Winnipeg

CentrePlan 2050

May 2024





Esplanade Riel and the Red River.

Vision, Mission and Values

VISION
A vibrant, healthy, and inclusive city for all Winnipeg residents and visitors.

MISSION
Achieve effective and efficient service delivery through a collaborative, engaged, and value-driven organizational culture.

VALUES
Accountability – as stewards of public assets and the work we do
Diversity – in who we are
Respect – for each individual person
Trust – with elected officials and the residents we serve
Transparency – in all we do

Land & Water Acknowledgement

Winnipeg is located in Treaty One Territory, the home and traditional lands of the Anishinaabe (Ojibwe), Ininew (Cree), and Dakota peoples, and in the National Homeland of the Red River Métis. Our drinking water comes from Shoal Lake 40 First Nation, in Treaty Three Territory.

The City of Winnipeg recognizes the importance of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples (also referenced in this Report as Indigenous Peoples and governments) connected to Winnipeg's history, and the vibrant, diverse people who make up Indigenous communities today.

The City acknowledges the harms and mistakes of the past, and is dedicated to upholding Indigenous rights, and to moving forward in partnership with Indigenous communities in a spirit of truth, reconciliation and collaboration.

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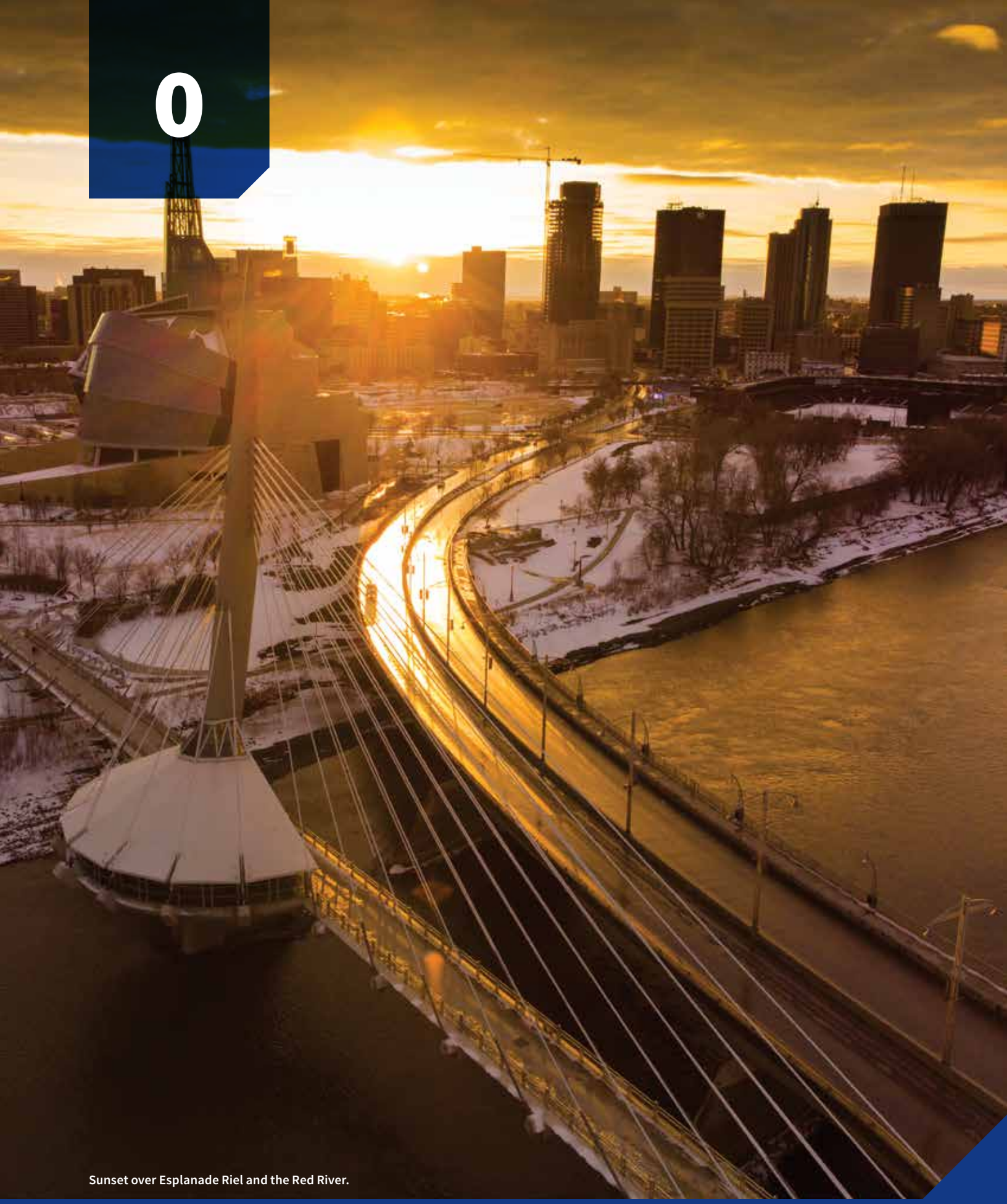


Sunset over Esplanade Riel and the Red River.

0

Introduction

0 Introduction

Winnipeg's Downtown is the city's heartbeat. It is the place where Winnipeggers gather to celebrate their cultures, creativity, and pride. Downtown captures the essence of what Winnipeg is, and what it can be, for residents, visitors, and investors. Winnipeg's past and present are rooted in Downtown; it is our future, and it is worth attention and investment.

To attract the businesses and services that are needed Downtown, and to make Downtown into a complete community where people can live and access all their daily needs, we need to make sure more people are Downtown for more hours of the day. We deserve a Downtown that has the investments it needs to be interesting, innovative, fun, easy to get to, and easy to get around.

0.1 Purpose of the plan

CentrePlan 2050 (the Plan) is a statutory secondary plan bylaw that sets out strategic moves to create the resilient and thriving Downtown that we deserve. The Plan spans different Downtown neighbourhoods and City Departments to help fulfil the City's corporate mission "to be a vibrant and healthy City which places its highest priority on quality of life for all its citizens". This document will help city-builders, decision-makers, investors, and residents understand and realize opportunities for Winnipeg's Downtown over the next few decades. It is meant to carry us into a better future while doing the basics right.

CentrePlan 2050 will provide a policy framework for Downtown and be a roadmap for action, which will help:

- Guide development and municipal investment;
- Guide urban design, land use, and transportation decisions;
- Coordinate actions and municipal investments among City departments;
- Encourage strategic business and residential development; and
- Identify opportunities for collaboration and partnership with external stakeholders and the private sector.

Over the past 20 years, the City and the community have created many reports, strategies, plans, and policies that cover a wide range of topics and areas of interest for Downtown. This Plan incorporates relevant Downtown-related ideas, particularly those addressing planning and land use, design of our streets, and what the City expects for new development. Having these actions and policies all in one place will ensure actions are aligned across City departments.

It is also important to build on the positive development momentum that began prior to the pandemic. This means re-introducing development incentives to get more people living Downtown, supporting existing residential neighbourhoods, re-envisioning how we design our streets, greening Downtown, and improving governance and maintenance. Together, these will help create beautiful and well-maintained neighbourhoods that we can be proud of, and where everyone can feel welcome.

Implementing the Plan will depend on several factors such as: building on opportunities, funding, strategic investment, continued collaboration with Downtown partners and community-led initiatives, and flexibility to adjust to changes in the economy, trends and population.



Urban Form



Street Network



Transit Network



Active Transportation Network



Downtown Neighbourhoods

Planning Downtown requires coordination of transportation networks and how they interact with neighbourhoods.

0.2 Guiding Context

Winnipeg has not had a new Downtown Plan since the early 2000's. The first *CentrePlan framework to guide development and municipal investments Downtown* was created in 1995-96 and updated in 1999 and 2008. Much was accomplished during these years, including changing zoning regulations to make Downtown development easier, redesigning Portage Avenue as a signature street, and expanding the Convention Centre.

One of the notable changes that occurred as a result of this framework was a focus on residential development Downtown. Whereas in the 1990s Downtown experienced stagnation and very little residential growth, we began to see a lot of progress over the last 25 years.

Downtown's population increased significantly between 2001 and 2021



Downtown's population change over 20 years, showing residential growth throughout Downtown.

A key part of this success involved the City taking a leadership role, in partnership with the Province and partner agencies, to transform a former industrial area (East Exchange and Waterfront Drive) into a thriving mixed-use neighbourhood. This success involved long-term commitment and effort over a generation, and this work is still in progress.

Waterfront Drive



Over the last two decades Waterfront Drive has transformed from an industrial area (top photo, taken in the early 2000s) to a thriving mixed use neighbourhood (bottom photo, taken in 2023)



Today, Downtown Winnipeg's context has changed, and we must adapt and respond to current challenges with the same level of effort and long-term commitment that we've made in the past. Although *CCDS 2.0* (the city-wide land use plan) and *OurWinnipeg 2045* (city-wide development plan) provide an overall policy context for Downtown, further direction and actions (as well as a more detailed and localized approach) are needed to make Downtown more resilient and adaptable to environmental, social, health and economic events and impacts, such as COVID-19.

The following provides a guiding context for *CentrePlan 2050*, shaping its strategic directions, goals, policies, and actions.



Portage Avenue (looking west).

Economic and Social impacts of the Pandemic

Downtown Winnipeg is the heart of the city and province. It is a catalyst for economic growth and a center of commerce that attracts business and fosters job creation. A thriving Downtown means a thriving city. A safe and active urban core sends a message of stability and economic promise, attracting both local and international investors. Over the past two decades, Winnipeg has experienced an unprecedented surge in new Downtown development, with over $3 billion in capital investment from the private, public, and non-profit and sectors. Our overarching objective has been to boost the Downtown's vitality by increasing the number of people living, working, and visiting Downtown. This positive trajectory instilled a strong sense of optimism regarding the future of Downtown and Winnipeg's competitive position in Canada.

However, the COVID-19 pandemic created a shock of unprecedented proportions which has reshaped the Downtown landscape, with profound impacts for Downtown vibrancy. The COVID-19 pandemic has had profound and far-reaching consequences, particularly with the significant impacts on homelessness, mental health and addictions. While many of these issues have impacted us city-wide, they have been felt most visibly within the Downtown area. These changes to our social context underscore the urgent need for a compassionate, community-coordinated response to address the complex public health needs of our community and provide support for individuals facing these challenges.

The pandemic has also brought about a transformative shift in work and employment patterns. The widespread adoption of remote work has disrupted the traditional dynamics of downtowns, akin to the way the migration of retail to the suburbs reshaped downtown areas in the 1960s and 70s. In this post-COVID era, businesses are re-evaluating the necessity of large office spaces, which poses a threat to the concentration of office workers in the downtown core. This will likely continue to have impacts on commuting travel patterns and the health of the Downtown commercial real estate market. Downtown Winnipeg is now faced with the imperative to adapt to this evolving and likely permanently altered economic landscape, necessitating a diversification of its economic base to maintain and increase vibrancy.

Responding to these social and economic challenges will be critical to creating a more resilient and vibrant Downtown. This will require a multipronged approach and partnerships with community groups and other levels of government. The pandemic-induced reduction in the downtown office population underscores the urgent need for more robust housing initiatives within Downtown Winnipeg. Addressing this housing investment challenge has been made even more difficult due to rising inflation and interest rates.

To ensure that Winnipeg remains economically competitive on the national stage, it is imperative *CentrePlan 2050* take more ambitious measures to initiate and boost residential construction of all types in the Downtown. A healthy and lively Downtown will require a commitment to infrastructure development, cultural enrichment, and community well-being. More people living Downtown and flourishing businesses attract further investments, fueling more economic growth.



Community members, Elders, and Chiefs attending a Signing Ceremony for Winnipeg's Indigenous Accord at City Hall.

Reconciliation

The City of Winnipeg acknowledges past harms and mistakes and is dedicated to upholding Indigenous rights and moving forward in partnership with Indigenous peoples in a spirit of truth, reconciliation and collaboration.

Winnipeg has the largest Indigenous population of major Canadian cities (12.4 per cent in 2021, compared with 5 per cent across Canada). This context creates significant opportunities for truth-telling and reconciliation, as well as increased Indigenous participation, influence, and collaboration in Winnipeg, particularly Downtown. This momentum has already begun, with the purchase of the Hudson's Bay Building (now Wehwehneh Bahgahkinahgohn), the Manitoba Métis Federation's investment in Downtown Winnipeg (most notably at Portage & Main), and the Memorandum of Understanding signed by the Southern Chief's Organization and True North Sports and Entertainment related to Portage Place. The future success of Downtown (and of the city and province as a whole) is tied to the momentum being built by Indigenous governments and Indigenous-led organizations.

Part of the City-wide commitment to reconciliation involves acting on the five recommendations for municipalities as outlined in the Truth & Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, one of which (#43) involves continued collaboration in learning engagements to enhance capacity related to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

In addition, the *Winnipeg Indigenous Accord* (the Accord) was adopted by City Council on March 22, 2017. It highlights City of Winnipeg commitments to the ongoing process of reconciliation in Winnipeg and invites participation from individuals, community groups, and businesses. Reconciliation is a process based on mutually respectful relationships and partnerships with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit governments, organizations, and individuals. Every year, the City reports on actions related to the Accord. The City must also respond to the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Gender Diverse People (MMIWG2S+) Calls for Justice, so City progress related to these Calls are included in the Accord reporting process.

As Downtown changes and grows, it is vital that the City be a leader in reconciliation. Implementing *CentrePlan 2050* will require new and existing relationships to be built and strengthened with Indigenous communities, learning from the past, and working towards a shared future where systemic barriers are acknowledged, addressed, and ultimately removed.



Corner of Bannatyne Avenue and Rorie Street in Winnipeg's historic Exchange District.

Climate change mitigation, adaptation, and resilience

The City of Winnipeg has committed to achieve greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets of 20 per cent by 2030, relative to 2011, and net-zero by 2050 in *OurWinnipeg 2045*. Meeting this target requires action from residents, communities, businesses, and governments locally and globally. The *Winnipeg Climate Action Plan* calls for implementation of innovative solutions to advance positive change, and strategically leverage existing and proposed federal and provincial initiatives. The 2022 Council approved *Community Energy Investment Roadmap* (CEIR) focuses on five big moves:

- Guide development and municipal investment;
- Guide urban design, land use, and transportation decisions;
- Coordinate actions and municipal investments among City departments;
- Encourage strategic business and residential development; and
- Identify opportunities for collaboration and partnership with external stakeholders and the private sector.



Downtown Winnipeg will be a driver for Winnipeg's transition to a net-zero community and economy.

Downtown will be an important driver for Winnipeg's transformational, equitable, and effective transition to a resilient, net-zero community and economy. A whole-city approach is needed for climate action that systemically changes the built environment, cultural, and organizational norms. Actions to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change need to be integrated into all decisions from transportation and buildings, to waste minimization and ecosystem biodiversity.

Buildings and transportation that are dependent on fossil fuels are major sources of greenhouse gas emissions, which exposes Downtown (and all of Winnipeg) to climate-related hazards. Unsheltered people and people experiencing poverty are most vulnerable to these hazards. Downtown is also the place where the impacts of positive change can be seen, particularly related to shifting transportation modes toward public transit and zero-emissions vehicles, including active transportation and the City's fleet.

In Winnipeg, transportation is the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions; in 2020, 48 per cent of emissions were related to personal vehicle use, commercial operations, transit, heavy transportation, and off-road vehicles (CEIR p. 48). Buildings are the second largest source (44 per cent of total greenhouse gas emissions from homes, businesses, institutions, and industrial buildings [CEIR p. 52]); 93 per cent of this is from the consumption of natural gas for space heating and other industrial purposes (CEIR p. 52).

CentrePlan 2050 can support city-wide initiatives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions Downtown by developing dense mixed-use neighbourhoods, implementing the rapid transit network, completing the cycling network, planting more trees to reduce the urban heat island effect, adaptively re-using existing buildings, connecting to rivers and riverbank ecosystems, enhancing the pedestrian environment, and installing green infrastructure to reduce stormwater runoff.



Millennium Library park contributes to Downtown's green network.

Poverty reduction and equity

Winnipeg has a poverty rate that is 4th highest of large Canadian cities. One in eight residents faces the harsh realities of poverty, navigating the city every day to secure the necessities of life: food and shelter. This burden weighs most heavily on specific people in Winnipeg including children, Indigenous peoples, recent immigrants, visible minorities, persons with a disability, 2SLGBTQQIA+ peoples, and lone parents, particularly single mothers.

Poverty is a deeply complex issue with many underlying causes and no single solution. While other levels of government oversee critical aspects of economic and social well-being, municipal governments across Canada are taking proactive measures to address poverty as they are closest to residents. The *Winnipeg Poverty Reduction Strategy* serves as the cornerstone for ongoing efforts to reduce poverty. It clarifies the City's role, identifies long-term goals and objectives, and outlines an implementation plan with actions across all City services to provide functional, accessible, and dignified amenities for all Winnipeggers.

CentrePlan 2050 weaves in actions related to equitable, inclusive and accessible city services, as well as community safety and wellbeing from the *Winnipeg Poverty Reduction Strategy* and other strategies related to equity and inclusion, including the Newcomer Welcome and Inclusion Policy and the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy. This integration underscores that no single issue, or solution, stands in isolation. Connecting these strategies and collaborating with all levels of government is essential to enhancing the quality of life for all residents.



Main Street Project provides programming and services to help community members build stability and transition towards stable, permanent housing.

