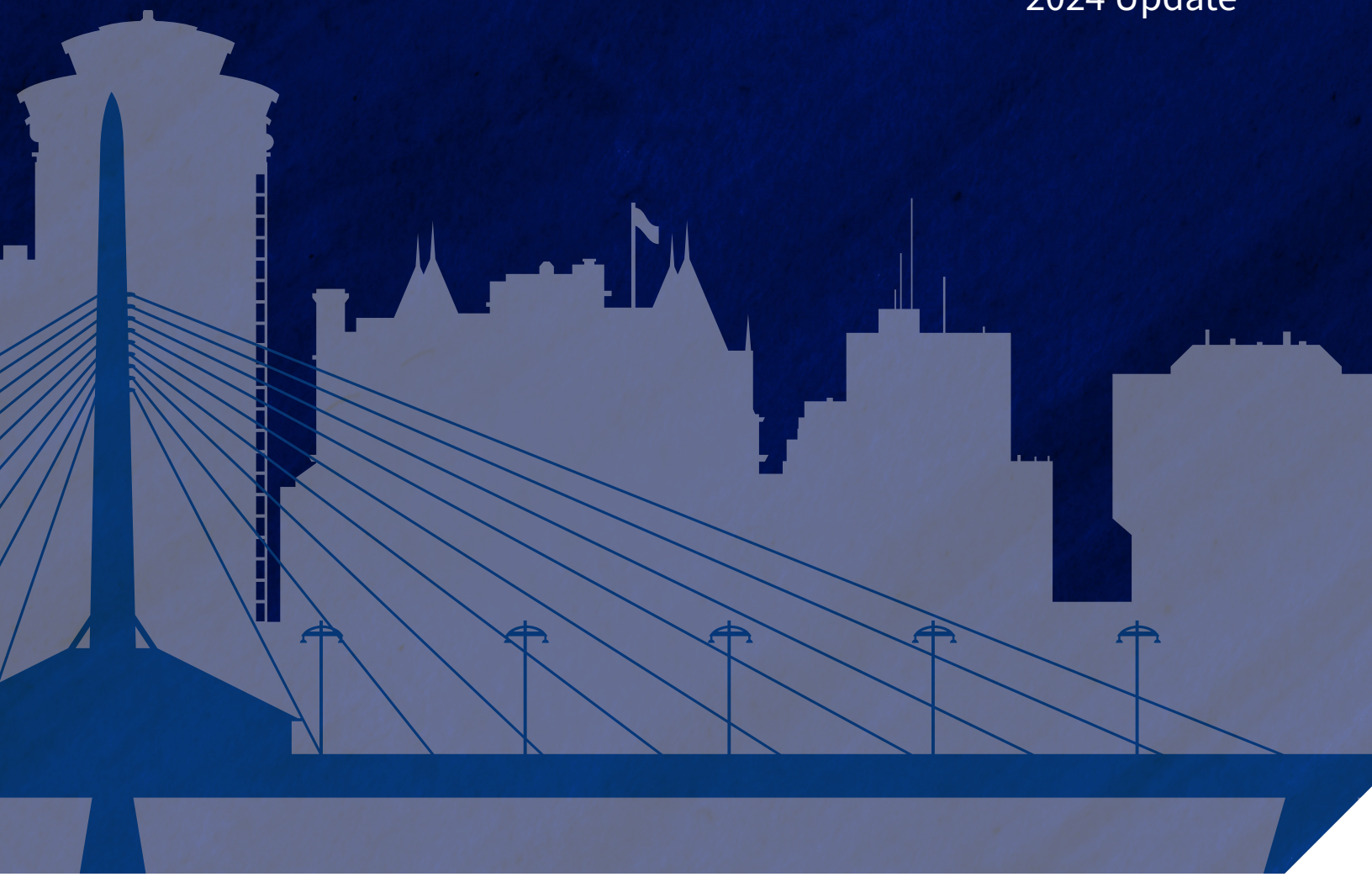
Winnipeg Police Board

Winnipeg Police Service

STRATEGIC PLAN 2020-2024

A Culture of Safety For All

2024 Update





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Our Vision

A CULTURE OF SAFETY *FOR ALL*

Our Mission

Build safe and healthy communities across Winnipeg through excellence in law enforcement, protection and crime prevention.

