BUDGET REVIEW

Item No. 19 Poverty Reduction Strategy – Status Update and Implementation Plan 2024-2027

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE DECISION:

The Executive Policy Committee received the matter as information.

(See Budget Review Item 31)

DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

Moved by Councillor Browaty,
That the matter be received as information.

Carried

COUNCIL DECISION:

On November 23, 2023, Council concurred in the recommendation of the Executive Policy Committee.

Make Poverty History Manitoba – City Working Group submitted a communication with respect to the matter.

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On November 14, 2023, the Executive Policy Committee submitted to Council that the recommendation of the Winnipeg Public Service be referred to the 2024-2027 multi-year budget process.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Title: Poverty Reduction Strategy: Status Update and Implementation Plan 2024-2027

Critical Path: Executive Policy Committee-Council

AUTHORIZATION

Author	Department Head	CFO	CAO
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) and 10-year plan was approved by Council on November 25, 2021. The PRS was co-created with community organizations and people with lived experience of poverty, as well as with input from representatives from almost all City departments.

This administrative report provides a status update on the strategy that includes highlights and challenges from the initial 18-month implementation plan, while also outlining a proposed 2024-2027 implementation plan with recommendations for actions to be considered in the 2024-2027 multi-year budget process with the financial implications from a city-wide Public Service perspective. This includes additional grants, operating and staffing resources of $1,449,500 in 2024, $1,894,000 in 2025, $1,844,500 in 2026, and $1,795,000 in 2027, supporting operations in seven departments, and six full-time equivalent (FTE) positions across five departments.

From the 80 actions in the initial implementation plan, eight were completed and 17 are sustained. Of the actions that are still in early stages or actively underway, some are continuing through the next phase of implementation and are included in the Implementation Plan 2024-2027, and some are moving forward through other City reports, policies or partnerships. In the next four-year implementation plan, there are 35 Initiatives and 103 Actions, with a focus on the two Life Poles of Affordable Housing and Indigenous Children, Youth and Families, as well as Food Security, Transportation and Systems Change.

This report is aligned to Council's 2023-2026 Strategic Priorities Action Plan (SPAP) Key Theme 3 "A Livable, Safe, Healthy, Happy City", which identifies poverty reduction as a priority area, supporting two actions. The recommendations of this report support Action 3.3 "Accelerate implementation of the Poverty Reduction Strategy." In connection to the Affordable Housing Life Pole, this report also supports Action 3.4, "Construct more affordable and social housing through partnerships with private sector, not-for-profit, and other governments."

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the status update on the Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) Implementation Plan 2021-2023, as included in **Appendix 1**, be received as information.

2. That the PRS Implementation Plan 2024-2027, as included in **Appendix 2**, be approved and adopted by Council, subject to the approval of Recommendation 3 relative to the financial resources required to deliver the Plan.

3. That the City-wide staffing and resource requirements for the four-year PRS Implementation Plan 2024-2027, as identified in **Appendix 3**, requiring operating and grants resources across seven departments, and an incremental six full-time equivalent (FTE) positions across five departments, with additional mill rate support of $1,449,500 in 2024, $1,894,000 in 2025, $1,844,500 in 2026, and $1,795,000 in 2027 be referred to the 2024-2027 multi-year budget process.

4. That, subject to the approval of Recommendation 3 relative to the financial resources required to deliver the PRS Implementation Plan, the Public Service report back by the end of the second quarter of 2027 with a status update on the PRS Implementation Plan 2024-2027, a midterm evaluation of the overall 10-year Poverty Reduction Strategy, and the next four-year Implementation Plan, including recommendations for actions and resources to be considered in the 2028-2031 multi-year 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 November 25, 2021, Council directed the Public Service to report back in the spring of 2023 with a status update on the strategy and provide the next implementation plan for the Winnipeg Poverty Reduction Strategy, including recommendations for actions to be considered in the 2024-2027 budget process.

On June 12, 2023, Council granted an extension of up to 90 days for the Public Service to report back on the matter.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS

To maximize the impact of City efforts in the second stage of implementation and accelerate the Poverty Reduction Strategy, as prioritized in Council's 2023-2026 Strategic Priorities Action Plan (SPAP), the Public Service needs to continue to build its capacity to undertake some of the more meaningful and complex actions, many which require specialized and new approaches.

Recommendation 3 outlines the financial and human resource implications to be referred to the 2024-2027 budget process. Additional mill rate support of $1,449,500 in 2024, $1,894,000 in 2025, $1,844,500 in 2026, and $1,795,000 in 2027. These resources will support seven departments, with an incremental six FTE's across five departments, as well as grants (e.g.

Transit community grants and Mobile Outreach Support Services) and operating funding to deliver key poverty reduction projects.

Without new FTEs and operating resources for key actions outlined in the PRS Implementation Plan 2024-2027, the impact of the Strategy on reducing poverty will be limited and the Plan cannot be achieved as presented in Appendix 2. As demonstrated through the outcomes of the initial 2021-2023 PRS Implementation Plan, the most progress was made in areas that were provided with the required staff capacity and resourcing.