0.3 Plan area

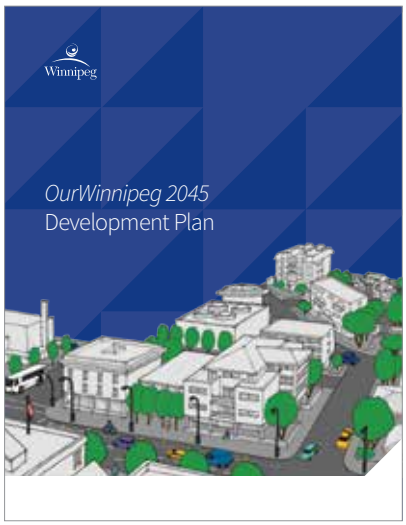
Downtown Winnipeg is bordered by the Red and Assiniboine Rivers to the south and east, the Canadian Pacific rail line to the north, and incorporates portions of the West Broadway, Centennial, and West Alexander neighbourhoods to the west. Below is a map of the official plan boundaries.

Downtown Winnipeg boundaries



Map of Downtown Winnipeg boundaries.

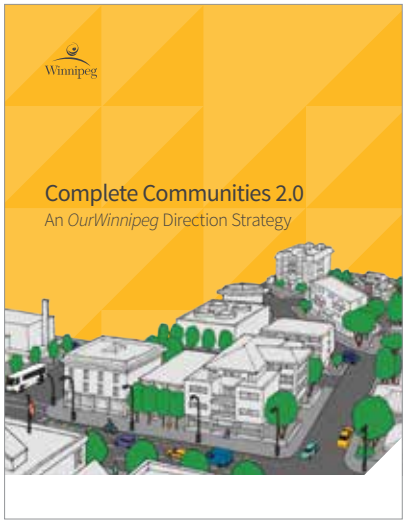
0.4 Legal authority



OurWinnipeg 2045

OurWinnipeg 2045 is the City of Winnipeg's 25-year development plan for strategic growth and development. It is a Council adopted bylaw that provides a city-wide vision and policies that influence the delivery of City services, how residents get around, and how the city grows. *OurWinnipeg 2045* uses six sustainable development goals to guide development including: Leadership and Good Governance, Environmental Resilience, Economic Prosperity, Good Health and Well-being, Social Equity and City Building.

Downtown policies in *OurWinnipeg 2045* speak to the importance of Downtown economic investment, housing, entrepreneurship, arts, inclusion, entertainment, and tourism. *OurWinnipeg 2045* considers Downtown to be Winnipeg's most important complete community, meaning that people should be able to live, work, and meet their daily needs here.



Complete Communities 2.0

Complete Communities Direction Strategy 2.0 (CCDS 2.0) is a city-wide secondary plan that addresses future land use. It is a Council-adopted bylaw that contains policy direction for Winnipeg's physical development moving forward.

This document has 10 goals for Downtown related to land use; Mobility (how we move around Downtown); Public Realm and Urban Design; and Arts, Education and Culture. Each of these goals have corresponding policies and actions.

In accordance with *The City of Winnipeg Charter Act*, everything in *CentrePlan 2050* must be consistent with *OurWinnipeg 2045* and *CCDS 2.0*. The Plan builds on the high-level goals in these two documents to include implementable actions to help us grow into a collection of unique, lively, and resilient neighbourhoods, and create the healthy, safe, equitable, and beautiful Downtown we all want to see in the future.


RBC



Seal River Crossing, a sculpture by Peter Sawatzky, located at the corner of Portage and Main.

0.5 How to use this document

In addition to *OurWinnipeg* and *CCDS 2.0*, the Plan should also be read together with relevant City regulations, plans (e.g. *Winnipeg Transit Master Plan, Transportation Master Plan, Winnipeg Climate Action Plan*, and *Community Energy Investment Roadmap*), policies, strategies (e.g. *Poverty Reduction Strategy*), manuals (e.g. *Transportation Standards Manual*), and guidelines; and the *Downtown Winnipeg Zoning Bylaw 100/2004*.

It should also be read together with its companion documents, which include the *Downtown Urban Design Standards* and the *Downtown Streetscape Design Standards Manual* (see section 0.7 for more information).

The Plan includes the following eight sections:

- **This current section** sets the planning context and introduces the strategic moves
- **Sections 1 through 5** outline five strategic moves designed to guide city-building and help Downtown grow into a thriving collection of residential and mixed-use neighbourhoods. Each strategic move has a set of goals, policies, and actions
- **Sections 6 and 7** contain glossary terms and appendices that address implementation

Interpretations

In cases where the word “shall” or “will” is included in a statement, it is considered mandatory. However, where actual quantities or numerical standards are contained within a mandatory statement, the quantities may be deviated from provided that the deviation is necessary to address unique circumstances that (upon City review) will render compliance impractical or impossible. These deviations should only be used in rare circumstances.

Statements such as “should”, are intended to apply to a majority of situations and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis to assess where deviation is necessary to address unique circumstances that will otherwise render compliance impractical or impossible, or to allow an acceptable alternate means to achieve the general intent of the statement to be introduced instead.

Encouraging statements within the document provide a defined framework of the principles that supplement the overarching goal and policy intent. These should be followed but are not mandatory requirements.



Hoar frost and the Canadian Museum for Human Rights.

A living document

While the Plan provides a clear vision and outlines a roadmap to guide municipal actions over 30 years, we recognize that new opportunities, challenges and trends will emerge throughout the life of this document. As such, the Plan is intended to be a living document, and a review and update of this Plan will occur at least every 5 years to address changes in the Downtown context and to reflect Council priorities. This involves ongoing monitoring of indicators to track progress and help adjust actions as necessary.



Sunset on the Red River.

0.6 Companion documents

As noted, the Plan should be read together with its companion documents, which will help shape development, and create a Downtown that is welcoming, interesting, accessible and functional, easy to navigate, and designed with people in mind. These companion documents include:

Downtown Urban Design Standards

The way we design buildings and open spaces can help make Downtown more vibrant and improve the quality of life of residents. The *Downtown Urban Design Standards (the Design Standards)* have been created to:

- Help designers, developers, and residents understand the City's expectations for high quality design
- Help City employees and the Urban Design Advisory Committee evaluate proposals for new development
- Consider and respect unique streets, neighbourhoods, and historic districts Downtown including the Exchange District National Historic Site and Broadway
- Provide specific guidance on the design of new buildings, additions to existing buildings, and public spaces
- Integrate with the *Downtown Streetscape Design Standards Manual*
- Inform future changes to the *Downtown Winnipeg Zoning By-law 100/2004*

Designers and developers must apply the Design Standards to make sure designs fit the context of Downtown's unique neighbourhoods. Adhering to the City's expectations for development from the project's outset will help the Urban Design Review process be as seamless as possible.

Downtown Streetscape Design Standards Manual

The way streets and sidewalks are designed plays a major role in how comfortable residents and visitors feel, and how pleasant and easy it is to move around Downtown. The *Downtown Streetscape Design Standards Manual* will provide long-term clarity on how streets will be designed when they are reconstructed. This will create predictable outcomes for street design by establishing a set of standard design requirements and streetscape elements.



CentrePlan will be a Secondary Plan, and it must comply with *Complete Communities 2.0* and *OurWinnipeg 2045*. The *Zoning By-law* and other implementation tools will be updated to comply with *CentrePlan 2050.*

0.7 Strategic moves framework

Winnipeg is on the path to becoming a city of one million people. While we can preserve the small-city charm, policies and practices must adapt to the demands of a large city. Central to this transformation is Downtown; ensuring it acts less as a thoroughfare, and more as a group of welcoming neighbourhoods with captivating destinations that reflect our city identity. Achieving this means that everyone – including those who run businesses, those wanting a fun night out, and those who live or seek shelter in the inner-city – must be able to feel safe and secure Downtown.

To create the equitable and resilient Downtown we deserve that has welcoming neighbourhoods, bustling streets and vibrant public spaces, Winnipeg must adopt a long-term approach to city-building in our Downtown. This will involve the following five strategic moves:

01

Strategic Move 1: Create great urban neighbourhoods

Reinforce and build exceptional neighbourhoods that celebrate unique urban identities while embracing growth and vitality.



02

Strategic Move 2: Re-envision streets to foster urban life

Re-imagine and design streets as lively, welcoming spaces that enhance urban living and are more than ways to move traffic quickly.



03

Strategic Move 3: Grow a greener Downtown

Increase green space and Winnipeg's urban forest and emphasize the development of a greener Downtown, underpinned by ecologically conscious policies and practices.



04

Strategic Move 4: Create a lively Downtown

Infuse Downtown with energy and transform it into a hub of activity and entertainment that offers unique urban experiences.



05

Strategic Move 5: Improve Downtown governance and implementation

Make decision-making processes more responsive and efficient.



Each Strategic Move includes a set of goals to achieve the strategic move. Every goal contains specific polices and actions (marked with a “green checkmark”) for the City and its partners to achieve the Downtown we want to see in the future. Success requires making changes that align with and enhance the unique character of each Downtown neighbourhood. To this end, district-specific actions have been integrated throughout the document.

As we work toward a resilient and prosperous Downtown, it is important to be flexible and responsive. These actions must be updated regularly to capitalize on unique opportunities and adapt to changing planning contexts.

01



01

Strategic Move 1:

Create great urban neighbourhoods

1. Strategic Move 1: Create great urban neighbourhoods

Successful, vibrant downtowns have great neighbourhoods that are active at all times of day and in all seasons. They also have a healthy mix of commercial and residential populations with the amenities to support both. Winnipeg's Downtown neighbourhoods each have their unique character, which can be celebrated and enhanced to attract more people.

1.1 Goal: Embrace and elevate Downtown's unique neighbourhoods and districts

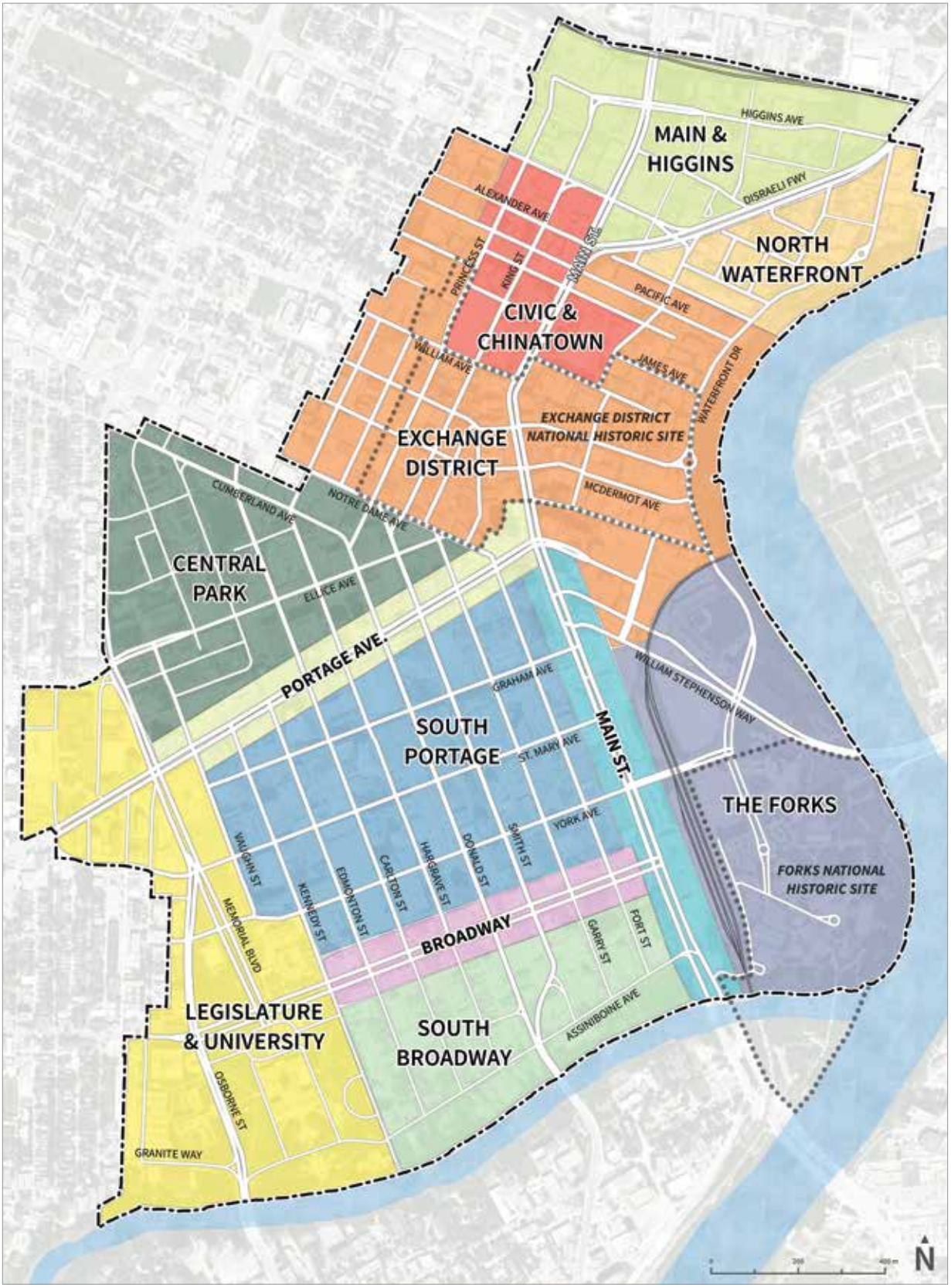
Downtown is a vibrant collection of neighbourhoods, each with its own unique character. Together, these form part of a larger community, while also showcasing who we are to visitors from across the country and abroad. As Downtown's population increases, our approach to designing and investing in amenities and public infrastructure should not only respect but also actively enhance the unique character of each neighbourhood.

The following section gives an overview for each unique neighbourhood, and provides actions and policies to the neighbourhoods and corridors identified on Map 1. Additional guidance for building and site design for these neighbourhoods and districts can be found in the *Downtown Urban Design Standards* companion document.



The Exchange District is a desirable mixed-use neighbourhood.

Downtown neighbourhood areas



Map of different neighbourhood areas Downtown.



Rendered image of future improvements to the Broadway median, which includes seating, naturalized plantings, restoration of the tree canopy, and public art.

Broadway

Broadway, with its wide sidewalks, plazas, and public spaces, is a signature street that celebrates the pedestrian experience. This promenade is anchored by the Legislative grounds to the west and Union Station to the east and can be adapted into a venue for festivals and other events. The generous width and tree canopy along Broadway offers a park-like setting in the Downtown that should be preserved. The street has a diverse mix of commercial, institutional, and residential uses, and is home to a collection of buildings representative of the mid-20th Century in the international style of modern architecture. Continued investments in the public realm will be needed to ensure this signature street will be a thriving destination for pedestrians.

Policies and Actions:

1.1.1 Conserve the wide sidewalks, boulevards, centre median, elm tree canopy, building setbacks and massing, and pedestrian realm along Broadway. Reducing sidewalk and boulevard width to accommodate motor vehicles is prohibited.

1.1.2 Support special events, programming, and other initiatives that draw people (e.g. food trucks) along Broadway, to enhance its role as an iconic street that connects major landmarks and tourist destinations.

1.1.3 ✓ Enhance Broadway as an image street with special character, with increased street trees, landscaping, private/public gathering space, public art, and pedestrian amenities.

✓ = Action



Aerial view of Central Park.

Central Park

One of the oldest neighbourhoods in the Downtown, Central Park is a diverse neighbourhood that is home to many of Winnipeg's newest residents. Many newcomers with children settle here and access park amenities in the heart of the neighbourhood. In the future, this neighbourhood should be improved to meet the needs of current residents, through better street design, addition of mixed-income housing, more street trees, continued park improvements and maintenance, and more places and opportunities to gather outside.

Policies and Actions:

1.1.4 Enhance the residential character, pedestrian-oriented nature, and neighbourhood feel through streetscape improvements, continued park improvements and maintenance, and lighting improvements.

1.1.5 ✓ Foster and support greater community use of public spaces (e.g. parks and streets) for gardens, markets, and other community activities. This could include eliminating street closure permit fees for non-profits and assisting with the application process.

1.1.6 ✓ Create a crosswalk across Carlton Street at Qu'appelle Avenue, to improve pedestrian connections to Central Park.

1.1.7 ✓ Explore ways to calm vehicular traffic and improve safety by implementing traffic calming measures, particularly around Central Park.

1.1.8 New development should include both market and non-market housing to support a mix of housing opportunities in the neighbourhood.

✓ = Action



Rendering of an improved King Street with design elements like lanterns and pavement patterns that honour the historic significance of Winnipeg's Chinatown.

Civic & Chinatown

Winnipeg's historic Chinatown remains an important cultural hub Downtown. This area includes City Hall and many arts and cultural institutions, including the Centennial Concert Hall and the Manitoba Museum. Over the past 40 years, Chinatown has seen significant decline, with loss of population and businesses. However, positive changes are now occurring, as new residential development has recently been added to the area; this needs to be built upon. In the future, this area will evolve to meet the needs articulated by its residents, and include a safe public realm, opportunities for business growth, continued arts and cultural events, and more housing development.

Policies and Actions:

1.1.9 ✓ Transform King Street into Chinatown's main street to support future development and pedestrian activity, as indicated in the *Development Strategy for Northwest Exchange District and Chinatown*.

1.1.10 ✓ Invest in public realm development and improvements at Market Lands and the Chinese Gardens at James Avenue and King Street, to expand upon existing open spaces and amenities.

1.1.11 Ensure future street renewals on Princess Street, James Avenue, and Alexander Avenue adhere to the *Streetscape Design Standards Manual* and reflect the character of the neighbourhood.

1.1.12 The following streets, which have already been designated as part of the five-year capital budget, shall be reconstructed in alignment with the *Downtown Streetscape Design Standards Manual* prior to the Manual's official approval:

- Princess Street
- James Avenue
- Alexander Avenue

1.1.13 Consider the *Development Strategy for Northwest Exchange District and Chinatown* and The Market Lands initiative when making planning decisions and infrastructure investments.