WHAT WE VALUE AND BELIEVE

WE VALUE:

Integrity

We act in an open, honest and trustworthy way in all of our interactions with each other and the public

Respect

We honour the diversity of individuals, showing understanding and acceptance for all people

Citizens and Communities

We conduct ourselves in a professional manner at all times, are above reproach and demonstrate pride and commitment to the people and communities we serve

Accountability

We make quality, ethical decisions that guide our individual and collective efforts and are responsible for our actions, use of resources and effectiveness

Courage

Whether serving on the streets or providing leadership and support, we will make tough decisions and take decisive actions to valiantly protect people and communities

WE BELIEVE:

- The safety and security of people, property and the community are a critical public interest
- In the rights of individuals and bias-free policing
- In the worth of each individual but in the reality that individuals and groups who engage in criminal behaviour must face the consequences and society must be protected from them
- Significant strides in preventing crime will happen when the risk factors of crime are appropriately addressed
- We must work collaboratively with the community and other justice, social services, health and community agencies who contribute time, resources and support, if we are to prevent crime in the long-term
- Our success depends upon the professionalism, innovation, skill and compassion of civilian and sworn members of the police service
- In the health, protection, well-being and professional development of our membership
- Effective governance is critical to ensuring accountability and effectiveness in the delivery of policing services

Winnipeg Police Board

OUR GOALS AND STRATEGIES

1. PROTECTION AND CRIME PREVENTION

- Promote road safety and driver responsibility
- Promote safety of downtown and other at risk neighbourhoods
- Prevent and disrupt gang and illicit drug activity

2. COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

- Promote communication, transparency and accountability
- Foster relationships, partnerships, understanding and trust to build confidence in police
- Referrals to restorative justice and diversion programming

3. EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT SERVICE

- Collaborate to reduce the demand for police response
- Explore innovative technologies
- Instill a culture of continuous improvement

4. HEALTHY ORGANIZATION

- Enhance training and professionalism in the Service
- Focus on employee safety, health and wellness





INTRODUCTION

The Winnipeg Police Board's (Board) five-year Strategic Plan (the Plan) guides important planning decisions for the Winnipeg Police Service (Service). The Plan is reviewed annually and informs the direction for the Service's Business Plan, which sets out the initiatives and actions that will be undertaken to support strategic goals established by the Board. A new Business Plan is adopted each year; this allows the Service to address emerging needs of the community. Quarterly reports set out the progress taken on the business actions.

The Plan outlines strategies and directions that are based on what the Board has heard from the people of Winnipeg regarding community needs, values, and expectations for public safety. The Business Plan reflects the actions police will take and includes more than 80 indicators to report to the public on performance. The documents assist the Board in fulfilling to provide civilian governance and oversight of the Service, and to evaluate the performance of the police chief.

This is the last year of the five-year plan (2020-2024), and considers the following information:

- Statutory duties of police officers – actions that the police are obliged to follow under the rule of law;
- Demand for service – includes calls for service from citizens and pro-active actions aimed at crime prevention or public safety response;
- Evidence/data about the environment that we live, work and play in – factors that are described in the Board's environmental scan;
- Public consultations and delegations to the Board;
- The City of Winnipeg 25-year development plan, 'Our Winnipeg 2045';
- The current City Council's strategic plan and its attendant action framework;
- The 2024 Winnipeg Police Service Citizen Survey information;
- The City of Winnipeg Citizen Survey (2023);
- Non-police strategies aimed at health and safety such as the City of Winnipeg Poverty Reduction Strategy, the United Way's 211 Manitoba Services, the Downtown Community Safety Partnership, Main Street Project, St. Boniface Street Links and others;
- Opportunities for multidisciplinary responses to police calls for service, such as the Alternative Response to Citizens in Crisis (ARCC) initiative;
- Quarterly and ad hoc reports on strategic/business targets, risks and opportunities and the policing budget; and
- Research and jurisdictional information on promising and best practices in police governance through the Canadian Association of Police Governance network (CAPG).

