnipeg should:

> "Adopt a living wage policy that would commit to: i. Paying direct employees a living wage according to accepted national living wage standards and in partnership with key community stakeholders. ii. Working with local living wage advocates to determine which City contracted and subcontracted services must be paid a living wage. Following this process, ensure future contracts in those service areas include a legally binding clause requiring contracted service workers, including those working for subcontracted companies, to be paid the living wage for Winnipeg."

However, an essential exception must be made when it comes to Community Grants. Not-for-profit and charitable sectors are often not funded sufficiently to be living wage employers themselves. The City of Winnipeg supplies, through Community Grants, both large and small amounts to various struggling organizations that assist Mayor and Council to work towards meeting the City's Charter responsibilities. To place a living wage requirement on these organizations would further put their operations at risk.

The City itself, though, and its for-profit contractors can and should do better. It is unacceptable that the City of Winnipeg currently pays below a living wage in certain job classifications. As one of the largest employers in Manitoba, The City should lead by example and commit to paying your employees a living wage, calculated by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives - Mantioba office at $19.21 an hour in 2023.

The Living Wage, as published annually by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, upholds the research standard set by the Canadian Living Wage Framework. This calculation is based on data from Statistics Canada and the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation, is done by two Economists with doctorate degrees and is peer-reviewed.

The City of Winnipeg's staffing problems resulted in wading pools not being open and services not being delivered. By increasing the wage of the lowest employees the City can attract and retain needed workers to deliver key services.

We also support the businesses and social enterprises the City contracts with being paid a living wage. We note the City provides community grants to non-profits and support these grants be improved to enable these non-profits to pay their employees a living wage as well.

Many municipalities across Canada, large and small, have committed to being living employees. It is time for Winnipeg to lead by example and do the same.

Thank you,
Make Poverty History Manitoba
City Working Group