= Action



Ice pans on the Red River.

Exchange District

Located just north of Canada's celebrated corner of Portage and Main, the 20-block Exchange District National Historic Site (EDNHS) encompasses over 100 turn-of-the-century buildings that display an innovative and functional approach to period architecture. Massive stone and brick warehouses, elegant terra-cotta-clad skyscrapers, narrow angled streets and covered alleys recall the time when this district was the economic gateway to Western Canada and commercial centre of Winnipeg. The First World War, the Depression and other changes eventually eroded its role, leaving the district to age virtually intact.

The Exchange District has emerged as the one of the City's most distinct and thriving urban neighbourhoods. As well as being celebrated for its history and architecture, it serves as a home to many of the City's cultural and creative organizations. Residents, office workers, and visitors are drawn to its pleasant streets, unique shops, and parks. This area is home to Red River Polytech and attracts innovation-oriented industries.

In the future, the Exchange District will continue to grow in vitality by building on its strengths. This growth will increase the residential population, support organizations and businesses in the creative economy, facilitate the adaptive re-use of Heritage Resources, and incorporate sensitive new infill development into the historic context. In addition, development within the Exchange District National Historic Site must occur in a way that is sensitive to historic character and overall look and feel of the area.



Buildings in Winnipeg's Exchange District.

Exchange District (general)

Policies and Actions:

1.1.14 Consider the *Exchange District Plan 2022* and the *2023 Exchange District Community Investment Strategy* when making planning decisions and infrastructure investments.

1.1.15 ✓ Work with The Forks Renewal Corporation to implement the redevelopment and enhancement of the Alexander Dock area, in a way that acknowledges the significance of this location as a place of attention and action for MMIWG2S+.

1.1.16 ✓ Develop Alexander Avenue as a shared street that prioritizes pedestrian movement, safety, and minimizes segregation between different modes of transportation.

✓ = Action



Alexander Avenue as it is today (looking east).



Rending of an improved Alexander Avenue with trees, benches, and patios.

Exchange District (National Historic Site)

Policies and Actions:

1.1.17 Conserve the Heritage Resources and heritage values of the Exchange District National Historic Site by protecting its character-defining elements which include buildings, elements of buildings, land, and elements of land from demolition and alterations and by ensuring that new infill development fits within its historic context.

1.1.18 Apply the *Exchange District National Historic Site Commemorative Integrity Statement* (updated from time to time), the *Urban Design Standards*, and the *Standards & Guidelines for Historic Places in Canada* documents as tools to better understand the historic context, to guide alterations and new development, and to maintain the heritage values of the Exchange District National Historic Site

1.1.19 ✓ Pilot Albert Street as a shared street that prioritizes pedestrian movement and minimizes segregation between different modes of transportation.

✓ = Action



The Exchange District National Historic Site is celebrated for history, architecture, and is home to many cultural and creative organizations.



The Golden Boy at the Manitoba Legislature on a winter night.

Legislature & University of Winnipeg

This area is home to many of Winnipeg's and Manitoba's major institutions, including the University of Winnipeg, the Manitoba Legislative Building, the Winnipeg Art Gallery and Qaumajuq (WAG-Qaumajuq), and the Manitoba Law Courts. It contains one of Downtown's largest open spaces (Memorial Park), providing impressive views of the monumental Tyndall stone architecture of the Legislative Building. Two major streets in this area (Osborne Street N/Memorial Boulevard and Portage Avenue) serve as gateways to the Downtown, and these will be transformed into image routes reflecting the heritage and character of the area.

Policies and Actions:

1.1.20 ✓ Explore the feasibility of redeveloping the surface parking lot next to the Granite Curling Club to include both market and non-market housing that supports club operations and/or building maintenance.

1.1.21 ✓ Work with the Province of Manitoba to update the design of Memorial Park as a signature community open space and improve pedestrian connections to the park.

1.1.22 ✓ As part of *Winnipeg Transit Master Plan* implementation and Rapid Transit station construction, enhance Memorial Boulevard/Colony Street/Balmoral Street from Ellice Avenue to St. Mary Avenue to improve the pedestrian experience along this image route, which connects the Manitoba Legislative Building, Wehwehneh Bahgahkinahgohn, the University of Winnipeg, and WAG-Qaumajuq.

1.1.23 Work with area stakeholders to develop Colony Street between Portage Avenue and St. Mary as a shared street that prioritizes pedestrian movement, safety, and minimizes segregation between different modes of transportation

✓ = Action



Rendering of proposed renovation to Main Street Project's buildings on Martha Street.

Main & Higgins Area

The area around Main & Higgins has a mix of commercial and industrial enterprises, institutions, and social service organizations that serve many residents who face systematic barriers. This area is of interest to many groups and organizations because of its history and present context: End Homelessness Winnipeg, the Winnipeg Foundation and both the Downtown BIZ and Exchange District BIZ have highlighted the potential for impactful investment in this area. This is an area of higher poverty Downtown, which requires careful planning and meaningful engagement with residents and visitors.

Policies and Actions:

1.1.24 Together with provincial, federal, and Indigenous governments, funders, and community organizations, support the development and implementation of a community-focused plan that includes, but is not limited to: safety, site maintenance, housing, single room occupancy (SRO) hotels, expectations for development, public open space, and ongoing support and investment for Thunderbird House and the surrounding area.

1.1.25 Improve pedestrian connections and safety along the Hope Alley corridor along Henry Avenue between Martha Street and Princess Street, including the crosswalk on Main Street. Improvements should consider placemaking and safety improvements recommended by community members, including the possible installation of a larger 'Hope Alley' commemorative marker.

1.1.26 Improve area accessibility, including infrastructure and snow clearing on sidewalks and at bus stops, as well as access to basic amenities like seating, water, shade, and protection from the elements.

1.1.27 ✓ Install a pedestrian crossing across Higgins Avenue at Austin Street.

1.1.28 Ensure station area planning by Main & Higgins respects the importance of the Thunderbird House, and that area stakeholders and rightsholders are invited to participate in the station area planning process for the proposed Rapid Transit station by this intersection.

1.1.29 ✓ Provide funding to community efforts and pilot projects (e.g. *Main Street community's Litter & Waste Management Plan*) that attempt to deal with waste management in the public realm, ensuring timely responses related to litter cleanup.

1.1.30 ✓ Implement initiatives outlined in the *Road Safety Strategic Action Plan*, with a focus on Main Street, Logan Avenue, and Higgins Avenue.

✓ = Action

North Waterfront

The North Waterfront District is an emerging residential district with unique architectural designs. This growing neighbourhood will continue to accommodate significant residential development supported by municipal investments in the public realm to transform this former industrial area into a thriving mixed-use neighbourhood.

Policies and Actions:

1.1.31 ✓ Update the *Zoning By-law* to support the transition of the neighbourhood from a former industrial area into a thriving mid-rise mixed-use residential neighbourhood that is in character with the building heights along Waterfront Drive.

✓ = Action



Portage Avenue at night.

Portage Avenue

Winnipeg's historic retail street, Portage Avenue, is transforming into a multi-modal regional corridor that will support increased retail and pedestrian activity at street level. An inclusive and resilient public realm will be fostered through improved public spaces and streetscapes, and taller mixed-use towers will provide new vertical communities for Winnipeggers anchored by investment in on-street rapid transit.

Policies and Actions:

1.1.32 As directed in the *Winnipeg Transit Master Plan*, Portage Avenue shall be a high-quality rapid transit corridor that is enhanced as an important image route to Downtown.

1.1.33 ✓ Include streetscaping improvements within the pedestrian realm in conjunction with the design and implementation of the Rapid Transit Network along Portage Avenue, to support new developments and businesses, and create a positive pedestrian environment.

1.1.34 Support development opportunities at Portage Place, that include housing and provide for a pedestrian connection aligned with Edmonton Street from Portage Avenue to Central Park.

1.1.35 Preserve the wide sidewalks and enhance the pedestrian realm by increasing the number of street trees and other sidewalk pedestrian amenities along Portage Avenue.

1.1.36 Portage Avenue should continue to be one of Downtown's primary districts for accommodating Winnipeg's tallest buildings.

✓ **= Action**



Winnipeg's Downtown neighbourhoods each have their unique character.

South Broadway

A quiet residential neighbourhood with a wide variety of building types, South Broadway has wide green boulevards, buildings that are set back from the property line, and mature elm trees that provide a distinct character in the Downtown. In the future, South Broadway should continue to attract residential infill development while accommodating complementary neighbourhood scale amenities.

Policies and Actions:

1.1.37 Respect and maintain the medium-rise and pedestrian-scale residential character of the South Broadway sub-sector of this neighbourhood.

1.1.38 Preserve and enhance the tree canopy and abundant greenspace in boulevards, building setbacks, and private front yards.

1.1.39 Protect the residential character of the neighbourhood by allowing complementary commercial neighbourhood-oriented uses that maintain lower car volumes.

1.1.40 ✓ Establish building massing criteria for the South Broadway Sub-sector in the *Downtown Winnipeg Zoning By-law*, to preserve front yards and the low-to medium rise character of the neighbourhood and support tree canopy health.

1.1.41 ✓ Explore ways to calm vehicular traffic and improve safety by minimizing vehicles cutting through the neighbhourhood, including making street improvements to Main Street and Assiniboine to increase safety for pedestrians crossing the street.

1.1.42 ✓ Work with the Province of Manitoba on design solutions that would eliminate cut-through traffic caused by vehicles turning from Osborne Street North and moving through the Legislative grounds to Assiniboine Avenue.

✓ = Action



Surface Parking lot on Kennedy Street (by Legislature) today (looking south).



What Kennedy Street could look like tomorrow.

South Main Street

South Main Street is a gateway into Winnipeg by car and train. Today, the many surface parking lots north of Union Station make it feel like a one-sided street. As South Main Street transforms into a rapid transit corridor, key priorities for this area include completing the street edge over time with mixed-used buildings and improving connectivity to The Forks.

Policies and Actions:

1.1.43 Preserve the wide sidewalks and enhance the pedestrian realm by increasing the number of street trees and other sidewalk pedestrian amenities along Main Street, including making street improvements to Main Street and Assiniboine Avenue to increase safety for pedestrians crossing the street.

1.1.44 Make changes to the intersection and Assiniboine Avenue between Main Street and Fort Street, to increase pedestrian and cyclist safety, calm traffic, and reduce the amount of motor vehicles cutting through the South Broadway neighbourhood.

1.1.45 No new vehicle approaches shall be created on Main Street, to protect the viability of the future Rapid Transit network as outlined in the *Winnipeg Transit Master Plan*, as well as increase safety for pedestrians.

= Action



Upper Fort Garry Provincial Park.

South Portage

South Portage has a mix of high-rise office, residential uses, and entertainment destinations, as well as many surface parking lots awaiting redevelopment. New development will focus on creating comfortable streets by filling in the gaps and introducing new active uses at street level. Taller buildings will accommodate new residents and workers while creating destinations that serve the whole city. While today Graham Avenue is primarily a bus corridor, in summer 2025 buses will be moving off Graham Avenue, creating an opportunity to enhance its open spaces to better serve the needs of people living, working, and visiting Downtown.

Policies and Actions:

1.1.46 Land uses and building design shall be pedestrian-oriented to support the re-envisioning of Graham Avenue, and include active frontages, front entrances, and space for both pedestrians and active transportation.

1.1.47 When streets are reconstructed, their design shall support the residential intensification of the district and accommodate a higher concentration of pedestrians in the area.

1.1.48 ✓ Support redevelopment of Wehwehneh Bahgahkinahgohn (the old Hudson's Bay building) through streetscaping improvements and development incentives.

✓ = Action



Proposed rendering of Wehwehneh Bahgahkinahgohn (former Hudson's Bay building).



Rendering of Railside at the Forks.

The Forks

The Forks, located at the junction of the Red and Assiniboine rivers, has been a meeting place for over 6,000 years. In the recent past, it has been developed into a special place for people to gather in all seasons. In the future, The Forks will be further developed to include a mixed-use residential community with supportive institutional, recreational, and cultural uses.

Policies and Actions:

1.1.49 Railside at The Forks should include a diversity of housing types, showcase great public spaces, demonstrate design excellence, and adhere to The Forks Renewal Corporation's sustainable development goals.

1.1.50 Development at Railside at The Forks should be undertaken in accordance with the *Railside at the Forks Policy and Concept Plan*, and in accordance with their Placemaking Guidelines.

1.1.51 ✓ Work with the Forks Renewal Corporation to support ongoing improvement and maintenance of the Nestaweya River Trail and its access points both within and outside Downtown.

1.1.52 ✓ Align existing development incentives for Railside at the Forks with future development opportunities on the property at the southwest corner of William Stephenson Way and Israel Asper Way at the Forks.

✓ **= Action**



The Forks has been a meeting place for over 6,000 years.

1.2 Goal: Play a leadership role in Downtown housing

For decades, Winnipeg and other Canadian cities have actively pursued residential development to improve the vibrancy of downtowns. Winnipeg has created programs and incentives, resulting in over 5,000 more people living Downtown since 2006. As the office worker population has declined since the COVID-19 pandemic, growing the residential population is even more important to bring life to the streets, support businesses Downtown, and become a complete community with the amenities needed to support daily life.

Creating the right conditions is essential to attract more residential development and get more people choosing to live Downtown. Currently, Downtown development is experiencing numerous challenges. This includes physical challenges like smaller development sites, traffic management, and logistics for materials staging. But Downtown development also faces less tangible market factors (e.g. high inflation and interest rates), and social concerns that include poverty, homelessness, crime, and perceptions of safety.

To reach our growth target of at least 500 units/year from 2025-2050 (12,500 units total), bold and effective actions to spur development are needed immediately; there is a long way to go before we create the economic conditions that will eliminate the need for incentives in the long-term. The 2024 Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) will help in the short term, but the City must also create and coordinate inter-governmental incentives and collaborate with non-market housing providers and Indigenous-led organizations to ensure momentum continues over the long term. Part of this coordination involves rethinking City processes to make it easier to develop Downtown, while making sure what is built is safe, functional, and fits in with the neighbourhood.

Policies and Actions:

1.2.1 Incentivize development to fulfil *CentrePlan 2050* objectives and align with provincial and federal incentive and grant programs.

1.2.2 ✓ Develop long-term coordinated development incentives with provincial and federal governments for market and non-market housing to meet our growth targets.

1.2.3 ✓ Work with the Province of Manitoba to redevelop provincial or crown corporation-owned surface parking lots for residential development.

1.2.4 ✓ Create a single window approach for intergovernmental collaboration on housing development Downtown to ensure programs across governments complement and support one another, and to help meet governmental targets for affordable and social housing.

1.2.5 Invest federal and provincial funding (e.g. Housing Accelerator Fund) directly through grants to housing projects and indirectly through public infrastructure improvements to support the creation of both market and non-market housing.



308 Colony street will be home to a 21-storey mixed-income, mixed-use building with 86 (40%) affordable units. It is the first residential high rise (over 10 stories) in the country to receive the Canada Green building Council Zero Carbon Building – Design StandardTM Certification.

1.2.6 ✓ Create and augment residential and commercial development incentives (e.g. Tax Increment Financing), focused on projects that:

- Support key municipal investments within this plan
- Convert surface parking lots
- Increase non-market housing stock
- Redevelop Heritage Resources
- Promote human-scale development through low- or medium-rise (10 storeys or less development
- Convert office uses to residential uses
- Create green buildings
- Include other benefits like 3+ bedrooms, accessible units, and visitable units.





What Downtown looks like today (top) and what Downtown could look like in the future. A more densely populated Downtown will ensure there are more people on the streets, for more hours of the day.



Growing the residential population will bring life to the streets, support businesses, and bring amenities needed to support daily life.

1.2.7 ✓ For a limited time, in recognition of the increased costs associated with Downtown development, eliminate fees associated with development Downtown, including Building Permits, Urban Design Review, Heritage Permits, and loss of paid parking fees.

1.2.8 ✓ Where on-street staging is required, as part of construction or renovation of buildings, waive fees associated with on-street staging costs for a limited time, and create incentives to speed up development and minimize the amount of right-of-way space used (e.g. sidewalks, parking, etc.), to encourage timely completion of developments Downtown and minimize disruption to the public right-of-way.

1.2.9 ✓ Review heritage incentive programs on an on-going basis (including the Gail Parvin Hammerquist Fund City-Wide Program and the Heritage and Economic Development Incentive Program) and develop new programs as necessary to ensure long-term, sustainable funding capacity.

1.2.10 ✓ Create a condition assessment grant program to help the City and owners of Heritage Resources procure engineering assessments of the structural viability, and viability of remediation of the historical resource.

1.2.11 Help non-market and Indigenous housing providers overcome hurdles to developing adaptable no-barrier, transitional, supportive, and social housing. This could include assistance with Downtown land or building assembly, streamlining development and permitting processes, and/or development incentives.

1.2.12 ✓ Establish a “Downtown Concierge” position to work one-on-one with applicants and assist with specific types of applications and permits (e.g. non-market housing) navigate development application and permitting processes and to ensure Downtown developments are prioritized.

1.2.13 ✓ Using the inventory of vacant buildings completed by the City of Winnipeg Housing Division in 2022, explore feasibility of redeveloping of vacant buildings for affordable housing.

1.2.14 ✓ Work with federal and provincial governments on initiatives to address the housing crisis, including (but not limited to) creating taxes on vacant buildings and surface parking lots.

✓ = Action



Surface parking lot on York and Hargrave today (looking west).



What York and Hargrave could look like tomorrow.



Manitoba Hydro Place (constructed 2009) is an excellent example of pedestrian-friendly urban design, which includes active uses at grade, a furnished plaza, landscaping, and building setbacks. It is also one of North America's most energy efficient office towers.