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Role of the Board

Provide civilian governance of the Service by:

- Receiving training and support to understand the demands on policing and the resources required to deliver adequate and effective policing
- Ensuring that community needs, values and expectations are reflected in the strategic plan through ongoing communication and consultation with residents and community groups
- Setting the strategic priorities for the Service
- Recommending estimates and then allocating the Council-approved policing budget
- Recruiting the police chief and evaluating their performance
- Receiving reports on how the priorities are supported and the progress toward the vision of a culture of safety for all

The Role of the Chief

Provide executive leadership to the Service by:

- Leading the effective management, administration and operation of the Service
- Implementing the strategic priorities through an annual Business Plan
- Demonstrating public accountability by providing the Board with quarterly and ad hoc reports on targets and measures that are in the annual Business Plan
- Reporting to the Board throughout the year on budgets, emerging issues, innovation, major risks, and critical incidents
- Stewardship of financial and human resources

The Role of the Service

Provide policing services to the citizens of Winnipeg through:

- Professional commitment to a culture of safety for all through a positive bias free approach in its dealings and recognition of the rights of all individuals
- Education, crime prevention, protection, intervention, enforcement and investigation

The Role of the Citizens of Winnipeg

Promote and support a culture of safety for all by:

- Being partners in your community
- Reporting crime – see it, say it
- Respecting and valuing policing services

WHAT DID WE HEAR?

People can connect with the Board by attending public meetings (in person or virtually), visiting the Board's website, participating in surveys, phoning, or sending emails or letters about issues within the Board's jurisdiction.

The 2024 update is based on current information from the latest WPS Citizen Survey data (2024), and input from the public. 2024 marks the end of the Board's second five-year plan (2020-2024). The Board met with the Police Accountability Coalition, Retail Council of Canada and representatives of the Winnipeg Police Association. The Downtown Community Safety Partnership hosted a walk with Board members so that they could have a first-hand look at what the partnerships between police and service providers can result in. The Board wants to highlight partnerships that exist in the community and how these partnerships contribute to public safety.

The Service has been working to educate and train staff on issues related to systemic racism and bias and on trauma informed, culturally sensitive approaches to contact with citizens. The 2024 WPS Citizen Survey showed that fair and respectful policing remains critically important. Concerted efforts to make connections throughout the community that contribute to safety and well-being will continue

Public safety is a concern for everyone in Winnipeg. The community is worried about the increase in violence, particularly downtown safety interventions and revitalization, property crime education and prevention as well as gun suppression. Safety tips, crime statistics, and Service events are shared through media releases and social media which allows the information to reach more people. Building strong partnerships and positive relationships are key to finding lasting solutions to increase trust and confidence in the police.

The public expects the police service to be professional and well-trained and to support that, staff need a workplace that supports them. Service members need to trust that they will be taken care of and that their well-being is a hall mark of community values. There is a shared responsibility to care for the well-being of first responders so that they can provide high-quality services. The Board receives updates on what is being accomplished to address the concerns raised by members of the Service, both sworn and civilian, in the 2021 WPS Mental Health and Workplace Culture Survey. Members face many challenges and it is important to have the training necessary to deliver effective services. The Board is dedicated to supporting changes that lead to a healthy organization.

Everyone has the right to be treated fairly. Equitable, non-discriminatory, and accessible complaint processes are essential for accountability and public trust. The Board has heard that the public expects accountability and transparency. The Board's expectations are outlined in its Bias-Free Policing Policy and reported on in the WPS Professional Standards Report. The Service reports on complaints made to the Professional Standards Unit, including whether or not the complaint was substantiated. The Service also provides reports on community, restorative justice programs, public education, training, budgets, projects, what people think about policing and safety, and how much citizens trust and have confidence in the police.