HISTORY/DISCUSSION

POVERTY IN WINNIPEG

Winnipeg's poverty rate is fourth-highest among large Canadian cities, and 3.2% higher than the national average.

Based on the 2021 Statistics Canada Census data, using the Low-Income Cut-Off (LICO):

- More than 1 in 12 of Winnipeg residents live in poverty (over 61,000 people), or 8.3%. This is down from 13% in 2016.
- More than 1 in 6 Indigenous residents (15.2%) and more than 1 in 7 Newcomer (13.3%) residents live in poverty *(Newcomer refers to the following groups: recent immigrants, refugees, refugee claimants or asylum seekers, and temporary residents in Winnipeg)*.
- 1 in 10 children in Winnipeg live in poverty, with poverty affecting 1 in 6 of all Indigenous children (18.6%) and 1 in 6 of all Newcomer children (18%) ages 0-17 years.
- 1 in 8 single parents live in poverty, and most (84.5%) are women.
- 4.1% of senior adults aged 65+ live in poverty; this is higher than the national average.

Based on data from the Winnipeg Street Census 2022, statistics specific to homelessness in the Winnipeg show:

- 68.2% of people experiencing homelessness are Indigenous.
- 29.2% of people experiencing homelessness cite lack of adequate income as the main reason for being homeless.
- 64.4% of youth experiencing homelessness spent time in the care of Child and Family Services (CFS). 50.2% of all people experiencing homelessness have spent time in CFS care, and many first became homeless immediately after aging out of the care of CFS.

Data demonstrates the following trends:

- **Government Benefits:** Federal and provincial benefits impact poverty. Based on the 2021 Low-Income Cut-Off (LICO) poverty has reduced to 8.3% from 13% since 2016 (2021 Census). A recent report from the Social Planning Council, "Poverty, the Pandemic and the Province" published in February 2023, shows that the COVID-19 Emergency and Recovery Benefit (CERB) resulted in a significant decline in poverty rates.
    - Increasing costs of food, fuel and housing has meant that households continue to experience financial constraints. Based on other measurements of poverty (Market Basket Measure and Low-Income Measure) using the 2021 Census data, 10-13% of Winnipeg residents are in poverty, in-line with the 13% in poverty in 2016 (2021 Census).

- **Child Poverty:** Child poverty in Winnipeg is the highest of any city in Canada, and more than double the national average. 1 in 10 children in Winnipeg live in poverty (2021 Census).
    - Among large cities, Winnipeg has the highest poverty rate for children aged 0-5 years, and highest for children aged 0-17. Despite this rate being down from 1 in 5 in 2016, this demonstrates an increase in child poverty relative to other Canadian cities, where Winnipeg was second and third respectively in 2016. In other words, other cities have been more successful in reducing child poverty since 2016.

- **Racialized Poverty:** Poverty in Winnipeg is racialized. Indigenous people, racialized groups, and Newcomers experience poverty in higher numbers than non-racialized residents, and are disproportionately represented in poverty, compared to their share of the total population in Winnipeg: 10.1% of all visible minorities live in poverty, a higher rate of poverty than the city average (2021 Census). Based on LICO using 2021 Census data:
    - More than 1 in 6 Indigenous residents live in poverty. There are higher rates of poverty amongst First Nations, Métis and Inuit residents, including children and youth. Indigenous people make up 12.4% of the population, while 15.2% are in poverty.
    - More than 1 in 7 Newcomer residents live in poverty. 6.2% of Winnipeg residents are Newcomers, while 13.3% are in poverty.
    - More than 1 in 7 Black residents live in poverty. 5.4% of Winnipeg residents are Black, while 13.3% are in poverty.
    - Indigenous, Newcomer and Black children are more impacted by poverty. 38.5% of Indigenous children aged 0-17 live in poverty, 14.5% of Newcomer children aged 0-17 live in poverty, and 18% of Black children aged 0-17 live in poverty.

- **Areas of Higher Poverty:** Poverty is concentrated in certain neighbourhoods. While people experiencing poverty live throughout the City, based on mapping and analysis undertaken (see Appendix 4: Areas of Higher Poverty Map), there are geographic areas of the City where more than half of all residents are living in poverty, and in some areas over 60% of all children (2016 Census).

- **Disability and Poverty:** There is an intersection between disability and poverty. A demographic, employment and income profile of Canadians with disabilities by Statistics Canada in 2017 shows that one in five Canadians lives with one or more disabilities, and this percentage is expected to increase as the population ages. Working aged adults with more severe disabilities are three times as likely as those without disabilities to live in poverty (28% vs 10%); persons with disabilities tend to have lower incomes and experience lower employment rates than those without disabilities. It is also recognized that those experiencing poverty are more likely to live and work in an environment that may adversely affect their health and thereby an increased risk of experiencing temporary or permanent disabilities (Statistics Canada 2017).