1.3 Goal: Foster design excellence

Downtowns in great cities are set apart from the surrounding cityscape. This unique character comes from their historical significance, diverse land use, pedestrian-friendly infrastructure, cultural and civic attractions, and, significantly, a commitment to higher quality design. When these elements combine, they make Downtown more accessible and welcoming, improve public safety (through eyes on the street), enhance pedestrian comfort, and contribute to distinct character and residential livability.

Downtown development projects shall adhere to the *Downtown Urban Design Standards*. The City shall promote design excellence, ensure new development does not compromise the development potential of adjacent sites, encourage architectural innovation, conserve historical resources and other resources that have potential for designation in the future, and ensure new development is in character with existing Downtown neighbourhoods and destinations. Downtown Winnipeg should be transformed into a place of high-quality streetscapes and architectural distinction, creating a place that residents and visitors alike will cherish and enjoy.

Policies and Actions:

1.3.1 Street level design of buildings will foster human-scaled spaces that promote social interaction.

1.3.2 ✓ Update the City's *Urban Design Guidelines* to create a *Downtown Urban Design Standards* document that:

- Communicates the city's design expectations for development downtown
- Forms the basis of the urban design review process and will be used to determine whether to grant urban design approval for downtown development, redevelopment, expansion, demolition, or exterior alteration
- Improves consistency and predictability in the development approval process
- Assists the review of development applications
- Includes standards related to the exchange district national historic site to conserve heritage value and maintain the national historic significance of this area

1.3.3 All development visible from the public street, sidewalk, or rear lane shall continue to require Urban Design Review (and heritage review as required) to ensure that projects are consistent with the *Downtown Urban Design Standards* and other applicable bylaws, standards, and guidelines (e.g. *Standards and Guidelines for Historical Resources in Canada*).

1.3.4 ✓ Review the Urban Design Review process to ensure it is clear, concise, and aligns with the *Downtown Urban Design Standards*.

1.3.5 The City shall coordinate the Urban Design Review and Heritage Review processes on Downtown applications that include proposed development in the Exchange District National Historic Site (infill or changes to non-designated buildings), and when changes to designated Heritage Resources are visible from the public street, sidewalk, or rear lane.

1.3.6 ✓ Identify buildings that have heritage value and should be protected/added to the List of Historical Resources.

1.3.7 All City projects should comply with the *Downtown Urban Design Standards* and reflect current sustainability best practices.

✓ = Action



Community cleanup event with City of Winnipeg staff and community members.

1.4 Goal: Focus services where they are needed most

Downtowns have higher concentrations of residents, visitors, students, and workers, and this typically increases the need for City services. Winnipeg's Downtown and surrounding neighbourhoods also have areas of higher poverty, which requires a greater focus on providing the services that people need to maintain a healthy neighbourhood that works well. Developing a culture of caring is essential to ensuring everyone's needs can be met. Access to public washrooms, drinking water, and more recreation options will reduce barriers to basic needs, improve equity, and enhance a sense of dignity and hope. This will all make Downtown a better place to be.

This section supplements work already being done by governments and community groups. It also highlights Downtown-specific actions that the City of Winnipeg can do to increase safety, support, and comfort for people who need it the most across Downtown.

Policies and Actions:

1.4.1 Encourage partnerships with non-profit organizations and other Downtown partners to increase recreational and cultural opportunities.

1.4.2 ✓ Partner with the Y Winnipeg (Downtown) and other potential partners like educational institutions to expand and subsidize programming for residents and people living on lower incomes.

1.4.3 ✓ Expand access to existing facilities and programming for recreation, library, community gathering, and 24/7 safe spaces.

1.4.4 Ensure access to clean drinking water and access to washroom facilities in all Downtown neighbourhoods.

1.4.5 ✓ Install water fountains/stations at Air Canada Window Park, Central Park, Gord Dong Park, Bonnycastle Park, Old Market Square, Stephen Juba Park, and Millennium Library Park.

1.4.6 ✓ Provide funding to increase hours of service and assess funding requirements for 24/7 staffing and peer support for Amoowigamig (public washroom by Thunderbird House).

1.4.7 ✓ Identify locations and explore how to provide funding for additional public washroom facilities with relevant supports tailored to specific community needs and contexts.

1.4.8 ✓ Explore options for increasing hours and adding staffing support at existing washroom facilities at Portage Place, Winnipeg Square, Central Park, the Susan A. Thompson Building at City Hall, and other City facilities Downtown, including costing and staffing in alignment with the City's Sustainable Procurement Action Plan.

1.4.9 ✓ Create incentives (e.g. grants, waived permit fees) for businesses, non-profit organizations, and new developments to encourage washrooms for public use, which may include assistance with upgrading facilities to be universally accessible.

1.4.10 Ensure areas with documented levels of higher service needs related to garbage and recycling storage, collection, and general maintenance receive the level of service required to keep up with higher service demands.

1.4.11 ✓ Increase garbage and recycling storage capacity and collection frequency in areas with documented higher service needs, by:

- Increasing resources dedicated to the city’s litter control and clean-up programs;
- Working collaboratively with business improvement zone (biz) organizations, service providers, and other agencies downtown (e.g. Organizations working with vulnerable populations) to ensure waste management approaches meet the specific needs of these areas;
- Ensuring property owners are aware of their responsibility to have sufficient and secured waste storage capacity and collection frequency; and
- Ensuring a coordinated and timely response to reports of abandoned waste and other waste complaints (through 311, inspections, bylaw enforcement and clean-up)

✓ = Action



The annual Pride festival draws people from all walks of life.

1.5 Goal: Forge a Downtown for all

The Forks has a long history as an Indigenous gathering and ceremonial area. This vibrant meeting place of economic, cultural, and intellectual interchange covered much of what is now Downtown Winnipeg. Today, Downtown is still a place where people come together, with Downtown residents representing over 30 nationalities from all walks of life, creating rich cultural diversity. Downtown cohosts many events to celebrate different communities, including the annual Pride Festival, National Indigenous Peoples Day, World Refugee Day, and other arts and cultural festivities. Downtown Winnipeg's residents are diverse.

Downtown is also marked by significant economic diversity, resulting in many mixed-income neighbourhoods where some neighbours confront the challenges of poverty and systemic barriers while others benefit from financial stability. Those experiencing poverty should be able to live with dignity and access community supports. The City should work to eliminate barriers and promote inclusivity, and urban design has a role to play in this process.

Recognizing, respecting, and supporting diversity in all its forms is essential for a prosperous Downtown where all residents feel welcome, safe, and can truly thrive. Through *OurWinnipeg 2045*, the City commits to providing equitable service access, poverty reduction, and cross-cultural learning to build community cohesion. *CentrePlan 2050*, together with other City strategies and policies (e.g. the *Welcoming Winnipeg: Reconciling our History Policy,* the *Winnipeg Poverty Reduction Strategy*, and others) helps bring this commitment Downtown.

Policies and Actions:

1.5.1 Apply the *Newcomer Welcome and Inclusion Strategy* to foster a welcoming, inclusive, and equitable Downtown.

1.5.2 As outlined in the *Welcoming Winnipeg: Reconciling our History Policy*, ensure that contributions, experiences, and perspectives of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit are reflected truthfully in stories, historical markers, public spaces, and place names Downtown, to foster cultural understanding and respect.

1.5.3 Implement actions outlined in City plans like *Kikininaw Oma* (the *Strategy to Support Unsheltered Winnipeggers*), the *Poverty Reduction Strategy*, the appropriate Calls for Justice of the MMIWG2S+ Inquiry, the *Winnipeg Road Safety Strategic Action Plan*, and the upcoming *Community Safety, Well-being and Crime Prevention Action Plan* outlined in *Council's 2023-2026 Strategic Priorities Action Plan*.

1.5.4 Support 2SLGBTQQIA+ inclusion through community programs, outreach services, public art and events that showcase the many contributions of 2SLGBTQQIA+ peoples.

1.5.5 Support ongoing work and Downtown-related actions of the United Nations Safe Cities Global Initiative Steering Committee and continue to work with relevant partners to create a city free from violence against women and girls.

1.5.6 ✓ Partner with and provide ongoing resources to community, volunteer, or Indigenous-led organizations that give peer support, emergency, and/or non-emergency response to those in the community in need of support and assistance.

✓ = Action

02



02

Strategic Move 2:

Re-envision streets to foster urban life

2. Strategic Move 2: Re-envision streets to foster urban life

Streets play an essential role in cities and downtowns. Streets shape how we experience Downtown as pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders, and motorists. The street network Downtown comprises upwards of 30 per cent of the total land area. Historically, some features of Downtown's street systems, like one-way streets, have been designed to move cars through Downtown as quickly as possible. To achieve the Plan's goal of creating a vibrant Downtown with thriving mixed-use neighbourhoods, a different approach to street design is needed.

Downtown should be easy to get to, and easy to get around in, but street design must also support civic life and economic activity. Downtown streets are an underutilized public asset, which can be used to create spaces and places for people, promote economic activity and encourage a vibrant urban life.

2.1 Goal: Re-envision how we design our streets

Design matters, and how streets are designed says a lot about what is valued and prioritized. Downtown is a destination, and not a place to go through as quickly as possible. Street design must reflect this value while still enabling movement of people, and goods where appropriate.

As the number of people living and vising Downtown increases, so also will pressure on transportation and transit infrastructure, especially on streets where many different uses and users are competing for limited space. It is not feasible or desirable to expand or widen streets Downtown, so it is important to better prioritize and reallocate the limited amount of space. This includes shifting towards more sustainable travel modes and making more efficient use of road space to help achieve transportation, public realm, environmental, economic, and public health objectives of *OurWinnipeg 2045* and *CentrePlan 2050*.

Good street design will enable growing numbers of residents, workers, students, and visitors Downtown to travel safely, efficiently, and more sustainably, while also attracting businesses and strengthening environmental resiliency.



Sidewalks, bike parking, businesses, and cycling routes all contribute to great urban neighbourhoods.

Policies and Actions:

2.1.1 Design streets to prioritize Downtown as a destination and a collection of great urban neighbourhoods. This should include focusing on placemaking; pedestrian, micro-mobility device user, and cyclist safety and comfort; accessibility; route connectivity (and availability/ signage during construction) implementation of the *Winnipeg Transit Master Plan*; and active transportation infrastructure.

2.1.2 Promote off-peak delivery and use of alternative delivery methods like bicycles and smaller delivery vehicles within Downtown.

2.1.3 ✓ Implement a pilot program to encourage and facilitate innovative freight delivery methods (off-hours deliveries, remote consolidation centres, etc.).

2.1.4 ✓ Work with key stakeholders to divert unnecessary truck through-traffic from the Downtown core to increase small business retention, encourage pedestrian traffic, and boost economic activity.

2.1.5 Streets should function as an extension of the pedestrian realm, and be easily closed for celebrations, markets, and public events.



Surface parking lot at Donald Street and St. Mary today (looking south).



What Donald and St. Mary could look like tomorrow

2.1.6 ✓ Develop "shared street" guidelines compatible with the *Provincial Shared Street Regulation*.

2.1.7 Road rights-of-way should provide space for green infrastructure including trees, other plants, and stormwater management features that will support climate change adaptation.

2.1.8 When scoping out the needs associated with street renewals and reconstruction, the City should include expertise in urban design and placemaking.

2.1.9 Any proposed pick-up and drop-off areas for developments shall be accommodated on the property or within existing curb-to-curb road widths. Laybys that remove space from the pedestrian right-of-way or sidewalk amenity zone shall not be permitted.

2.1.10 All departments should be included in the selection and prioritization of street renewals as part of the five-year capital budgeting process. Criteria to evaluate which streets should be selected should include, but not be limited to the following:

- Development potential
- Planned investments in Transit and active transportation
- Placemaking potential
- Climate adaptation
- Condition of the roadway and sidewalk
- Coordination with planned improvements to underground structures and utilities such as Manitoba Hydro

2.1.11 ✓ Create a new *Downtown Streetscape Design Standards Manual*, to guide street reconstruction and design. The *Downtown Streetscape Design Standards Manual* will categorize Downtown streets by types, based on their function in the roadway network and the planned adjacent land uses. For each street type, the Manual will provide recommendations for how space is to be allocated within the sidewalk area for each type of street, including placement of furnishings, secure bike storage, trees, and other streetscape elements.

2.1.12 The following streets, which have already designated as part of the five-year capital budget, shall be reconstructed in alignment with the *Downtown Streetscape Design Standards Manual* prior to the Manual's official approval:

- Kennedy Street
- Edmonton Street
- Carlton Street
- Hargrave Street
- Qu'appelle Avenue

2.1.13 ✓ Prioritize completion of the following street improvements as identified in the Exchange Waterfront Neighbourhood Development Program (2014-2018) and in alignment with the *Downtown Streetscape Design Standards Manual*:

- Pacific Avenue
- Amy Street
- Rupert Avenue
- Martha Street
- Alexander Avenue

2.1.14 ✓ Review the one-way street systems for their effect on safety for vulnerable road users, economic vibrancy, and effectiveness in moving people Downtown.

2.1.15 ✓ Review the *City of Winnipeg Manual of Temporary Traffic Control on City Streets* (MTTC) to reflect best practices during Downtown development, to improve pedestrian and cyclist access, connectivity, and accessibility during street and building construction.

✓ = Action



Approaching Downtown on Queen Elizabeth Way.



Streets play an essential role in cities and downtowns.



Proposed pedestrian bridge connecting Edmonton Street/McFadyn Park with Fort Rouge Park and River Avenue.

2.2 Goal: Improve connectivity Downtown and to adjacent neighbourhoods

The connectivity challenges facing Downtown involve is its overall size and the distance between neighbourhoods and destinations, as well as physical barriers (like rivers and major roads) that hinder pedestrian and cyclists from accessing other parts of Downtown.

People are more likely to walk from one destination to another if the experience is convenient, comfortable, and enjoyable. This requires a thoughtful approach to improving connections and pedestrian experiences between key destinations such as The Forks, Old Market Square, Rapid Transit stations, parks and rivers, educational institutions, recreation facilities, grocery stores, and commercial districts.

Policies and Actions:

2.2.1 Downtown and adjacent neighbourhoods, parks, and recreational opportunities should be strengthened and connected by safe and accessible active transportation networks to each other and Downtown.

2.2.2 ✓ Open the ground level intersection of Portage Avenue and Main Street to pedestrians.

2.2.3 Future studies and engagement related to the Portage Avenue and Main Street intersection shall consider ground level crossings in their scope and options.

2.2.4 A high-quality active transportation corridor should be established linking McFadyen Park to Central Park as part of the redevelopment of Portage Place Mall.

2.2.5 ✓ Improve existing pedestrian crossings at Main Street, particularly in places where Main Street is extra wide or impeded by additional turn lanes or angled streets (e.g. Broadway, York Avenue, St. Mary Avenue, James Avenue, Disraeli Freeway, and Higgins Avenue).

2.2.6 ✓ Build the Osborne to Downtown active transportation bridge as outlined in the *Winnipeg Pedestrian and Cycling Strategies*.

2.2.7 ✓ The City should strengthen connections between The Forks and the rest of Downtown through the following actions:

- Explore the creation of a new pedestrian connection under the train tracks into Railside at The Forks development by the property at the southwest corner of William Stephenson Way and Israel Asper Way;
- Improve existing connections to, and across, Main Street through active transportation crossings, lighting, plantings, trees, benches, and gateway features; and
- Improve the pedestrian environment on Portage Avenue East, Westbrook, Sir William Stephenson Way and Pioneer Avenue as primary pedestrian routes linking Portage & Main to the Forks, St. Boniface and Waterfront Drive

✓ = Action



The *Winnipeg Transit Master Plan* will improve transit service in Winnipeg.



Portage & Main (looking west).

2.3 Goal: Create a Downtown for pedestrians

In addition to addressing the impacts of surface parking lots along our streets and building infill that has active street frontages, the City must also prioritize safe street design for pedestrians and other active transportation users. Since the 1950s, for many different reasons, this pedestrian-oriented environment was eroded and Downtown lost its walkable character.

To re-envision streets for people, it is vital to again prioritize safe street design for pedestrians and other active transportation users. Streets should be designed with pedestrian safety as a top priority. Most pedestrian collisions (including fatal, major, minor, or minimal injury) take place Downtown and principally involve larger roadways. Serious injuries and deaths on the road are preventable and Winnipeggers should no longer tolerate such incidents.

In the future, Downtown will become safer and it will be easier and more enjoyable to walk around, explore, cross the street, and discover what Downtown has to offer. Ensuring accessibility for all will help people of all ages and abilities feel welcomed and valued and will bring life to Downtown streets.

Policies and Actions:

2.3.1 Prioritize pedestrian-scale design in the planning, design, operation and maintenance of transportation infrastructure.

2.3.2 ✓ Implement Downtown-related pedestrian safety improvements in the *Road Safety Strategic Action Plan*, particularly in areas that have high collision rates. This will include reviewing lower speed limits to reduce collision frequency and severity, and improve safety and livability.

2.3.3 When streets are being repaired or reconstructed, the City should replace break-away traffic signal or street lighting poles with fixed base infrastructure.

2.3.4 ✓ Review pedestrian crossings of streets with more than two lanes to improve the pedestrian experience across these roads, including two-stage crossings with refuges or longer walk times.

2.3.5 On blocks longer than 150 metres and where no laneways or other connections are provided, the City may, where desirable, acquire a portion of a property to improve mid-block pedestrian connectivity.

✓ = Action



Downtown snowy alley.

2.4 Goal: Create a Downtown for cyclists

Walking and cycling are the most sustainable transportation options to get around Downtown, and both can have enormous benefits for health, reduced greenhouse gas emissions, air quality, road safety and equity. As more people continue to live, work and visit Downtown, it is important to provide cycling infrastructure that is safe, comfortable, and friendly to all ages and abilities.