WHAT DO WE KNOW?

Demand and Expectations

The demand for services is a factor in the establishment of the current strategic objectives. In 2023, there were 783,003 calls for public safety services (police, fire and paramedic).

Policing often involves responding to situations where a person feels unsafe. How the police respond depends on how serious the situation is. The alarming increase in violence has created a deepening concern for public safety and the underlying social systems that contribute to a healthy, vibrant community. The challenges faced by the Service in managing and responding to the demand are also greater.

New ways to use technology are improving how the police provide services. A report from the Bloomberg Harvard City Leadership Initiative in 2019 found that many 911 calls are about issues that are not considered emergencies. In 2023, there were 21,206 calls asking for well-being checks on individuals (these calls can include checking on people in crisis, dealing with addictions-related issues or where loved ones are concerned about their health.)

The Alternative Response to Citizens in Crisis (ARCC) program, which created two-person response teams to help those experiencing mental health crisis, has been successful. The Board would like to see the program expanded and its effectiveness continue to be evaluated. Police must respond to issues that affect public safety and there are ongoing discussions with all levels of government to increase the impact of programs that have proven to be helpful such as the Downtown Community Safety Partnership and the ARCC program.

The Board believes that meaningful partnerships contribute to healthier communities and the prevention of crime. In order to make the most of partnerships, the Board would like to hear more from the community on what they believe is most effective. The Service will continue to connect people to services that increase public safety by dealing with health issues and supporting wellness when needed. The Board acknowledges the importance of learning from current programming while planning for its future growth.

External Accountability

The Board receives an annual report from the Service on the frequency and degree of use of force. The report is shared on the City of Winnipeg Decision Making Information System (DMIS). There are rules in place to make sure the police use force correctly and that they are accountable for their actions. The Service complies with important oversight laws and structures that include the *Criminal Code of Canada* and *The Police Services Act – Manitoba*, the Professional Standards Unit, Manitoba's Law Enforcement Review Agency, and the Independent Investigation Unit of Manitoba (IIU).

The Board receives reporting on the actions that the Chief of Police is taking to support a healthy organization. This includes training and sharing information about professional development initiatives. Complaints related to bias are reported annually in the Bias-Free Policing Report. The Service follows the standards set by the Commission for Accreditation of Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) and supports the work to create policing standards for the Province of Manitoba.

Communication

The police connect with the public on social media sites and regularly share updates, news, and items of interest with the public. Platforms like Facebook, YouTube, and Substack are used to share articles about different aspects of policing, including tools that are used, how work units are organized, stories from police officers, and history.

Live briefings on Facebook and YouTube, are streamed by the Public Information Office staff and the Chief of Police to share updates. The Service provides two online tools, a "Calls for Service Map" and "CrimeMaps" which give timely snapshots related to crime and safety in Winnipeg. The maps provide transparency by showing what kinds of issues the Service manages from week to week. https://www.winnipeg.ca/police/crime-prevention/crimemaps-calls-service-map

Policies and Procedures

The Board's Law Enforcement Accreditation Policy provides that the Service is to meet the standards set by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA). This program outlines and checks that the Service follows internationally accepted policing standards. The Service was re-accredited in November 2023 and routinely submits proofs of its compliance. The Board receives updates quarterly on the accreditation progress for recertification.

Fiscal

The Board, working with the Service, decides how to allocate the budget approved by City Council to provide adequate policing that meets the community's needs and expectations. City Council approved a multi-year budget (2020-2023) and is working on the next 4-year budget (2024-2027). The Board provides annual budget estimate recommendations to Council that aim to ensure that service delivery is stable and meeting expectations of the public for adequate and effective policing.

In the 2024 Winnipeg Police Service Citizen Survey, 38% of respondents felt that the police were underfunded, and 35% thought they were appropriately and adequately funded.