These trends confirm the areas of focus of the Poverty Reduction Strategy.

OVERVIEW OF THE POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY

Council adopted the Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) on November 25, 2021. This 10-year Strategy identifies the role of the City of Winnipeg in reducing poverty. The Strategy includes two Life Poles, and eight Goal Areas supported by a set of Objectives.

Life Poles

There are two areas where the most substantial investment and attention is needed for the City to make an impact in reducing poverty:

- Indigenous Children, Youth and Families
- Affordable Housing

Eight Goals for Poverty Reduction

- **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

Strategy Development and Implementation

Stakeholder engagement took place to develop the Strategy and inform the first phase of implementation. Using a co-creation model, the PRS team worked with community partners, people with lived experience of poverty, and representatives from various departments across the City to develop the Strategy and an initial implementation plan with actions within existing resources to kick-start the City's poverty reduction work. Ensuring the inclusion of lived experience voices in the development and on-going implementation of the Strategy is particularly important, since it ensures that those most impacted by poverty are meaningfully included in the City's poverty reduction work.

This collaborative approach involved two working group structures that met regularly during the development of the PRS Strategy: the PRS Core Working Team (15 members) and the PRS Interdepartmental Working Group (25+ members). These groups continue to meet regularly to provide ongoing guidance throughout implementation.

Poverty is complex and reducing poverty requires broad support and involvement from all sectors. Each internal and external champion plays a vital role in advancing the PRS Goals.

Alignment with Budget Cycle: Since the Poverty Reduction Strategy was adopted during the development of the 2020-2023 multi-year budget, a shorter timeframe of 18-months was used for the initial Plan. Subsequent plans are longer and will align with the multi-year budget cycle; 2024-2027, and 2028-2031.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN 2021-2023 FINAL REPORT

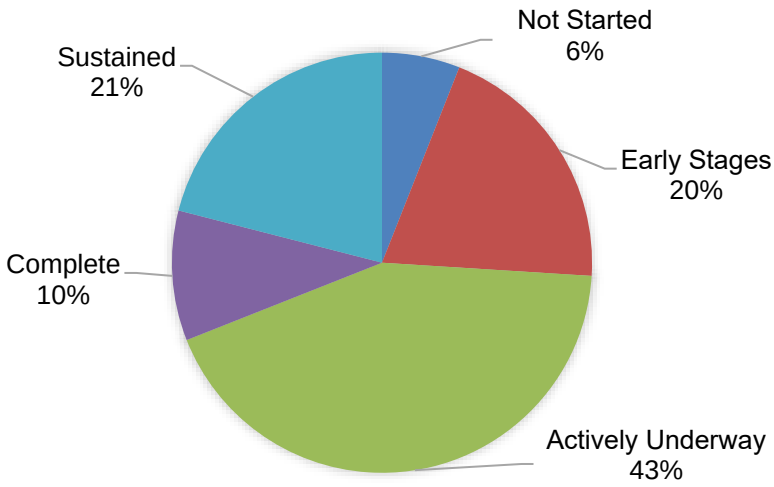
The Poverty Reduction Strategy Implementation Plan 2021-2023 was the initial 18-month plan that was tabled during the adoption of the PRS in late 2021. The plan had 80 Actions, each

working to advance the PRS Goals or Life Poles. More than a dozen departments across the City were involved in leading and delivering these Actions, with overall coordination provided by the Poverty Reduction Strategy Team in the Community Development Division of the Community Services Department.

Status of Actions

As per Recommendation 1, the Poverty Reduction Strategy Implementation Plan 2021-2023 Final Report, a status update on the initial implementation plan, can be found in **Appendix 1**. Of the 80 actions, eight (8) were completed and 17 are sustained. (See Graph 1 for the percentage of actions Not Started, Early Stages, Actively Underway, Complete or Sustained)

GRAPH 1: FINAL STATUS OF ACTIONS



Highlights and Successes 2021-2023

The City made progress on several actions in the initial PRS Implementation Plan 2021-2023. Below is a list of some of the actions led by various departments that have been meaningfully implemented via the PRS (see Appendix 1 for details):

- 1.2 Voter Engagement to Increase Participation
- 2.1 Affordable Housing Strategy – Parking Requirements
- 3.1 Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy
- 3.6 In-house WFPS Training to Diversify Recruits
- 3.8 Living Wage for all City Employees
- 4.1 Access to Drinking Water
- 4.3 Community Connections Space at Millennium Library
- 6.2 Recreation Fee Subsidy Program through Third Party Referrals
- 7.1 Support for Indigenous land-based education programs

Additionally, progress on other projects that were directly related to PRS Goals and Objectives, were also achieved due to additional funding support both from the City and other levels of government. Examples include the development and operations of the permanent public washroom, Amoowigamig, and progress on housing initiatives due to increased staff capacity for housing programs in Planning, Property and Development and Indigenous Relations Division, in part through leveraged federal and provincial funds (see section “Approaches to Advance PRS Goals Over the Next Four Years” for more details).