Cycling infrastructure (such as protected bike lanes and short and long-term secure bike parking) encourages local buying, which is critical to the Downtown economy. It is important to complete the Downtown cycling network as quickly as possible, while making Downtown a safe, convenient and enjoyable place for active transportation.

Policies and Actions:

2.4.1 New residential development should be designed to include short and long-term secure bicycle storage (e.g. a bike room or in-suite bike storage).

2.4.2 ✓ Accelerate the implementation of the Downtown bike network as outlined in the *Winnipeg Pedestrian and Cycling Strategies*.

2.4.3 ✓ Create a program to collect detailed pedestrian and cyclist counts and other data on a regular basis.

2.4.4 Support the use of secure temporary short-term bicycle parking (e.g. a staffed bicycle valet or temporary bicycle corrals) at public events (e.g. festivals, sports events, and cultural attractions).

2.4.5 ✓ Partner with BIZ organizations, businesses, property owners, and community partners to implement long-term secure bicycle parking such as bike cages and lockers.

2.4.6 ✓ Partner with BIZ organizations, businesses, and community partners to implement short-term bicycle parking and where possible secure bicycle maintenance stations through the Bicycle Parking Partnership Grant as budget allows.

✓ = Action



Cycling infrastructure at Main Street and Assiniboine Avenue.

Downtown cycling network





In the future, Portage Avenue will be improved as a rapid Transit corridor.

2.5 Goal: Create a Downtown for public transit

OurWinnipeg 2045 sets a direction for major corridors to become more pedestrian and transit-oriented over the long term. As the highest residential and employment densities are directed towards Downtown, it is the place that can provide the best transit access. Because of this, the City must support Rapid Transit and the Transit network in general with a transit-oriented public realm, to help create well-connected, mixed-use activity nodes.

As part of the *Winnipeg Transit Master Plan*, the Rapid Transit network will provide access into Downtown for tens of thousands of people each day. Arriving, departing and waiting are all everyday actions along these critical movement corridors, so the experience should involve an attractive, pedestrian-friendly environment for all. Transit must become the quickest, safest, most accessible and most convenient way to travel to and through Downtown.

Policies and Actions:

2.5.1 Accelerate construction of Downtown Rapid Transit infrastructure as outlined in the *Winnipeg Transit Master Plan*.

2.5.2 Implement the new *Winnipeg Transit Master Plan* route network by June 2025.

2.5.3 ✓ As part of *Winnipeg Transit Master Plan* implementation, transform Main Street and Portage Avenue (including pedestrian areas) into high-quality Rapid Transit corridors and image routes through Downtown. This should include prioritizing accessibility and life safety, and improving pedestrian amenities like public art, lighting, trees, wide sidewalks, and benches. Pedestrian areas and transit infrastructure will be constructed at the same time.

2.5.4 Dedicated space for amenities should be provided at all bus stops and stations, either as standalone elements (e.g. trees) and structures (e.g. benches) or integrated with adjacent developments or streetscape elements.

2.5.5 ✓ Identify opportunities to co-locate Rapid Transit Stations with adjacent developments to improve safety, convenience and comfort of transit riders.

2.5.6 If transit stops are removed as part of the *Winnipeg Transit Master Plan* implementation, replace transit infrastructure (e.g. shelters, signs) with trees and other pedestrian amenities.

2.5.7 ✓ Identify pedestrian realm improvements to improve wayfinding, signage, and accessibility related to the Rapid Transit stations and transit stops.

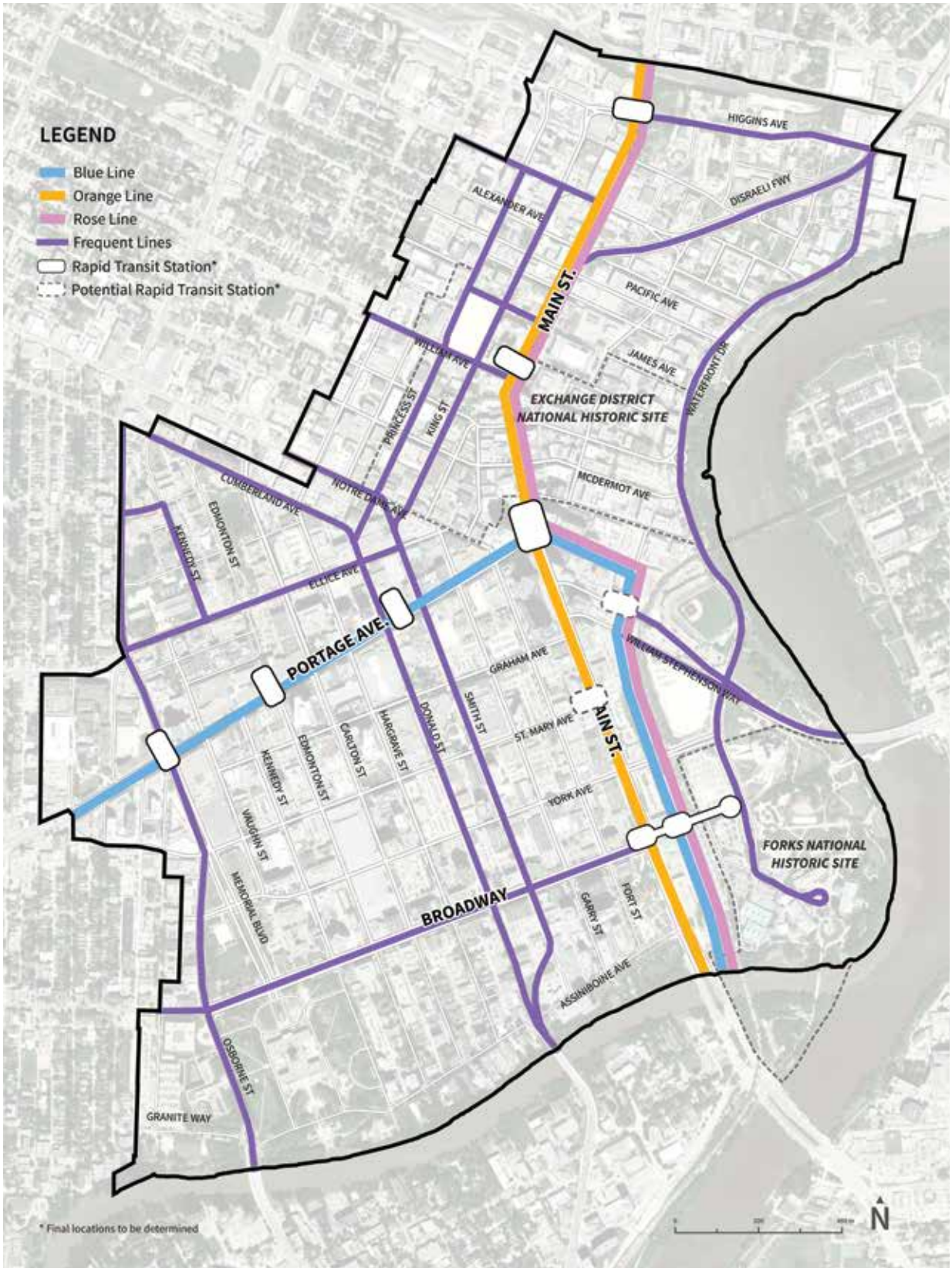
2.5.8 ✓ Work with BIZ organizations to improve comfort, safety, placemaking, and wayfinding at transit stop locations where bus routes intersect, to assist transit riders transferring buses at these intersections.

2.5.9 ✓ Integrate the Weather Protected Walkway Network with the transit network including enhancing street-level entrances that connect to transit stops and Rapid Transit stations.

2.5.10 ✓ Create a Downtown “free zone” for public transit.

✓ **= Action**

Proposed Downtown long-term transit network





On-street parking in Winnipeg's Exchange District.

2.6 Goal: Rethink how motor vehicle parking is provided

Getting people downtown is a critical component for Downtown economic health and vitality, and parking options are a tool to support this. A Downtown parking system should contribute to both short- and long-term development goals including the transition to electric vehicles and redevelopment of surface parking lots. This requires looking at parking as more than a place to put a car and instead seeing it as a key link in the transportation system and an economic asset that enables us to access goods and services. Our parking system should incorporate all these needs and should enable the best use of space.

Policies and Actions:

2.6.1 ✓ Address illegal surface parking lots through enforcement.

2.6.2 ✓ Establish surface parking licensing program and fees for Downtown standalone surface parking lots, to address landscaping and safety issues, encourage redevelopment, encourage addition of EV charging stations, and ensure surface parking lots are safe, high-quality, visually appealing, and functional, in accordance with the Downtown Parking Strategy.

2.6.3 Parking decisions should be made using data driven decision making and factor in the level of service provided in each Downtown district and neighbourhood.

2.6.4 ✓ Create a comprehensive assessment of City parking supply, co-led by Winnipeg Parking Authority and Public Works, to establish an expected level of service Downtown. This analysis should include the number of parking spaces, occupancy rates, and types of parking facilities (e.g., on-street, off-street, garages) for City and private sector parking.

2.6.5 On- and off-street parking, both public and private, should include electric vehicle charging spaces (or be electric vehicle ready), car share spaces, and adequate loading and delivery areas.



Electric Vehicle charging station at The Forks.

2.6.6 ✓ Explore how to provide electric vehicle charging stations for both on- and off-street parking areas and establish targets and timelines for constructing/retrofitting electric vehicle (or electric vehicle ready) spaces.

2.6.7 Facilitate the construction of underground parkades, parking structures with active uses on the ground floor, and parking structures concealed by active uses to help with the redevelopment of strategic sites.

2.6.8 ✓ Repair the Millennium Library parkade while maintaining the size of the Millennium Library Park and its function as public open space.

2.6.9 ✓ Collaborate with BIZ organizations to develop district-specific parking strategies and address curbside management and off-street parking issues.

2.6.10 Parking revenue should be reinvested in the operations of the Winnipeg Parking Authority and other initiatives within the Plan.

2.6.11 ✓ Establish a parking revenue reinvestment model, where a portion of parking proceeds are used to fund actions in this plan.

2.6.12 ✓ Implement dynamic pricing for parking spaces to encourage turnover and reduce congestion. Higher prices during peak hours and lower prices during off-peak hours can incentivize alternative transportation modes.

2.6.13 ✓ Create a plan to reduce the number of on-street pay-stations while motivating more parkers to use mobile payment options rather than pay stations and informing them of how they can pay.

2.6.14 ✓ Replace and modernize existing pay-stations, while looking at being more effective with the number and location of the pay-stations.

✓ = Action



Streets shape how we experience Downtown as pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders, and motorists.



03

Strategic Move 3: Grow a greener Downtown

3. Strategic Move 3: Grow a greener Downtown

Winnipeg's green spaces, parks and tree canopy enrich the city with leisure, gathering, and recreational opportunities. These hold immeasurable value for both residents and tourists alike. Compared to other areas of Winnipeg, this green network is more difficult to see Downtown due to building density, expansive streets, and a lack of street trees.

Bound by the Red and Assiniboine rivers, Downtown boasts naturalized riverbank zones that create a haven from urban heat and noise. While these rivers are undeniable assets, they also serve as obstacles, hindering people's movement between Downtown and adjacent neighbourhoods. In the future, Downtown will take full advantage of its natural assets, enhancing connections with neighboring areas, and bringing more greenery to every street through quality park spaces, more trees, and green infrastructure.

The green Downtown we deserve ensures that the expanding residential community in the city centre can access a wide range of recreational activities, experience a thriving urban forest, and easily reach parks both within and outside Downtown. It also makes Downtown more resilient to risks and vulnerabilities of climate change.

3.1 Goal: Promote green infrastructure

Downtown areas often feature extensive concrete landscapes, which place increasing strain on land drainage as more buildings are constructed. Emerging research shows that green infrastructure can help alleviate this burden, while also providing social, environmental, and economic benefits. Green infrastructure manages stormwater through natural elements such as bioretention facilities (e.g. rain gardens), plant and soil systems, green roofs, and well-planned landscaping.

In Winnipeg's Downtown, green infrastructure will be researched, trialed, and integrated into public lands. Incentives and regulations to promote its adoption in private developments should be explored, as well as ways to overcome barriers such as clay/silty soil conditions and extreme weather. Monitoring and maintenance will be prioritized to ensure the long-term effectiveness of public investments. Collectively, these measures will contribute to a more sustainable, resilient, and visually appealing Downtown.

Policies and Actions:

3.1.1 Downtown should be a showcase for green infrastructure and innovation, such as plant and soil systems, green roofs, and well-planned landscaping.

3.1.2 ✓ Develop grant programs that complement funding programs associated with other governmental strategies (e.g. the *National Adaptation Strategy*), and support installation of green infrastructure.

3.1.3 Encourage new buildings to include adequate space and conditions to incorporate trees, landscaping, and green infrastructure (e.g. green roofs).

3.1.4 ✓ Explore the possibility of constructing reed beds and floating wetlands along the Red and Assiniboine Rivers.



Riverbanks and riparian zones are an essential part of Downtown's green network.

3.1.5 Protect, restore and enhance riparian zones to support aquatic health, riverbank stability, flood protection and habitat biodiversity.

3.1.6 The City shall consider green infrastructure options when assessing municipal infrastructure projects, and test green infrastructure solutions wherever possible.

3.1.7 The City should upgrade public infrastructure on street reconstruction projects to incorporate green infrastructure to include components such as rain gardens, bioswales, reduced street widths, soil cell suspended pavement systems with necessary soil volume (e.g. silva cells) to support a healthy tree canopy and enhance stormwater management.

3.1.8 ✓ Strategically plant micro forests (or pocket forests) to augment green spaces, reduce urban heat island effect, provide opportunities to connect people with nature, and improve public access to green spaces.

✓ = Action



As Downtown grows and evolves, so too must its public spaces.

3.2 Goal: Ensure public spaces meet needs of a growing residential population

Parks and green spaces help create thriving residential neighborhoods. They provide opportunities for relaxation, recreation, social interaction, and a connection to nature, all of which contribute to overall well-being. Downtown Winnipeg currently has one of the lowest amounts of parkland per person in the city. Expanding parkland in this densely developed urban area is complex; there is more concrete, more building density, and most land is already used for other purposes.

The *Winnipeg Recreation and Parks Strategies* outline a target of 30 square metres of parkland per person, so more parks will be needed to support residents and workers as Downtown's population grows. There is less land available Downtown, so it is important to think about Downtown parks differently.

Attractive, well-maintained parks and plazas make Downtown more appealing for residents, and function as cost-effective development incentives. As residential growth is a primary goal, Downtown parks need to serve residents with more amenities and be more flexible, multifunctional, and durable for community gatherings and public events. This will result in a tailored approach consistent with Downtown's unique character, while achieving the well-being and satisfaction for its growing residential community.

Policies and Actions:

3.2.1 Park space and amenities should be provided to accommodate the needs of Downtown residents, in accordance with the *Winnipeg Recreation and Parks Strategies*, with a focus on areas of higher poverty, and considering the needs and interests of visitors and workers.

3.2.2 Park amenities should be tailored to the unique park spaces Downtown, to increase variety and experiences (e.g. outdoor exercise equipment in parks with active transportation trails, and photo opportunities in more urban settings like Millennium Park or event venues, etc.).

3.2.3 ✓ Determine the targeted technical level of service for park amenities and maintenance of parks in the Downtown and adjacent neighbourhoods, and dedicate sufficient funding to meet this technical level of service for improvements, upgrades and ongoing maintenance.

3.2.4 ✓ Re-evaluate how park and recreational amenity needs are assessed Downtown, to account for residential growth targets, higher levels of poverty, desired amenities (like dog parks) and less private green space.

3.2.5 Parks Capital and Operating budget allocation for Downtown should be increased to meet current service demands and should grow in proportion to increases in residents, visitors and workers.

3.2.6 ✓ Update the *Zoning Bylaw* to create a zoning category for parks Downtown, and to ensure that parks are designated appropriately in accordance with the *Winnipeg Zoning Bylaw*.

3.2.7 ✓ Assess how much additional investment is required to meet the targeted levels of service of 30 square metres per person, as identified in the *Winnipeg Recreation and Parks Strategies* for the Downtown, with consideration to anticipated population increase.

3.2.8 The City shall look for opportunities (including existing rights of way, surface parking lots, derelict properties, and land acquisition) to develop new parks.

3.2.9 ✓ Create a new community park to improve connectivity and access to multi-use greenspace between the SHED and the Exchange District.

3.2.10 Prioritize the retention and acquisition of riverbank lands to restore riparian habitat, increase public access to waterways, and improve active transportation along the North Winnipeg Parkway to parks beyond Downtown.

3.2.11 ✓ Secure land for and construct a four-season Parks' maintenance facility to service Downtown.

3.2.12 Prioritize park improvements in areas of higher poverty to meet service gaps.

✓ = Action



One of the pop-up meeting spaces created by the Downtown Winnipeg Business Improvement Zone (BIZ).

3.3 Goal: Increase programming options through partnerships

Downtown parks and public spaces can foster life, energy, and creativity. To get the most out of these opportunities, partnerships are key. Community and non-profit organizations and the private sector can offer creative ideas, flexibility, and the innovation needed to draw people into a space. To build a lively and greener Downtown for residents, workers and visitors, the City must build partnerships to increase programming and opportunities.

Policies and Actions:

3.3.1 Consider temporary or semi-permanent commercial amenities in public spaces. The intent would be to increase use of city parks, increase recreational opportunities, foster dynamic civic life and complement existing park amenities.

3.3.2 Support Downtown partners to provide recreational and programming opportunities on City-owned land, existing rights of way, and corporate plazas.

3.3.3 Work with the Province of Manitoba to add greenspace and park amenities as part of the redevelopment of their surface parking lots.