CURRENT EVENTS

An increase in reports of violent crime, consistently high rates of homicide, systemic racism, insufficient affordable housing, and economic insecurity are all part of the ongoing conversations about policing. Racialized and marginalized communities do not necessarily feel included in the public safety umbrella. Trust in established institutions, like the police, is still reported by some to be low, however, the recently released Leger survey on institutional confidence indicates that among government institutions police are the most trusted in Canada (73%). The Board understands that the community expects the police to provide professional, unbiased policing and to collaborate to inspire greater trust and confidence in public safety systems. The Board is focused on improving outcomes and continuing to work toward innovative, accountable service delivery that is inclusive and respects diversity.

WPS 2024 Citizen Survey Key Findings

The biennial WPS Citizen Survey (2024) was conducted by an independent agency and provided statistically valid data in regard to citizens' perspectives. The survey is comprehensive, addressing crime, safety, views of the Service itself, including public opinion on the funding currently provided by City Council to the Service.

For ease of reference, highlights of the 2024 survey are included below. The full survey results can be viewed on the Board's website.

Safety Perception

- 72% believe crime increased over the past year - virtually unchanged over the past three surveys
- 42% believe crime has increased in their neighbourhood as opposed to outside of their neighbourhood – meaning there is a belief that crime has increased elsewhere in the City – this result is unchanged over the past two surveys
- 91% feel safe/very safe walking in their own neighbourhood in the daytime
- 59% feel safe/very safe walking in their own neighbourhood at nighttime
- Property related crimes are reported to be the most serious problems. These include such things as breaking and entering, stealing property from vehicles, and vandalism, graffiti, or damage to property.

Downtown Safety

- 50% feel unsafe/very unsafe walking downtown alone in daytime
- 42% of females feel unsafe in daytime, compared to 57% of males
- 89% feel unsafe/very unsafe alone after dark

Traffic

- Photo radar approval rating is consistently high with support steadily increasing. Photo radar use in school zones has increased reaching the highest proportion to date in 2024 at 84%.
- 61% of respondents believe police should continue with current level of traffic enforcement and 27% believe that police enforcement should be stricter than in the past.

Right Size

- 50% indicated there are too few officers, 6% indicated there are too many and 33% considered that the current complement is about right

Funding

- 35% feel the Service is adequately funded, 38% under-funded, and 12% feel it's over funded

Quality

- 54% indicated the overall quality of policing is excellent or good. Of those that indicated good/ excellent, 71% were 55+ years old.
- Decline of 13% from 2005

Trustworthy

- 76% indicated the Services is moderately or completely trustworthy as a source of local public safety news.

Confidence

- There has been a steady decline in confidence in the Winnipeg Police Service, down from 81% in 2015 to 58% in 2024.

General Policing

- When asked about the importance of 12 police activities, Winnipeggers put the most emphasis on responding promptly to calls (91%). They put the least emphasis on concentrated effort on intoxicated persons, panhandlers, and graffiti artists (51%). Comparing to 2022, the biggest change was in ratings of the importance of community and diversity relations work, which declined from 69% to 63%.

EXTERNAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS

A host of factors, including growth and diversity of the city's population, funding and resource allocation, advancements in technology, and crime trends, influence the service delivered by police. The Board prepares an annual environmental scan to describe some of the conditions and issues that define the environment for policing in Winnipeg. The trends outlined in the Board's report are considered as strategic priorities are developed.