Challenges
While the City has made a concerted effort to move forward key actions in the initial 18-month PRS Implementation Plan, the Public Service and community partners involved with the PRS identified several challenges throughout this phase where enhanced focus and resources will be required to improve progress as the implementation of the Strategy goes forward. **Appendix 1** summarizes the progress of the PRS Implementation Plan 2021-2023, as well as highlights, challenges and input from community partners with lived experience of poverty.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN 2024-2027

As per Recommendation 2, the Winnipeg Poverty Reduction Strategy Implementation Plan 2024-2027 is included as **Appendix 2.**

The Implementation Plan 2024-2027 has 35 Initiatives and 103 Actions. While some actions can be achieved within existing resources, many require new staffing, and operating resources to be undertaken, which are outlined in Recommendation 3.

Actions in the Implementation Plan 2024-2027 are directly aligned with the PRS Goals and Objectives. Actions are balanced to both provide enhanced support and services to people who are currently living in poverty, and to take steps to long-term change to reduce poverty overall.

Plan Development
A co-creation and collaborative approach continued throughout strategy implementation, and the development of the next phase of implementation. Both the Core Working Team and Interdepartmental Working Group were involved in strategic planning and drafting actions for the next implementation plan.

Stakeholder engagement was conducted in December 2022 to identify emerging issues or trends as the Public Service began planning for the next phase of implementation. Through conversations with key stakeholders and partners, the following priorities were identified over the next four years:

- Affordable Housing (Life Pole)
- Indigenous Children, Family and Youth (Life Pole)
- Food security
- Transportation (as a key connection to food and employment)
- Culture of Caring and Systems Change

These areas became the focus for drafting initiatives and actions for the next four-years and helped identify where additional resources were needed. A full summary of what was heard during Phase 1 Stakeholder Engagement can be found in **Appendix 5.**

A second phase of stakeholder engagement is planned for fall 2023 to provide information to stakeholders on the next phase of implementation and explore further opportunities for collaboration.

Implementation Plan Overview
The Implementation Plan is organized by Goal area, with larger thematic Initiatives that align with the 10-year Objectives. Each Initiative includes a set of interconnected and related Actions that will be led by City departments. See an example below, from Goal 1: Equity and a Culture

of Caring are Demonstrated through Strategy Implementation and Systems Change. This is Initiative 1.1 Poverty Reduction Strategy Implementation and Alignment, with Actions: 1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.3, and 1.1.4.

Goal 1: Equity and a Culture of Caring are Demonstrated through Implementation & Systems Change

Initiative 1.1. Poverty Reduction Strategy Implementation and Alignment			
Actions		**Lead**	**Status**
1	Poverty Reduction lens is considered in project, program, and services development, and administrative reports.	CAO	In progress
2	Reflect spending on Equity and Poverty Reduction in budget reporting, by demonstrating alignment with poverty reduction annual and multi-year budgets, as a dollar figure and percentage of departmental budgets.	FIN	In progress *(Action 1.6)*
3	Report to Council on progress and impacts of the Poverty Reduction Strategy.	CAO	In progress
4	Further develop and explore the Indigenous Children, Youth and Families life pole to better inform implementation of the Strategy, such as developing additional objectives or a document to supplement the Strategy.	IRD	New
Departments Involved CAO, FIN, IRD, WPB, All departments	**Resources** New Poverty Reduction Strategy Coordinator FTE (in CMS)	**Supported Objectives** Goal 1: Objectives B, C, E	

Each Action also includes an action Status, either ‘In progress’ or ‘New’. New actions are new approaches, services, or programs for the Public Service. ‘In progress’ actions are building off work that is already underway; if carried over from the initial Implementation Plan, the previous action number is included from Implementation Plan 2021-2023.

Implementation Plan Highlights

The plan aims to balance initiatives that have direct and indirect impacts for people living in poverty. Some work towards long-term systems change to reduce poverty over time, and some seek to directly support people living in poverty in a more immediate way.

Below are highlights of direct impacts that Initiatives from the new proposed four-year implementation plan will have on the day-to-day lives of people living in poverty:

- **More Affordable Housing:** Initiative 2.2 Fast Track affordable housing – facilitate the development of vacant land, vacant buildings, and transitional and supportive housing.
- **Access to employment:** Initiative 3.1 Job Readiness Programming – providing enhanced supports during recruitment, including expanded community-based recruitment.
- **Access to water and washrooms:** Initiative 4.4 Access to Services for Basic Needs to provide residents with more access to clean drinking water and public washrooms.
- **More Affordable Transit:** Initiative 5.2 Transit programs for Indigenous children, youth and families: work with community partners to develop and implement the Transit Pass

Pilot for Youth Aging Out of Care and roll-out the Transit Fare Pilot for At-Risk Indigenous Women & Gender Diverse Peoples.
- **Health and wellbeing supplies:** Initiative 6.2 Holistic Programs and Operations of City facilities: providing health and wellbeing supplies and menstrual products.
- **Community-based Safety at Libraries:** Initiative 8.1 Community-Based Safety at Winnipeg Public Libraries, which includes ongoing operations of the Community Connections Space at Millennium Library.