3.3.4 ✓ Work with BIZ organizations to develop a “Parks on tap” travelling beer gardens program and/or other programming that supports and expands opportunities for local businesses.

✓ = Action



Downtown parks and public spaces can foster life, energy, and creativity.

3.4 Goal: Transform Graham Avenue into a destination

Today, Graham Avenue is primarily a bus and bike only street. As part of the *Winnipeg Transit Master Plan*, buses will begin moving off Graham Avenue Buses in summer of 2025. This provides an opportunity to re-imagine Graham Avenue as a key destination within the heart of a key sports and entertainment area.

In the future, Graham Avenue will be a destination street with a linear park and plaza where people want to be; whether they are attending a street party, biking across Downtown, enjoying a patio, or simply breathing in the fresh air of a green or naturalized area.

Policies and Actions:

3.4.1 The future design of Graham should be based upon the following objectives:

- Placemaking;
- Bike connectivity;
- Encouraging infill development;
- Mixing transportation modes; and
- Greening the street (including urban canopy coverage).

3.4.2 ✓ Transform Graham Avenue into a linear park and plaza that is a unique Downtown destination. The design should include considerations for green infrastructure, public art, programming, urban forest enhancement, green space, cycling infrastructure, and plaza space with amenities, like water and electrical hookup, to support events and vendors.

3.4.3 ✓ Create construction drawings based on Graham Avenue engagement activities.

3.4.4 ✓ In collaboration with Downtown partners, create a Graham Avenue Animation Strategy that outlines commitments and responsibilities of public, private, and non-profit partners, to ensure the street is a successful, safe, and well-maintained public space year-round.

3.4.5 Build unique partnerships and explore unique management agreements to position Graham Avenue as a testing ground for urban life and urban design.

3.4.6 ✓ Initiate a pilot project to animate Graham, to begin on July 1, 2025, as soon as the buses come off Graham Avenue.

3.4.7 ✓ Initiate a retail strategy to support existing businesses, attract new businesses, encourage affordable rents, assist in animation and decrease vacancy along Graham Avenue.

✓ = Action



Graham Avenue at Edmonton Street (Manitoba Hydro) today (looking east).



What Graham Avenue at Edmonton Street could look like tomorrow.



Graham Avenue at Donald Street (Arena) today (looking west).



What Graham Avenue at Donald Street could look like tomorrow.



Graham Avenue at Garry Street today (looking west).



What Graham Avenue at Garry Street could look like tomorrow.



Downtown's tree canopy provides protection from the sun and wind, and brings natural beauty to streets and parks.

3.5 Goal: Increase the tree canopy Downtown

Winnipeg is known for its tree canopy, and that identity should extend across Downtown. It is important to build great urban neighbourhoods Downtown that are resilient to the effects of climate change. Ensuring a robust tree canopy will be critical to having a higher quality of life for Downtown residents, workers and visitors. Trees provide many important benefits, including cooling our streets in the summer, reducing rainwater runoff and air pollution, improving mental and physical health, and beautifying the city.

Policies and Actions:

3.5.1 The City should plant trees on streets and parks in accordance with the *Winnipeg Comprehensive Urban Forest Strategy*.

3.5.2 During street design and development, identify furnishing and planting zones that dedicates spaces for trees as outlined in The Downtown Street Design Standard Manual and in accordance with tree planting specifications outlined in the *Winnipeg Comprehensive Urban Forest Strategy* and the Tree Planting Standards for Regional Streets and Downtown.

3.5.3 When one or more trees are removed during City infrastructure projects (e.g. construction of the Rapid Transit network, street repairs, Water and Waste projects) the City shall use the project's budget to replace them in Silva cells, two trees for every one tree removed, as close to the location(s) of the original tree(s) as possible.

3.5.4 The City should ensure long-term success for street trees through measures that may include appropriate soil composition and volumes, determining how often trees should be pruned Downtown, planting multiple trees and companion plantings in continuous trenches. Additional space may be required on high pedestrian movement streets, in accordance with the Tree Planting Standards for Regional Streets and Downtown.

3.5.5 Where the City determines that parking lot landscaping requirements in the *Zoning Bylaw* cannot be met, require financial or equivalent contributions for trees and tree infrastructure (e.g.: silva cell) for tree planting in the public right-of-way or in parks.

3.5.6 ✓ Establish landscaping requirements in the *Zoning Bylaw* where private yards are provided or required as part of development.

✓ = Action



Summer storm over the Canadian Museum for Human Rights.

3.6 Goal: Foster and demonstrate climate change action

Climate change action can lead to cleaner air, more green spaces, and sustainable transportation options. Downtowns should be at the centre of cities' responses to climate change action, and in the future, Winnipeg's Downtown will become a showcase for climate change resilience.

The City should prioritize construction of green buildings and deep retrofits and promote adaptive re-use of existing buildings. This will help reduce greenhouse gas emissions, limit construction waste, and increase energy efficiency.

Policies and Actions:

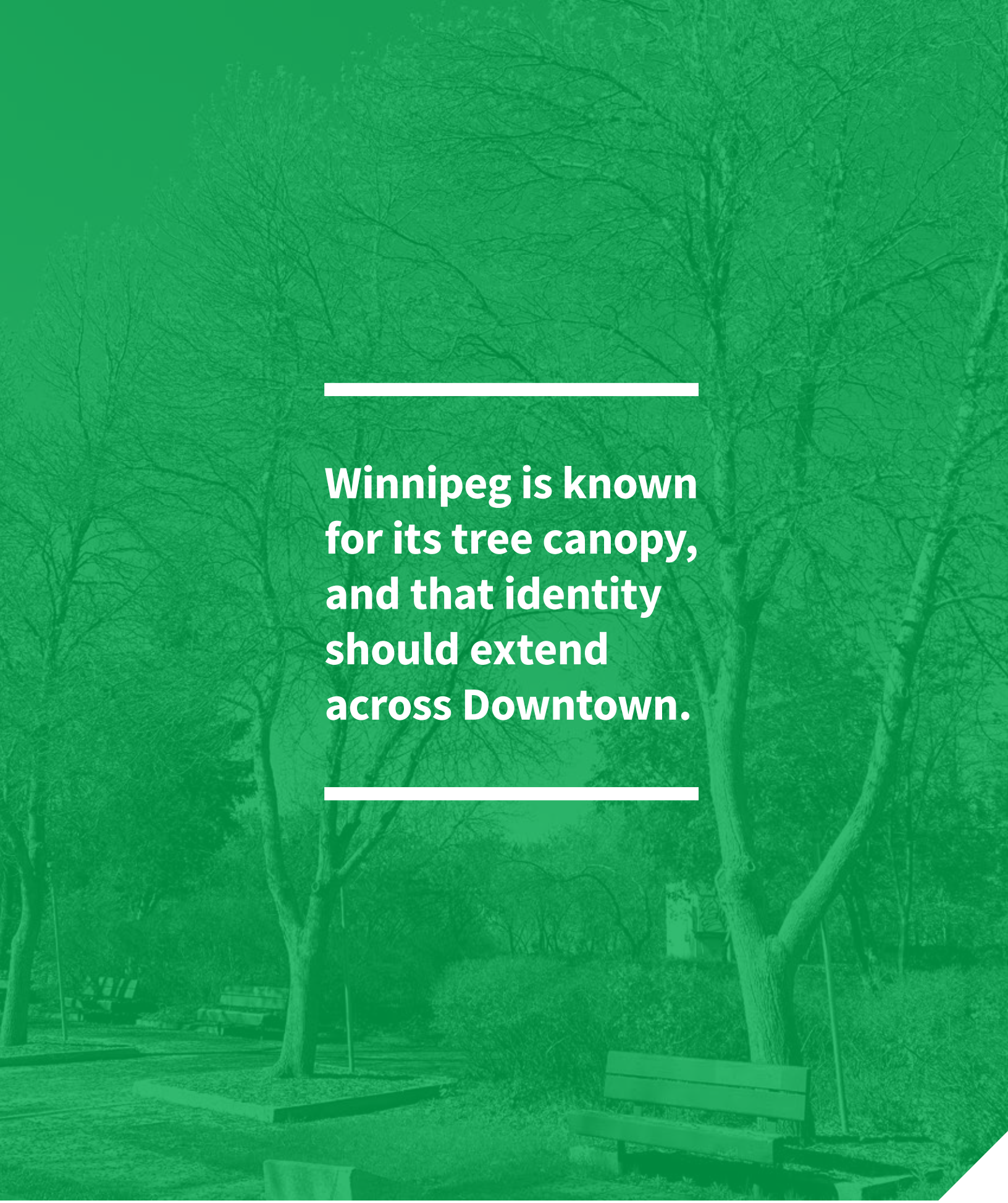
3.6.1 The City should showcase Downtown as a leader in climate change mitigation, adaptation and net-zero emissions.

3.6.2 ✓ Work with Manitoba Hydro to ensure Downtown has the electric power requirements (power generation and distribution system) to support an energy transition from fossil fuel and accommodate a growing population.

3.6.3 New buildings and building retrofits should be designed in accordance with City-adopted green building policies and the *Bird Friendly Building Design Standard*.

3.6.4 ✓ Conduct a climate risk and vulnerabilities assessment for Downtown to inform appropriate adaptation, response and recovery measures. This may include incorporating strategies to protect public safety (e.g. extreme heat, weather events, green infrastructure) and minimize damage to infrastructure and systems.

✓ = Action



Winnipeg is known for its tree canopy, and that identity should extend across Downtown.

04



04

Strategic Move 4: Create a lively Downtown

4. Strategic Move 4: Create a lively Downtown

Lively Downtowns embrace and build on their unique identities and attractions. They offer authentic, one-of-a-kind experiences and memorable interactions that draw people from across the city and beyond.

Downtown Winnipeg proudly showcases diverse artistic expressions, professional sports, local and international entertainment, great restaurants, and locally rooted festivals, making it the cultural and entertainment centre of Manitoba. Public art installations enhance our streets, and Winnipeg's identity as a winter city is being recognized as a fundamental strength that sets us apart. Downtown fosters a collaborative spirit where students, entrepreneurs, creatives, and local businesses support one another, propelling each other to greater heights. In addition, Indigenous businesses and governments are taking a prominent role in the redevelopment of Downtown, contributing to its evolution.

These aspects of Downtown's identity breathe life into its core. By nurturing these strengths, Downtown will prosper and preserve its unique position in our city, inviting people from all walks of life to share in its vibrant spirit.

4.1 Goal: Strengthen Downtown as Winnipeg’s entertainment and cultural hub

Downtown is where Winnipeggers come together to celebrate in distinctive ways – like skating among curated warming huts on a frozen river, swing dancing under the canopy at The Forks, exploring artist studios on First Fridays in The Exchange District, or celebrating sporting achievements at Portage and Main. Unique experiences can be found across Downtown, at its many theatres, the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, Centennial Concert Hall, Manitoba Museum, Canadian Museum for Human Rights, WAG-Qaumajuq, Old Market Square, and many other significant spaces. These experiences bring diverse people together and create a positive image that attracts tourists, talent, festivals, and investment; and ultimately enhances quality of life.

The City will continue to be an active partner in strengthening Downtown as a cultural and entertainment hub by better supporting gatherings and events. The City will re-evaluate wayfinding and signage and seek out new placemaking opportunities to enhance access and navigation throughout Downtown.

Policies and Actions:

4.1.1 ✓ Explore how to renew and enhance wayfinding Downtown, including the use of web-based and technological solutions and connections to transit infrastructure.

4.1.2 Support community-initiated placemaking opportunities like a ‘Pop-Up Spaces Program’ that includes movable and re-useable furniture, to activate under-utilized spaces in all seasons, creating more reasons to visit and experience Downtown.



WAG-Quamajuq at the corner of St. Mary Avenue and Memorial Boulevard.

4.1.3 ✓ Work with the Exchange District BIZ to create an Exchange District Festival Campus (centered around Old Market Square) as a collection of linked entertainment spaces that can be managed as a whole, using bollards and branding to create an appropriately scaled and supported festival area. Approvals and processes would be streamlined to ensure event planning in this area is simple and straightforward.

4.1.4 ✓ Create a program to promote public education about Heritage Resources and the history of Winnipeg's development from the pre-Colonial settler era to the recent past.

4.1.5 ✓ Support existing events and festivals by developing a system to assess infrastructure needs and streamline approvals from year-to-year.

4.1.6 ✓ Work with BIZ organizations and other Downtown partners to amend relevant bylaws and develop policies outlining when parking meter, street closure, and other event fees can be waived Downtown to support arts and cultural events, with a focus on events that align with the City's reconciliation commitments.

4.1.7 The City should continue to work collaboratively with Downtown agencies (e.g. The Forks North Portage Development Corporation, BIZ organizations) and other private stakeholders (e.g. True North Sports and Entertainment) to provide a wide range of quality programming for both visitors to Downtown as well as programming targeted for Downtown residents and employees.

4.1.8 The City should work collaboratively with private landowners to deliver increased programming on privately owned spaces that the public can access.

4.1.9 ✓ Transition the temporary patio program into a permanent program, allowing businesses to set up temporary patios in the public right-of-way, with a focus on flexibility, lower costs, and streamlining the approval process.

✓ = Action



Both temporary and permanent public art installations contribute to Downtown's unique character.

4.2 Goal: Integrate more public art

Public art goes beyond mere decoration; it is an engaging way to connect people from diverse communities, build local identity, and support local arts and culture. It sparks conversations, creates a sense of place, and provides fresh perspectives on both new and familiar ideas. Through public art, we're encouraged to explore, connect, and think about the diverse perspectives that make Winnipeg the unique and vibrant city it is today.

The City's public art projects are administered by the Winnipeg Arts Council in accordance with the Public Art Policy, with the aim of creating a network of destinations and experiences travelling through all Downtown neighbourhoods.

Downtown should be at the core of the City's public art efforts, welcoming all Winnipeggers. Public art should seamlessly blend into public spaces, enhancing Downtown's distinct character and image, marking gathering spaces, gateways to neighbourhoods, and assisting with both temporary and permanent wayfinding and placemaking. We need a Downtown that celebrates public art at every turn, and where each piece celebrates a different aspect of Winnipeg's identity.

Policies and Actions:

4.2.1 Installation of public art should be encouraged throughout Downtown, including at important "gateways" to various neighbourhoods like the Exchange District.

4.2.2 Public art should be integrated into all major public projects.

4.2.3 ✓ Establish a "percentage for public art" policy, where one per cent of all Downtown City infrastructure projects is pooled into the Public Art Program to fund public art projects Downtown.

4.2.4 ✓ Reinstate an annual base amount for the Winnipeg Arts Council's Public Art Program that considers annual inflationary increases, to ensure effective policy implementation, project planning, and program and collection management.

4.2.5 Encourage the Winnipeg Arts Council to explore public-private partnerships to facilitate public art Downtown.

4.2.6 ✓ Work with the Winnipeg Arts Council, BIZ organizations, and Winnipeg's philanthropic community to explore the creation of a matching grant program.

✓ = Action



Summer patios bring life to the street and enjoyment to customers.



Niizhoziibean, the sharing space at the Forks.

4.3 Goal: Honour Indigenous history and culture

Reconciliation involves the hope of healed relationships, and that requires public truth sharing, apology, and commemoration that acknowledge and redress past harms. It is a city-wide and system-wide effort to address the ongoing legacies of colonialism and encourage new and respectful relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. The design of Downtown holds the opportunity to implement this commitment in a tangible way by infusing Indigenous-directed design, identity, and expression into Downtown's urban landscape. In doing so, the City's history and identity can be commemorated and celebrated, fostering deeper awareness and understanding among settlers, residents, and visitors, while inspiring a future built on full participation and equity.

Indigenous culture, art, and heritage has shaped – and will continue to shape – Downtown. Through close collaboration with Indigenous governments, communities, Elders and artists, the design and planning of our urban spaces must be guided by Indigenous voices.

Policies and Actions:

4.3.1 Indigenous art, history, and culture should be featured prominently and in a meaningful way throughout Downtown to reflect the importance of Indigenous culture and heritage in Winnipeg.

4.3.2 Downtown parks should be inclusive and include the infrastructure for Indigenous land-based practices (e.g. practicing ceremony, picking medicines, and sharing stories/ perspectives).