The most recent environmental scan can be found on the Board's website in the Board Publications. https://legacy.winnipeg.ca/clerks/boards/WpgPoliceBoard/pdfs/boardpublications/2023/2023-The-Environment-for-Policing-in-Winnipeg.pdf

REPORTING TO WINNIPEG

In an effort, to be accountable, the Board reports publicly to the citizens of Winnipeg and provides ways to hear from community members on values and expectations. The strategic plan is a fluid document and is reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that it continues to reflect what is important to Winnipeg residents. The Service provides a range of reports on standards, compliance with Board policies and public interaction, as well as statistical and financial reports to demonstrate its performance. The Board shares this information quarterly at its public meetings. At the request of the municipality the Board's strategic planning shall consider alignment with the City's Multi Year Balanced Budget. The Board will be developing the next five-year plan in consultation with Winnipeg citizens for 2025-2029.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The Chief of Police is accountable to the Board for implementing the strategic plan. The annual WPS Business Plan sets out the actions that the Service will take to implement the strategies, as well as metrics that are specific to each strategic direction. The Chief of Police provides the Board with quarterly reports on many aspects of policing. The Business Plan reports and the Chief's Reports provide updates on work that the Service is doing to move to a culture of safety for all. Updates are made to the annual WPS Business Plan that reflect developing issues as well as the long-term strategic goals. In 2023, managing public events, including protests, was included in the report as a result of a dramatic increase in such events.

GOALS

The Board has set the following strategic objectives for 2020- 2024:

- **1. Protection and Crime Prevention**
- **2. Community Partnerships**
- **3. Effective and Efficient Service**
- **4. Healthy Organization**

GOAL ONE | Protection and Crime Prevention

The City of Winnipeg and the Province of Manitoba have launched various initiatives to increase safety overall. Protection and crime prevention are key to the role of police in the community.

The police work on neighborhood issues as they arise or when patterns are identified. Information about safety concerns is shared with the public through CrimeMaps and Calls for Service Maps on the Service website as noted previously. There is ongoing support for promoting responsible driving and enforcing traffic safety. Partnerships on targeted campaigns, like “Just Slow Down” and “Don’t Drive High” will continue. The Board supports the idea of improving road safety equipment to better prevent violations and enforce rules.

The strategic directions for this goal are:

- Promote road safety and driver responsibility
- Promote safety of downtown and other vulnerable neighbourhoods
- Prevent and disrupt gang and illicit drug activity

GOAL TWO | Community Partnerships

Building partnerships, engaging with the community, and communicating are important tools to make our communities safer. By working with community leaders, positive results can be achieved in areas such as health, housing, food security, and poverty reduction, which are essential aspects of safety. The police are open to partnerships that improve service delivery and safety. The integration of the web of public safety is challenging and police are only one part of long-term solutions. The Service is committed to being inclusive and delivering policing without bias. The Service supports efforts to update how data is collected, to help police services better understand and build relationships with Indigenous and racialized community members.

The strategic directions for this goal are:

- Promote communication, transparency and accountability
- Foster relationships, partnerships, understanding and trust to build confidence in police
- Referrals to restorative justice and diversion programming



GOAL THREE | Effective and Efficient Service

To provide police services that match the needs of citizens, the police must adjust to changes in the environment. People know that safety isn't just about crime but also about health, economic security (having enough food and a place to live), and social supports. Working closely with all levels of government and the community to improve availability of services that meet the needs of people seeking help. Technology and laws are always evolving, and the police are expected to keep up with these changes to provide service. Body worn cameras are increasingly being used across Canada. It is believed that their implementation will make police officers more accountable and increase public confidence in police.

The strategic directions for this goal are:

- Collaborate to reduce the demand for police response
- Explore innovative technologies
- Instill a culture of continuous improvement

GOAL FOUR | Healthy Organization

Working in law enforcement is a tough job, and the well-being of the people working in this environment is important to maintain a healthy work culture and police service. The leaders of the Service are working with their members to make real changes in how the organization operates. The goal is to gain greater employee engagement, improve morale, and support members to deliver a professional and compassionate policing services. In early 2021, an independent survey was conducted on wellness and culture that resulted in recommendations to the Service's leadership and the unions. A workplan was developed and is in progress. The Board receives regular reports on the implementation of the recommendations.

The strategic directions for this goal are:

- Enhance training and professionalism in the Service
- Focus on employee safety, health and wellness

Winnipeg Police Board

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