Approaches to Advance PRS Goals Over the Next Four Years

There are a number of approaches that the City is taking to advance poverty reduction over the next phase of implementation and work towards the Strategy Goals and Objectives:

- Building Blocks: Concept to Delivery
- Poverty Reduction Through Related Strategies
- Partnerships and Funding Opportunities

Building Blocks: Projects from Concept to Delivery

In the initial 18-month PRS Implementation Plan 2021-2023, several actions were related to preliminary or exploratory phases of projects, such as developing concepts or examining feasibility. In this next four-year implementation plan, actions will be brought into the next phase, where the Public Service will begin delivery and implementation of new programs or approaches to services with the goal of achieving tangible, positive benefits for those living in poverty.

One example of this is water fountains in City parks. The first Implementation Plan explored drinking fountains in core area Parks; Parks and Open Space Division in Public Works identified potential locations and budget requirements (Action 4.2). In the next implementation plan, the Public Service will build off this work and install water fountains or filling stations in parks in areas of high poverty, with a goal of 15 new water fountains and stations by 2029 (Action 4.4.2).

Another example is the Freight House community project. During the first implementation plan, the Public Service began a process to explore an alternative method of operations of the facilities within the Freight House, leveraging provincial funds to secure the necessary resources to conduct a study and a planning process (Action 6.6). The next implementation plan builds off this preliminary work and will follow-through on the study and planning (Action 6.2.1).

Advancing PRS Though Other City Strategies

Since the adoption of the Poverty Reduction Strategy, a number of other connected Strategies and Policies have been approved by Council that play a significant role in advancing specific PRS Goals. Some of these Strategies are well underway and others are still in development.

Some actions or projects related to the Poverty Reduction Strategy have advanced through other City reports and pathways:

- Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy – adopted by Council on September 29, 2021.
- Social Procurement Framework; Sustainable Procurement Strategy & Action Plan – adopted by Council on July 21, 2022.
- Winnipeg Transit Master Plan (WTMP) – adopted by Council on April 29, 2021.
- Forthcoming plans with strong PRS alignment, for Council consideration and approval:
    - Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and Two-Spirited Peoples (MMIWG2S+) Action Plan
    - CentrePlan 2050
    - Transportation Master Plan 2050

- Community Safety, Well-being and Crime Prevention Action Plan
- Accessibility Plan
- GCWCC Plan 2045

Partnerships and Funding Opportunities

Other opportunities have also presented themselves through partnerships and funding for projects directly connected to PRS goal areas related to Affordable Housing, Community Well-Being, Community Safety, and Accessible and Equitable City Services.

- **Affordable Housing:** The City is working closely with the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) and the Province of Manitoba, to drive forward the City's work to facilitate Affordable Housing.
  - **Rapid Housing Initiative (RHI):** This includes three rounds of funding from the CMHC beginning in October 2020 totaling around $37 million of RHI funds to support the creation of 157 units of housing, as well as partnerships with Manitoba Housing to provide operating grants to several of the funded projects. The most recent round of funding, RHI Round 3 supported 4 projects: MMF's Mazoun Infinity House of Hope at 292-298 Edison Street ($5.8M), Wahbung Abinoonjiiag's project ($1.3M), the University of Winnipeg Community Renewal Corporation 2.0 project at 454 Edmonton Street ($6.1M), and Spence Neighbourhood Association project at 466 Sherbrook Street ($1.8M).
  - **Federal Housing Accelerator Fund**: The City applied for $192 million through the Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) which, if successful, will add resource capacity and operating funds to deliver HAF action items targeted at developing new housing and affordable housing over the next three years (Council Meeting July 13, 2023).

- **Public Washroom:** In 2022 and 2023 the City partnered with Ma Mawa Wi Chi Itata to operate the City's newest public washroom, Amoowigamig, using a trauma-informed, culturally safe and harm reduction approach. Through this partnership new funding opportunities with the Winnipeg Foundation to support washroom operations have become available, based on funds referred to the 2024-2027 multi-year budget.

- **Building Safer Communities:** Another successful funding opportunity is the recent federal funding the City has leveraged to help advance PRS Goal Area 8: Equity in Community Safety is Increased through Collaboration. The City of Winnipeg and Public Safety Canada are partnering to deliver the Building Safer Communities Fund (BSCF), supporting community-based prevention and intervention initiatives to reduce gun and gang violence in Winnipeg. Up to $4 million will be distributed to Winnipeg-based community initiatives over the next three years.

- **Equitable services:** The City was successful in leveraging provincial funds through the Building Sustainable Communities Program for a feasibility study of the Freight House facility in Centennial Neighborhood to enhance equity of services in this area of higher poverty.