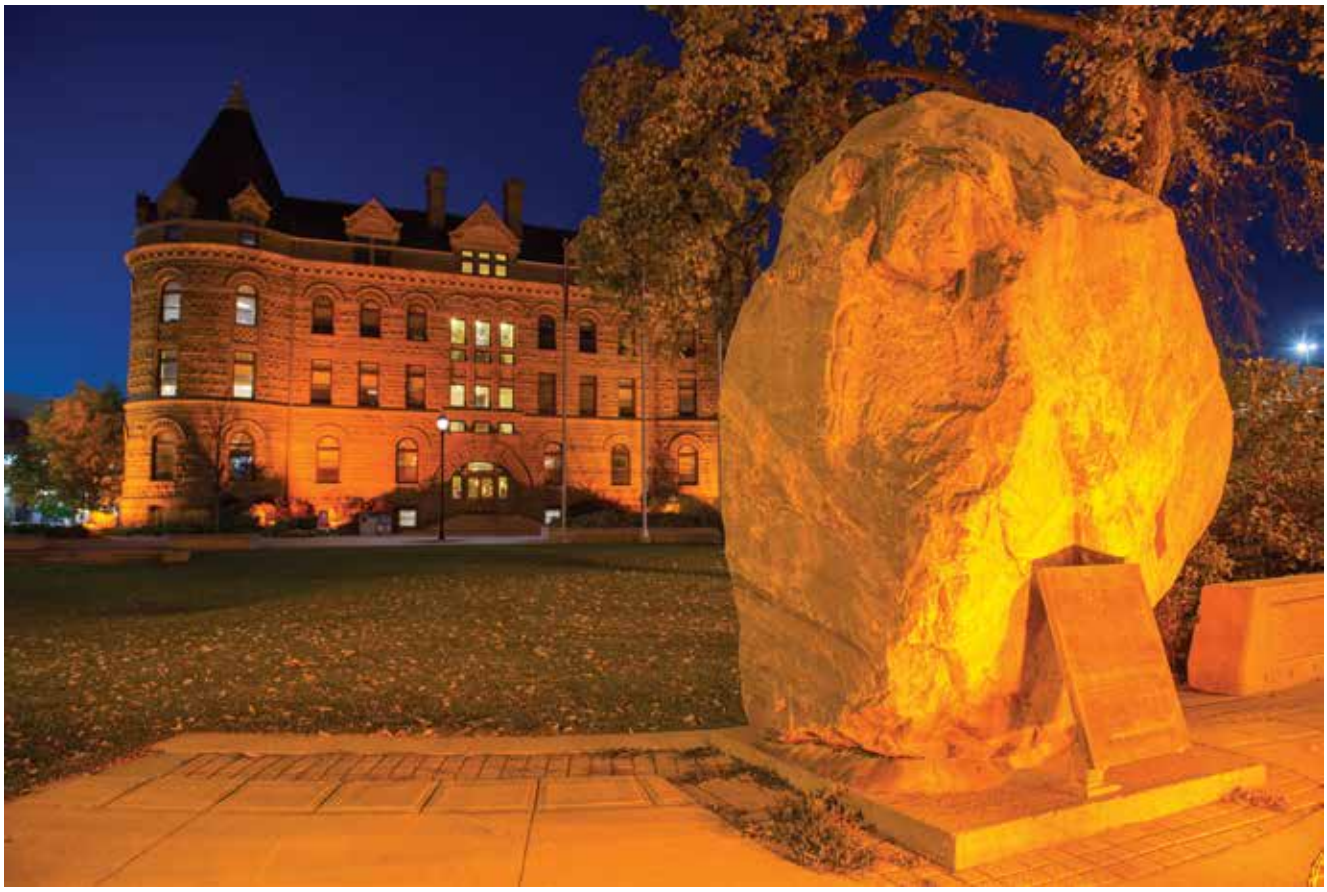
4.3.3 Encourage opportunities for ceremony and cultural practice.

4.3.4 ✓ Develop a plan to interpret and share stories of our shared history through Indigenous perspectives and art.

✓ **= Action**



Lively Downtowns embrace and build on their unique identities and attractions.



The University of Winnipeg at night.

4.4 Goal: Foster learning, innovation, and local business

Commerce and education bring life and energy to Downtown. Manitoba-owned, independent, and small businesses are the backbone of Downtown's economy and are critical to maintaining and increasing its vibrancy. Students are also part of this; Downtown has 40,000 students in various universities, colleges, and institutes, creating opportunity to showcase Downtown as a place where young minds want to stay, collaborate, and innovate.

To make Downtown an attractive place to learn, invest in, and innovate, it is important to both support existing institutions and businesses, and grow new ones. This can be done through partnerships, reactivating retail storefronts and underutilized buildings or sites, and making sure existing businesses are in an environment where they will thrive.

Policies and Actions:

4.4.1 The City should focus economic development initiatives on business attraction, investment, retention, street level business opportunities in vacant storefronts, and expansion to support demand for new retail and commercial services downtown.

4.4.2 ✓ Collaborate with school divisions and educational institutions to maintain existing school sites and post-secondary campus facilities within Downtown and, where possible, create new sites and facilities.

4.4.3 ✓ Collaborate with technology carriers to provide infrastructure (hardware) that allows fast and reliable digital connectivity, to attract more business Downtown.

4.4.4 Encourage Economic Development Winnipeg to create a strategy to support promotion and growth of Indigenous-owned businesses.

4.4.5 ✓ Create and enhance programs to address Downtown lighting, window cleaning and repair, and graffiti removal.

4.4.6 ✓ In partnership with BIZ organizations, support a storefront improvement program to improve customer comfort and safety and contribute to the economic development and promotion of businesses Downtown.

4.4.7 ✓ Work with Economic Development Winnipeg to develop a Downtown First economic strategy.

4.4.8 ✓ Explore options around re-tenanting vacant space in the old Canada Post tower.

✓ = Action



True North Square (looking east).

4.5 Goal: Make Downtown a destination in all seasons

Winnipeg takes immense pride in its winter identity, which is a testament to residents' resilience and adaptability. The cold winters may be challenging, but they also bring people together in unique and heartwarming ways. The example set by The Forks shows that Downtown can be a lively year-round destination that celebrates outdoor activities, even during the coldest months. Winter can enrich culture, fuel creativity, and foster a sense of belonging.

To create a thriving winter city, the City will adopt a winter-city lens to guide the design of all recreational amenities, streets, buildings, and public spaces Downtown. This strategic approach ensures Downtown Winnipeg evolves into a welcoming and vibrant place for residents and visitors, regardless of the season.

Policies and Actions:

4.5.1 Both public and private buildings and exterior public spaces should be designed for all-season safety and comfort, including addressing wind impacts and downdrafts, sunshine exposure and lighting.

4.5.2 ✓ Extend the time frame associated with the temporary patio program to allow patios in shoulder seasons.

4.5.3 ✓ Update pedestrian-level wind regulations for buildings to provide clarity about when an assessment is required, and the requirements and criteria for wind assessments to enhance pedestrian comfort and safety.

4.5.4 Sidewalks, bike routes, and bus stops should be convenient and accessible in winter.

4.5.5 ✓ Increase level of service related to snow removal on sidewalks and bike routes and find alternatives to the practice of using Downtown sidewalks as snow storage areas.

4.5.6 ✓ Explore partnership opportunities with organizations and facilities like the Y Winnipeg (Downtown) to provide more indoor and outdoor recreation options to Downtown residents.

4.5.7 ✓ Encourage and support Downtown partners to provide more opportunities for outdoor activities in all seasons.

4.5.8 ✓ Identify appropriate locations and provide a timeline for building universally accessible year-round and seasonal river access to Winnipeg's waterways.

✓ = Action



Downtown should be a destination in all seasons.



05

Strategic Move 5:

Improve Downtown governance and implementation

5. Strategic Move 5: Improve Downtown governance and implementation

Downtown is more complex to manage than other regions of Winnipeg. In this relatively small geographical space, one encounters large properties, businesses of various sizes, residents, tourists, cultural facilities, other levels of government (including Indigenous governments), and agencies supporting those most in need. While this rich mix contributes to Downtown's character, it also introduces complexities, as different interests and needs often intersect or compete in the same area.

The higher population density and the large number of visitors significantly increase demands on infrastructure. Sidewalks, public transit facilities, street trees, and public spaces all require continuous and dedicated maintenance and reinvestment to effectively support Downtown's dynamic environment.

Downtown also drives the image of Winnipeg, generating substantial revenue and employment opportunities. Sustaining the economic health of Downtown, supporting local businesses, attracting investment, and managing the economic interests of various Downtown stakeholders demands a concentrated effort.

These challenges are further complicated by unique urban planning complexities that can impact costs, as well as safety and security concerns, logistics for hosting events, transportation and parking, and the necessity for community engagement. These factors underscore the necessity for proactive governance and process improvement.

5.1 Goal: Fund the plan and measure progress

The success of *CentrePlan 2050* depends on the long-term commitment of Council, other levels of government, and the Public Service to the goals, policies and actions outlined in this Plan. This involves dedicating stable and long-term funding sources to plan implementation, ensuring that financial resources are consistently available to prevent delays or setbacks in Downtown's economic vitality. We have done this in the past, through the Core Area Initiative, which brought together funding from three levels of government to revitalize the physical and social environment in Winnipeg.

In addition to funding commitments to support the plan's actions, plan implementation will also require a commitment to tracking progress associated with our investments Downtown. To ensure this happens, the Public Service will provide annual reports to the Executive Policy Committee.



A unique view of Portage Avenue.

Policies and Actions:

5.1.1 *CentrePlan 2050* implementation should have a stable, long-term municipal funding source.

5.1.2 ✓ Establish a tri-level agreement with the federal and provincial governments (like the Winnipeg Core Area Initiative model) to assist with *CentrePlan 2050* implementation.

5.1.3 ✓ Explore how to finance Plan implementation through the capital and operating budgeting process, which could include exploring how the business tax levied from downtown businesses is allocated.

5.1.4 ✓ Measure progress related to the indicators outlined in Appendix A of this document.

5.1.5 ✓ Create a Downtown neighbourhood profiles data set on the City of Winnipeg Neighbourhood Profiles Census Information website that aligns with the Downtown boundaries as outlined in this Plan.

✓ = Action



Esplanade Riel at night.

5.2 Goal: Make service delivery a priority Downtown

Service delivery (through more streamlined and effective governance, operations and maintenance) should be a priority, as Downtown often is the first impression that visitors and tourists have of our city. A clean, attractive, and well-maintained Downtown can enhance a city's image and reputation, making it more appealing to investors, visitors, and potential residents. A well-maintained Downtown sends the message that we are welcoming, desirable and open for business. Over the past few years, Winnipeg has fallen short, and has not provided this positive first impression. To attract the investment we want, this must change.

Downtown maintenance will be elevated in its priority to meet the service needs of residents, businesses, and visitors. This dedication is integral to creating the vibrant and successful Downtown that we deserve. As *CentrePlan 2050* is implemented, the collaborative cross-departmental approach that helped form CentrePlan will continue, ensuring that resources and budgets are aligned to help do the basics well.

Policies and Actions:

5.2.1 ✓ Explore how to better coordinate and communicate about City infrastructure projects and timelines.

5.2.2 ✓ Create a process to engage Downtown stakeholders and other governments on Plan implementation and provide a venue for on-going dialogue to discuss operational issues and coordination of Downtown initiatives.

5.2.3 ✓ Change Public Service processes and re-align employees to ensure Downtown is managed as a cohesive service delivery unit to implement this plan, with a customer service lens and enough flexibility to adapt to unique situations and ongoing changes.

5.2.4 Downtown should be clean and well-maintained to foster a sense of place and pride, increase health and safety, and provide inclusive public spaces.

5.2.5 ✓ Enhance the Downtown maintenance program to ensure healthy and vigorous trees and plants, including well-maintained planters and flower beds.

5.2.6 Support community organizations in their work to mindfully and respectfully clean up Downtown encampments.

5.2.7 Work with BIZ organizations to remove graffiti and clean bus shelters.

5.2.8 ✓ Increase the frequency, resources and quality of care dedicated to fixing or replacing sidewalks, benches, lighting, curbs and other public realm infrastructure in the right-of-way and in parks and plazas.

5.2.9 Prioritize work orders to complete high-priority maintenance issues, to improve response times.

5.2.10 ✓ Work with other governments, BIZ organizations, social enterprises, and social service agencies (e.g. Siloam Mission's MOST program and DCSP's Clean Slate program) to develop innovative ways to keep Downtown clean and support people through income generation opportunities.

✓ = Action

5.3 Goal: Ensure Zoning and other City regulations reflect Downtown priorities

Zoning and other City bylaws are important implementation tools that help make City policies and priorities a reality. These rules make sure that development stays people-centered and contributes positively to the neighbourhood and street.

Policies and Actions:

5.3.1 ✓ Update the *Zoning Bylaw* to align with the *Winnipeg Urban Design Standards*, other City bylaws, and the objectives of this Plan.

5.3.2 Ensure that property standards covered by the *Neighbourhood Liveability* and *Vacant and Derelict Buildings* bylaws are enforced and that the Downtown is considered a priority area by bylaw officers.

5.3.3 ✓ Review the *Encroachment Bylaw* to reflect Downtown development priorities and realities, ensure encroachment fee agreements reflect the annual revenue generated by the proposed encroachment, and further specify which (and how far) architectural features may project into the public realm.

5.3.4 ✓ Create policy and criteria to determine when a property made up of multiple lots is not required to complete a Short Form Subdivision Application prior to the issuance of a Development Permit.

5.3.5 ✓ Review land dedication fee policy for consistency and specify develop criteria for when fee exemptions can be made, to support *CentrePlan 2050* objectives.

5.3.6 ✓ Explore exempting change-of-use applications from requiring a development permit, provided it is for a permitted use in the zoning district, and that there are no other City regulations required to allow the proposed use.

✓ **= Action**



New housing Downtown needs to be supported by all levels of government.



Residential development brings activity to neighbourhood streets and businesses.

5.4 Goal: Improve coordination with partners

Collaboration amongst City agencies, non-profit organizations, and the private sector is essential for a successful Downtown. Each partner and agency has its own unique mandate, skills and resources, allowing for a more comprehensive approach to revitalization. These organizations can act nimbly while contributing to overarching City priorities related to public benefit, economic development, and quality of life.

The City will take the lead on planning initiatives by actively engaging with public, private, and non-profit sectors either directly or through City agencies and partners like CentreVenture, Economic Development Winnipeg, the Forks North Portage, and BIZ organizations. The City will support innovative partnerships and will ensure that decision-making processes prioritize both economic growth and community well-being.

Increasing the residential population Downtown and realizing other Plan objectives will require City leadership, and collaboration between the City and its agencies. Each entity will work within its mandate (and in partnership when needed) to transform Downtown into a thriving place the whole city and province can be proud of, where community health and well-being is paramount.

Policies and Actions:

5.4.1 The City should play a convening, coordinating and supporting role for agencies and community organizations, to help achieve goals outlined in *CentrePlan 2050* and other City strategies.

5.4.2 Lead planning initiatives Downtown, and work with CentreVenture, BIZ organizations, and other partner agencies to coordinate long-term planning efforts and project implementation.

5.4.3 ✓ Work with agencies (e.g. BIZ organizations, Economic Development Winnipeg, CentreVenture) to establish clear areas of responsibility, reduce duplication and overlap of mandates, and align with City goals and policy outcomes.

5.4.4 Coordinate public infrastructure projects Downtown with new private development projects to encourage economic growth and ensure alignment in placemaking efforts.

5.4.5 ✓ Work with CentreVenture Development Corporation under their renewed mandate to increase the number of new housing units developed Downtown and accomplish economic growth and community well-being goals of *CentrePlan 2050*, as well as *OurWinnipeg 2045* Sustainable Development goals.

5.4.6 Provide annual operating funding to CentreVenture and replenish their gap financing fund in support of challenging revitalization projects, including surface parking lot redevelopment, heritage adaptive re-use, arts development, and affordable housing.

5.4.7 ✓ Work with CentreVenture to create and administer, where feasible, financial incentive programs (such as Tax Increment Financing (TIF) and Housing Accelerator Funds, and its gap financing fund) in a coordinated manner with the goal of maximizing the number of revitalization projects.

5.4.8 Assist CentreVenture in the assembly of strategically located properties to meet Downtown housing targets and complement public space enhancements.

5.4.9 Support CentreVenture to assemble properties in strategic locations where residential development is desired and, in turn, to develop those lands through collaborative partnerships with the private and non-profit sectors.

5.4.10 Encourage Economic Development Winnipeg to pursue new business creation or expansion Downtown as a first priority for office-based businesses.

5.4.11 ✓ Prepare a coordinated brand strategy for Downtown neighbourhoods in partnership with CentreVenture, Economic Development Winnipeg, The Forks North Portage, and the BIZ organizations.

✓ = Action

06



06

Glossary

6. Glossary

6.1 Glossary

Accessibility – Refers to people's ability to access a place, service or product. Accessibility issues are far reaching and affect everyone from parents pushing strollers, to newcomers who struggle with reading English, to people maneuvering large rolling delivery carts, to people with both temporary and permanent mobility, sensory and agility limitations.

CentreVenture – Established in 1999, CentreVenture Development Corporation is an arms-length agency of the City of Winnipeg, whose mandate is to provide leadership in the planning, development, coordination, and implementation of projects and activities in the downtown. CentreVenture expedites development in Winnipeg's downtown by supporting private-public cooperation and innovative partnerships.

Door density – The number of active building entrances (not including exit-only doors) along a given length of sidewalk. Door density is an urban design metric to compare how pedestrian oriented different streets, blocks or proposed developments are.

Dynamic pricing (for parking) – The practice of adjusting the prices of the parking spots in real time based on factors such as demand, time of the day and day of the week.

Economic Development Winnipeg – Governed by a private-sector board and driven by the needs of the business community, Economic Development Winnipeg grows the local economy by attracting business, investment, events and people to our city. The organization includes the YES! Winnipeg business development team and Tourism Winnipeg.

Business Improvement Zone (BIZ) – A non-profit association of business owners that join together to promote and improve the economic vitality of their business district. A BIZ is created by bylaw through City Council and is funded through a levy the City collects on the BIZ's behalf.

Green Infrastructure – A broad category that integrates natural assets, and designed and engineered elements that have been created to mimic natural functions and processes that provide human health benefits and critical environmental, social and economic services, and protect against climate shock; and the stock of natural resources or ecosystems that are relied upon, managed, or could be managed by a municipality, regional district, or other form of local government for the sustainable provision of one or more municipal services. For example, urban forests, grasslands, wetlands, parks and open space, river corridors, soil, green roofs, and permeable pavement.

Green buildings – Buildings constructed to achieve minimum energy performance and are certified by one of the following green building standards:

a. LEED® (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Certification at the Silver level or better;

b. Green Globes Design™ at the 3 Globes level or better;

c. Other such third-party verified standards deemed to fulfill the Policy intent by the Chief Administrative Officer or designate.

Heritage Resources – A building or land, or element of a building or land that embodies heritage values.

Heritage values – Those which convey aesthetic, architectural, historic, scientific, cultural, social or spiritual importance or significance for past, present and future generations.

Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) – A national housing program launched in 2023 by the Government of Canada through the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC). For Winnipeg, it includes $122.4 million to help create 3,166 additional building permitted housing units, and 14,101 in total over three years. This includes at least 931 affordable housing units.