RESOURCE REQUESTS

As per Recommendation 3, while some of the actions in the PRS Implementation Plan can be achieved within existing resources, several of the proposed actions require resourcing, including additional staffing capacity and/or operating funds, to be able to meaningfully move forward.

Actions requiring additional resources are outlined in **Appendix 3** and the rationale for each resource request is listed below by department.

Community Services

Project Coordination: For overall coordination of the Strategy, two full-time equivalent (FTEs) are required in Community Services. These positions will project manage, coordinate, and facilitate implementation and operations of the Poverty Reduction Strategy by the Public Service (see Initiatives 1.1 and 1.3). This will include leadership and interdepartmental coordination and support, enhanced engagement and collaboration with key community partners, and on-going monitoring, evaluation, and reporting on the PRS. Currently no FTEs are dedicated to the PRS.

The project team will also work to advance a number of key PRS actions, many which require additional operating funds to move forward. This includes:

- Overseeing the development and implementation of an Equity Tool (1.2.1).
- Organizing activities, including training and events, to build awareness about poverty and homelessness within the Public Service and more broadly for Winnipegger's (1.6.1).
- Leading the Freight House community project, for which the City leveraged provincial funds in 2023 and 2024 to initiate a study, which may require funding in 2025 and 2026 to implement findings (6.2.1).
- Ensuring the voices of those with lived experience of poverty are engaged and valued by providing honorariums for their expertise and input (1.5).

In addition, operating funds are requested in Community Services to support the Non-Emergent Encampment Support process, support Indigenous Children, Youth and Families with enhanced Indigenous cultural programming and land-based learning, as well as resources to support the purchase and distribution of Health and Well Being Supplies through City facilities, including Recreation Centres, Pools and Libraries, with a focus on equipping facilities in areas of high poverty. These supplies assist residents to meet their basic needs and can be used as a tool to build relationships and de-escalate challenging situations. Supplies may include water, coffee, snacks/nutrition and hygiene supplies.

Explore Continuation of Mobile Outreach Support Services (MOSS) Grant Program: The MOSS program was established to offer funding to one or more community-based organizations to provide mobile outreach support services to individuals who are unsheltered or are living in encampments. Pilot funding for this program was provided in 2021 and in the City's 2022 budget update, Council approved $550,000 per year in 2022 and 2023 to support the continuation of mobile outreach services. Funding was provided to three (3) community organizations, referred to as 'Outreach Service Providers' (OSP) – Main Street Project, St. Boniface Street Links and Resource Assistance for Youth (RAY). OSP's receive referrals via 311, WFPS and other City departments and deploy outreach vans to provide direct and immediate support to unsheltered residents across the City. The City is currently in discussions with the new Provincial government to explore how to collaborate to address homelessness. Funding for this program may be considered as part of the dialogue.

There continues to be a need for trauma-informed and people-centered support for unsheltered residents, including those living in encampments. This report is requesting $650,000 annually to continue funding this community well-being program starting in 2024, an increase of $100,000 in response to increased costs experienced by service providers due to the high demand and use of the services, as well as the costs of inflation impacting fuel, food and supplies that agencies will be incurring over the next 4 years.

Assets & Project Management (Universal Design Office)

Accessibility and Universal Design: Given the strong intersection between disability and poverty, the implementation of the Strategy requires an accessibility lens and a commitment to the City's Universal Design Policy and Accessible Design Standard. This is needed to ensure that new housing and the facilities and services available within them, all public spaces, and transportation system improvements are responsive to the needs of all who are intended to benefit from the work undertaken under this strategy.

Several Initiatives within the Implementation Plan identify the application of an accessibility lens and equity lens. Additional staff capacity is needed to support all departments in a broad range of projects to integrate Accessible and Universal Design in a meaningful way in City services and facilities, with one (1) new Accessibility and Universal Design Planner FTE, and resources to complete accessibility audits of civic facilities where the public accesses City services and those facilities that house employees (Initiatives 3.4 and 6.5).

Equity Office

Employment Liaison: There is a strong connection between employment, income and poverty. As a large organization, employing over ten thousand people, the City has an important role to play in reducing poverty through gainful employment. With the goal of enhancing employment equity at the City, the Equity Office is seeking a new permanent FTE Employment Liaison to provide job preparedness supports, build partnerships with community stakeholders and rightsholders, dismantle systemic barriers and allocate resources to remove barriers to applicants living in poverty. This position will also help to facilitate focused hiring events, in collaboration with other Departments, and coordinate certifications offered in-house, free of charge, to reduce financial barriers to low-income applicants seeking employment opportunities with the City of Winnipeg.

Human Resource Services (HRS)

Front-Line Staff Training and Employment Systems Review: City staff from many departments including, but not limited to Public Works, Community Services, Transit and the WFPS often interact with low-income, vulnerable or unsheltered individuals in their daily work. This is particularly true for City staff whose work takes place in areas of high poverty. Many staff do not feel equipped to engage with higher needs residents living in poverty, as they do not have the tools or training needed to feel comfortable in these interactions. In some cases, this is due to bias or assumptions that can lead to prejudice. In other cases, it is a lack of exposure or understanding about the realities of those living in poverty that creates discomfort. And in other situations, there are safety concerns.

Building awareness about poverty, as well as providing staff with specialized training to support people living in poverty when they interact with them on the job, is a key part of creating a trauma-informed, people centered and compassionate Public Service. Funding is required to hire trainers with the unique knowledge and skills to educate the City workforce in the areas of trauma-informed care, de-escalation, working with people who live in poverty, harm reduction and MMIWG2S+. Some funds will be used to deliver specific training on MMIWG2S+ to Transit drivers, other funds will support broader training opportunities on poverty related issues for front line and public-facing employees from across the organization.

HRS will also use additional resources for consulting to begin an Employment Systems Review to identify systemic barriers and recommended improvements, with the goal of creating more equitable HR policies and practices.

Indigenous Relations Division (IRD)

Indigenous Focused Supports & Programming: Resources are needed to strengthen the Indigenous Children, Youth and Families Life Pole (see Initiative 1.1) and expand related programming to support vulnerable Indigenous groups. Programming areas include Homelessness Prevention to provide supports to Indigenous people coming off-reserve, exiting the justice system, and Indigenous youth aging out of care of Child and Family Services (see Initiative 4.1) & Indigenous Land-Based Programming to provide Indigenous youth with opportunities for cultural experiences and knowledge (see Initiative 6.1).

Winnipeg Transit

Transit Program Coordinator: The one (1) new FTE Transit Program Coordinator requested through this report will be part of the Transit Client Services Division and will be a dedicated Winnipeg Transit resources to implement the Poverty Reduction Strategy. This includes further developing and implementing poverty reduction projects linked to the Life Pole of Indigenous Children, Youth and Families (see Initiative 5.2), which will directly support youth aging out of care and Indigenous women and gender-diverse peoples through grant programs to community agencies. This position will also work to enhance the Transit Travel Trainer Program, lead initiatives that will promote and create greater access to the WINNpass, including the roll out of the WINNpass Third Party Referral Program and explore options to provide more deeply affordable transit (Initiative 5.3).

Grants for free Transit: Affordable transit is one of the biggest levers that the City has to decrease poverty and address other related issues such as food insecurity, as well as Integration of transportation and supporting infrastructure as a component of successful housing. Reduced fares, and in some cases free fares, will allow low-income residents to use limited funds on basic needs such as housing and food. It will also enable these residents to travel to health and social service appointments, and access training or employment opportunities. Additional grant funds are requested to implement projects linked to the Life Pole of Indigenous Children, Youth and Families (see Initiative 5.2), which will directly support youth aging out of care and Indigenous women and gender-diverse peoples through access to free transportation.

Winnipeg Fire Paramedic Service (WFPS)

Fire Prevention in Encampments: A dedicated Community Liaison FTE and operating funds for the Community Risk Reduction program are required to support a specialized fire prevention outreach model that was developed by WFPS (see Initiatives 4.2 and 4.3) connected to Goal 4: Community Well-being Supports for those in Greatest Need are Increased. This model provides hands-on fire safety and risk reduction education to unsheltered residents, including those living in encampments. WFPS staff visit encampments directly and provide supplies such as burn barrels, carbon monoxide detectors and naloxone kits to encampment residents, while addressing concerns related to garbage or flammable materials, with the goal of reducing the risk of fire in these spaces. The WFPS staff who was seconded to this initiative built strong relationships with encampment residents and community service providers and collaborated with other City departments involved with encampments (i.e. Public Works, WPS, Community Services).

NEXT STEPS

Over the next four years, the Public Service, in collaboration with many community and government partners, will work to implement the actions outlined in the PRS Implementation Plan 2024-2027, while also looking for other opportunities to further the Goals and Objectives of the Strategy.

As part of the report back in Spring 2027, as per **Recommendation 4,** the PRS Project team will bring forward the final four-year implementation plan of the 10-year PRS, to align with the 2028-2031 multi-year budget, after which time the full Poverty Reduction Strategy can be reviewed and renewed.

Evaluation and monitoring of the Strategy will also be undertaken going forward through consistent reporting on the implementation plan impacts and progress. Goal 1, Objective E of the PRS includes a commitment that the Strategy and Implementation Plans are monitored, evaluated and updated on a regular basis to ensure progress is being made. This will be achieved through various means, including the ongoing work of the Core Working Team and Interdepartmental Working Group, as well as through the Strategic Priorities Action Plan, specifically the proposed SPAP annual reports to Council. Finally, a midterm evaluation of the overall 10-year Poverty Reduction Strategy is recommended to accompany the report back in Spring 2027. Throughout all evaluations of the PRS, the use of collaborative approaches and shared wisdom, and inclusion of lived experience voices will remain a priority.

Requested Changes

At a Reports Briefing on October 23, 2023, an earlier draft of this administrative report was reviewed by members of the Executive Policy Committee and the following revisions were requested:

- Add language with respect to dialogue with the province re: funding for the mobile outreach program.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Financial Impact Statement

Date: October 16, 2023

Project Name:

Poverty Reduction Strategy: Status Update and Implementation Plan 2024-2027

First Year of Program **2024**

	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
Capital					
Capital Expenditures Required	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Less: Existing Budgeted Costs	-	-	-	-	-
Additional Capital Budget Required	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Funding Sources:					
Debt - Internal	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Debt - External	-	-	-	-	-
Grants (Enter Description Here)	-	-	-	-	-
Reserves, Equity, Surplus	-	-	-	-	-
Other - Enter Description Here	-	-	-	-	-
Total Funding	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Total Additional Capital Budget Required	$ -				
Total Additional Debt Required	$ -				
Current Expenditures/Revenues					
Direct Costs	$ 1,449,500	$ 1,894,000	$ 1,844,500	$ 1,795,000	$ 1,810,000
Less: Incremental Revenue/Recovery	-	-	-	-	-
Net Cost/(Benefit)	$ 1,449,500	$ 1,894,000	$ 1,844,500	$ 1,795,000	$ 1,810,000
Less: Existing Budget Amounts	-	-	-	-	-
Net Budget Adjustment Required	$ 1,449,500	$ 1,894,000	$ 1,844,500	$ 1,795,000	$ 1,810,000

Additional Comments:

Direct costs include the City-wide staffing and operating expenditure requirements to move forward the four-year Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) Implementation Plan 2024-2027.

An incremental six full-time equivalent (FTE) positions and additional operating expenditures totalling the amount of $1.449 million in 2024; $1.894 million in 2025; $1.844 million in 2026; $1.795 million in 2027 increase for collective agreements each year thereafter be referred to the 2024-2027 budget process.

A fulsome detail analysis of the annual resource requirements across City departments is outline in Appendix 3 of the report.

Ozzy Garrett - October 16, 2023

Ozzy Garrett CPA, CGA - Manager of Finance
Community Services Department

CONSULTATION

This Report has been prepared in consultation with the departments listed below:

- Assessment & Taxation
- Assets & Project Management
- Chief Administrative Office
- City Clerk's Office
- Corporate Finance
- Community Services Department
- Customer Service & Communications
- Equity Office
- Human Resource Services
- Innovation & Technology Services
- Legal Services
- Planning, Property & Development
- Public Works
- Water & Waste
- Winnipeg Fire Paramedic Service
- Winnipeg Police Service
- Winnipeg Transit

The following external stakeholders were also consulted in drafting the report and attached Implementation Plan 2024-2027 through the PRS Core Working Team:

- Canadian Community Economic Development Network
- Fearless R2W
- Make Poverty History Manitoba
- Poverty Awareness and Community Action
- Rossbrook House
- United Way Winnipeg
- Winnipeg Indigenous Executive Circle
- Lived Experienced Advisors

For a full list of external stakeholders that were engaged in the development of Implementation Plan 2024-2027 of the Poverty Reduction Strategy, please see **Appendix 5**: Phase 1 Stakeholder Engagement Summary.

OURWINNIPEG POLICY ALIGNMENT

OurWinnipeg 2045 integrates a poverty reduction lens throughout, including interconnected sustainable development goal outcomes and policies that contribute to poverty reduction and equity. The following highlight OurWinnipeg alignment with the Poverty Reduction Strategy:
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 policies 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.
- 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. WCAP includes multiple actions that address poverty reduction and equity through sustainability initiatives.

Both strategies aim to increase the resilience of our communities, as well as provide increased support to residents experiencing poverty related to the effects of climate change, such as during increased extreme weather events. In addition, with an increased focus on food security in the PRS, there is synergies with landfill diversion.

Some examples of strategic directions in the WCAP that demonstrate strong intersections with the PRS include:

- Increase to 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 (WCAP Strategic Opportunity 3)
- Increase energy performance of existing buildings (WCAP 5.1) which will decrease both greenhouse gases and energy costs
- Build Climate Equity through partnerships with key stakeholders such as neighbourhood associations, Building Urban Industries for Local Development (BUILD), and the Centre for Aboriginal Human Resource Development Inc. 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 7.1)

WINNIPEG POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY ALIGNMENT

This report is connected directly to all aspects of the Winnipeg Poverty Reduction Strategy.

SUBMITTED BY

Department: Community Services
Division: Community Development Division and Indigenous Relations Division
Prepared by: Noëlle DePape, Denae Penner, Aron Skworchinski
Date: October 16, 2023
File No: CMS-2023-5

Attachments:

- Appendix 1: Poverty Reduction Strategy Implementation Plan 2021-2023 Final Report
- Appendix 2: Poverty Reduction Strategy Implementation Plan 2024-2027
- Appendix 3: Resource Requests for the PRS Implementation Plan 2024-2027
- Appendix 4: Areas of Higher Poverty Map
- Appendix 5: PRS Phase 1 Stakeholder Engagement Summary