Housing, adaptable no-barrier – Can be upgraded, expanded, divided into extra units or used for a variety of purposes throughout its life. It incorporates flexible features that can accommodate occupants' changing requirements easily and inexpensively – using the principles of universal design. Features such as wider doors and corridors, entrances without steps, lever hardware, height-adjustable or removable cabinets, and wall reinforcement for grab bars or rails, are less expensive when incorporated during initial construction.

Housing, affordable – Housing that falls within the financial means of a household living in either market or non-market dwellings. Housing is generally considered affordable if all costs related to shelter, including rent or mortgage payment (principal, interest and a 10% down payment), taxes, insurance and utilities require 30% or less of gross annual household income. Housing affordability is also influenced by household income (e.g. the concept of housing hardship that considers if a household can afford basic non-housing expenses like food and transportation after paying for housing) as well as housing cost and supply.

Housing, market – Refers to the primary rental market, which includes rental units in privately initiated apartment structures containing at least three rental units.

Housing, non-market – Includes social housing and transitional housing.

Housing, social – Housing that is created or operated and funded through direct government

subsidies, provided for the benefit of low-income households as defined by the Province of Manitoba, and may include ongoing subsidies or rents geared to income.

Housing, supportive – Housing and programs for low-income individuals or those who need assistance in order to live independently, including assisted living, accessible housing and substance-use recovery programs.

Housing, transitional – Temporary or interim accommodation (in the form of multi-unit apartments, single-room occupancies, scattered site apartments, etc.) to homeless or at-risk individuals and/or families that is combined with case-managed support services, aimed at helping these individuals to transition to long-term and permanent housing, self-sufficiency and independence.

List of Historical Resources – Means a building or land, or an element of a building or land that has been added to the List of Historical Resources and is subject to the restrictions of the Historical Resources By-law no. 55/2014.

2SLGBTQQIA+ peoples – Acronym representing people who identify as Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning, Intersex, Asexual, and/or Plus.

MMIWG2S+ – Acronym representing Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and Two-Spirited, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered, Queer, Questioning, Intersex, Asexual and Non-binary people.

Mid-rise – A building that is in the five to six storey range.

Shared street – A “pedestrian-priority” street designed for slow travel speeds where pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists all share the right of way.

Urban Mixed-use Corridors – The most pedestrian oriented of the city’s Corridors. Their design and land use either currently provide a high quality urban environment or are expected to transition to such a standard in the shorter term.

Zoning – Classifies a city's land into specific "zones" that regulate the use, size, height, density and location of buildings and activities permitted in them. These zones are set out in zoning by-laws, as required in the *City of Winnipeg Charter Act*.

Zoning Bylaw – A Council bylaw that regulates the use, size, height, density and location of buildings and activities permitted in them. In CentrePlan 2050, “Zoning bylaw” refers to the *Downtown Winnipeg Zoning By-law 100/2004* and any future versions of a bylaw that regulates zoning Downtown.



Winnipeg transit bus on Portage Avenue.

07



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Appendices

7. Appendices

7.1 Appendix A – Key performance indicators and targets

Strategic Direction	Target	Key Performance Indicator	Source
Create great urban neighbourhoods	Increase number of people living Downtown by 20,000 people by 2050	Downtown population	Statistics Canada
Create great urban neighbourhoods	Increase the number of market and non-market housing units by 1,500 over the next three years using the housing accelerator fund and other development incentives	# of new residential units developed within the downtown area	Planning, Property & Development Department
Create great urban neighbourhoods	Increase the number of market and non-market housing units by 12,500 by 2050	# of new residential units developed within the downtown area, by district	Planning, Property & Development Department
Create great urban neighbourhoods	Fewer unhoused people in Winnipeg	Annual homeless-ness counts	Street census – End Homeless-ness Winnipeg (every two years)
Create great urban neighbourhoods	Year over year, fewer unhoused people Downtown	# people rehoused	End Homeless-ness Winnipeg
Create great urban neighbourhoods	Year over year, increase the number of affordable housing units Downtown	# of new afford-able housing within the Downtown area	Planning, Property & Development
Create great urban neighbourhoods	Fewer dwelling units in need of repair	Dwelling condition	Statistics Canada (census data every four years)

Strategic Direction	Target	Key Performance Indicator	Source
Create great urban neighbourhoods	Fewer downtown residents living in unaffordable housing (more than 30% of gross income on all housing costs)	Affordability measure	Statistics Canada (census data every four years)
Create great urban neighbourhoods	Maintain a healthy residential vacancy rate (3%)	Occupancy rates of Downtown residential buildings, by size of dwelling unit and price	CMHC (annual)
Re-envision streets to foster urban life	Increased pedestrian activity	pedestrian counts	Public Works
Re-envision streets to foster urban life	Increased transit usage	# of boardings and alightings downtown	Transit
Re-envision streets to foster urban life	Increased cycling downtown	cycling counts	Public Works The Forks
Re-envision streets to foster urban life	Expand the cycling network	km of new bike routes established or enhanced	Public Works
Re-envision streets to foster urban life	Increase number of new ev-ready on- and off-street parking stalls downtown	# of charging stations installed	Planning, Property & Developments (permits)
Re-envision streets to foster urban life	50 Per cent decrease in land area taken up by stand-alone surface parking by 2050	sq. metres of surface parking downtown	Planning, Property & Development
Re-envision streets to foster urban life	Improved street safety	# of fatal and serious injury collisions	Statistics Canada

Strategic Direction	Target	Key Performance Indicator	Source
Re-envision streets to foster urban life	Improve sidewalk conditions and accessibility	kilometres of sidewalk upgraded each year	Public Works
Create a Lively Downtown	Growth in downtown businesses	Assessed retail value within BIZ areas	City of Winnipeg
Create a Lively Downtown	Growth in educational institutions	Enrollment numbers	Post Secondary Institutions
Create a Lively Downtown	Increase number of students living downtown	Enrollment by geographical area	Post Secondary Institutions
Create a Lively Downtown	Less street level vacancy	vacant storefronts (at grade)	Downtown BIZ, Exchange District BIZ, West End BIZ
Create a Lively Downtown	Maintain a healthy office vacancy rate (5-10%)	Office vacancy rates of downtown buildings	CBRE
Create a Lively Downtown	Growth in cultural events and festivals	no. of community events/festivals, no. of attendees	Downtown BIZ, Exchange District BIZ, West End BIZ, City of Winnipeg CAO's office, Economic Development
Create a Lively Downtown	Increased tourism	visits to museums, shows and other attractions	Tourism Winnipeg
Create a Lively Downtown	Increased presence of public art	# of new public art installations downtown, # of installations celebrating Indige-nous perspectives and culture	WAC

Strategic Direction	Target	Key Performance Indicator	Source
Create a Lively Downtown	Reduction in crime	# of incidents reported to Police	WPS (annual statistical report)
Create a Lively Downtown	Year over year, increase public perception of safety	perceptions of safety	WPS (annual citizen survey)
Create a Lively Downtown	Create patio city	# of on-street patios registered annually	Zoning and Permits
Grow a greener Downtown	30m2 of parkland per resident	Square metres of new publicly owned parks/ plazas divided by Downtown population	Parks
Grow a greener Downtown	18 Trees per hectare and 15 per cent canopy coverage at maturity	# of trees per hectare	End Homeless-ness Winnipeg
Grow a greener Downtown	Percentage of tree canopy coverage	# people rehoused	End Homeless-ness Winnipeg
Improve Governance and Implementation	Improve sidewalk conditions and accessibility	complaints about snow clearing	311
Improve Governance and Implementation	Increase number of garbage and recycling containers	# of garbage and recycling containers	Water and Waste, Public Works
Improve Governance and Implementation	Increase partnerships with community organizations	$ provided to community organizations	City of Winnipeg
Improve Governance and Implementation	Increase funding from other levels of government	dollars leveraged from other levels of government	CentreVenture Planning, Property & Development
Improve Governance and Implementation	Decrease response time for downtown maintenance concerns	Response time	311

7.2 Appendix B – List of actions and priorities

Implementation Time frame

Priority – immediate (*within five years*)
Medium / Long – 10 years +
Short / Medium – 1 to 10 years

Goal	Action	Proposed Lead	Proposed Support	Implementation Time frame
Strategic Move 1 – Create great urban neighbourhoods				
Goal 1.1	**Create great urban neighbourhoods**			
1.13	Enhance Broadway as an image street with special character, with increased street trees, landscaping, private/public gathering space, public art, and pedestrian amenities.	Public Works	Planning, Property and Development	Short / Medium
1.1.5	Foster and support greater community use of public spaces (e.g. parks and streets) for gardens, markets, and other community activities. This could include eliminating street closure permit fees for non-profits and assisting with the application process.	Planning, Property and Development	Public Works / Winnipeg Parking Authority	Short / Medium
1.1.6	Create a crosswalk across Carlton Street at Qu'appelle Avenue, to improve pedestrian connections to Central Park.	Public Works	Planning, Property and Development	Short / Medium
1.1.7	Explore ways to calm vehicular traffic and improve safety by implementing traffic calming measures, particularly around Central Park.	Public Works	Planning, Property and Development	Medium / Long
1.1.9	Transform King Street into Chinatown's main street to support future development and pedestrian activity, as indicated in the Development Strategy for Northwest Exchange District and Chinatown	Public Works	Planning, Property and Development / CentreVenture	Medium / Long

Goal	Action	Proposed Lead	Proposed Support	Implementation Time frame
1.1.10	Invest in public realm development and improvements at Market Lands and the Chinese Gardens at James Avenue and King Street, to expand upon existing open spaces and amenities.	Public Works	CentreVenture	Short / Medium
1.1.15	Work with The Forks Renewal Corporation to implement the redevelopment and enhancement of the Alexander Dock area, in a way that acknowledges the significance of this location as a place of attention and action for MMIWG2S+.	Public Works	Planning, Property and Development	Short / Medium
1.1.16	Develop Alexander Avenue as a shared street that prioritizes pedestrian movement, safety, and minimizes segregation between different modes of transportation.	Public Works	Planning, Property and Development	Short / Medium
1.1.19	Pilot Albert Street as a shared street that prioritizes pedestrian movement and minimizes segregation between different modes of transportation.	Public Works	Planning, Property and Development	Medium / Long
1.1.20	Explore the feasibility of redeveloping the surface parking lot next to the Granite Curling Club to include both market and non-market housing that supports club operations and/or building maintenance.	Chief Administrative Office	Planning, Property and Development / Water and Waste	Priority
1.1.21	Work with the Province of Manitoba to update the design of Memorial Park as a signature community open space and improve pedestrian connections to the park.	Planning, Property and Development	CentreVenture / Downtown Biz	Medium / Long

Goal	Action	Proposed Lead	Proposed Support	Implementation Time frame
1.1.22	As part of Winnipeg Transit Master Plan implementation and Rapid Transit station construction, enhance Memorial Boulevard/ Colony Street/Balmoral Street from Ellice Avenue to St. Mary Avenue to improve the pedestrian experience along this image route, which connects the Manitoba Legislative Building, Wehwehneh Bahgahkinahgohn, the University of Winnipeg, and WAG-Qaumajuq.	Winnipeg Transit	Public Works	Medium / Long
1.1.24	Together with provincial, federal, and Indigenous governments, funders, and community organizations, support the development and implementation of a community-focused plan that includes, but is not limited to: safety, site maintenance, housing, single room occupancy (SRO) hotels, expectations for development, public open space, and ongoing support and investment for Thunderbird House and the surrounding area.	Community Services	Planning, Property and Development	Priority
1.1.25	Improve pedestrian connections and safety along the Hope Alley corridor along Henry Avenue between Salvation Army and Siloam Mission, including the crosswalk on Main Street. These investments should be coordinated with the investments on Main Street as part of Winnipeg Transit Master Plan implementation.	Public Works	Community Services / CentreVenture	Short / Medium
1.1.27	Install a pedestrian crossing across Higgins Avenue at Austin Street.	Public Works		Medium / Long
1.1.29	Provide funding to community efforts and pilot projects (e.g. Main Street community's Litter & Waste Management Plan) that attempt to deal with waste management in the public realm, ensuring timely responses related to litter cleanup.	Water and Waste	Public Works	Priority

Goal	Action	Proposed Lead	Proposed Support	Implementation Time frame
1.1.30	Implement initiatives outlined in the Road Safety Strategic Action Plan, with a focus on Main Street, Logan Avenue, and Higgins Avenue.	Public Works		Medium / Long
1.1.31	Update the Zoning By-law to support the transition of the neighbourhood from a former industrial area into a thriving mid-rise mixed-use residential neighbourhood that is in character with the building heights along Waterfront Drive.	Planning, Property and Development		Short / Medium
1.1.33	Include streetscaping improvements within the pedestrian realm in conjunction with the design and implementation of the Rapid Transit Network along Portage Avenue, to support new developments and businesses, and create a positive pedestrian environment.	Winnipeg Transit	Public Works / Planning, Property and Development	Medium / Long
1.1.40	Establish building massing criteria for the South Broadway Sub-sector in the Downtown Winnipeg Zoning By-law, to preserve front yards and the low-to medium rise character of the neighbourhood and support tree canopy health.	Planning, Property and Development		Short / Medium
1.1.41	Explore ways to calm vehicular traffic and improve safety by minimizing vehicles cutting through the neighbhourhood, including making street improvements to Main Street and Assiniboine to increase safety for pedestrians crossing the street.	Public Works	Planning, Property and Development	Short / Medium
1.1.42	Work with the Province of Manitoba on design solutions that would eliminate cut-through traffic caused by vehicles turning from Osborne Street North and moving through the Legislative grounds to Assiniboine Avenue.	Public Works	Planning, Property and Development	Medium / Long

Goal	Action	Proposed Lead	Proposed Support	Implementation Time frame
1.1.48	Support redevelopment of Wehwehneh Bahgahkinahgohn (the old Hudson's Bay building) through streetscaping improvements and development incentives.	Chief Administrative Office	Planning, Property and Development /Public Works	Short / Medium
1.1.51	Work with the Forks Renewal Corporation to support ongoing improvement and maintenance of the Nestaweya River Trail and its access points both within and outside Downtown.	Public Works	Planning, Property and Development	Short / Medium
1.1.52	Align existing development incentives for Railside at the Forks with future development opportunities on the property at the southwest corner of William Stephenson Way and Israel Asper Way.	Chief Administrative Office	Planning, Property and Development	Short / Medium
Goal 1.2	**Play a leadership role in Downtown housing**			
1.2.2	Develop long-term coordinated development incentives with provincial and federal governments for market and non-market housing to meet our growth targets.	Chief Administrative Office	Planning, Property and Development	Priority
1.2.3	Work with the Province of Manitoba to redevelop provincial or crown corporation-owned surface parking lots for residential development.	Chief Administrative Office	Planning, Property and Development	Priority
1.2.4	Create a single window approach for intergovernmental collaboration on housing development Downtown to ensure programs across governments complement and support one another, and to help meet governmental targets for affordable and social housing.	Chief Administrative Office	Planning, Property and Development	Priority

Goal	Action	Proposed Lead	Proposed Support	Implementation Time frame
1.2.6	Create and augment residential and commercial development incentives (e.g. Tax Increment Financing), focused on projects that: • support key municipal investments within this Plan • convert surface parking lots • increase non-market housing stock • redevelop heritage buildings • promote human-scale development through low- or medium-rise (10 storeys or less) development • convert office uses to residential uses • create green buildings • include other benefits like 3+ bedrooms, accessible units, and visitable units.	Chief Administrative Office	Planning, Property and Development / CentreVenture	Priority
1.2.7	For a limited time, in recognition of the increased costs associated with Downtown development, eliminate fees associated with development Downtown, including Building Permits, Urban Design Review, Heritage Permits, and loss of paid parking fees.	Chief Administrative Office	Planning, Property and Development	Priority
1.2.8	Where on-street staging is required, as part of construction or renovation of buildings, waive fees associated with on-street staging costs for a limited time, and create incentives to speed up development and minimize the amount of right-of-way space used (e.g. sidewalks, parking, etc.), to encourage timely completion of developments Downtown and minimize disruption to the public right-of-way.	Winnipeg Parking Authority	Planning, Property and Development / Public Works	Priority

Goal	Action	Proposed Lead	Proposed Support	Implementation Time frame
1.2.9	Review heritage incentive programs on an on-going basis (including the Gail Parvin Hammerquist Fund City-Wide Program and the Heritage and Economic Development Incentive Program) and develop new programs as necessary to ensure long-term, sustainable funding capacity.	CentreVenture	Planning, Property and Development	Short / Medium
1.2.10	Create a condition assessment grant program to help the City and owners of heritage buildings procure engineering assessments of the structural viability, and viability of remediation of the historical resource.	Planning, Property and Development		Short / Medium
1.2.12	Establish a “Downtown Concierge” position to work one-on-one with applicants and assist with specific types of applications and permits (e.g. non-market housing) navigate development application and permitting processes and to ensure Downtown developments are prioritized.	Chief Administrative Office		Priority
1.2.13	Using the inventory of vacant buildings completed by the City of Winnipeg Housing Division in 2022, explore feasibility of redeveloping of vacant buildings for affordable housing.	CentreVenture	Planning, Property and Development	Short / Medium
1.2.14	Work with federal and provincial governments on initiatives to address the housing crisis, including (but not limited to) creating taxes on vacant buildings and surface parking lots.	Chief Administrative Office	Planning, Property and Development	Short / Medium

Goal	Action	Proposed Lead	Proposed Support	Implementation Time frame
Goal 1.3	**Foster design excellence**			
1.3.2	Update the City's *Urban Design Guidelines* to create a *Downtown Urban Design Standards* document that: • communicates the City's design expectations for development Downtown • forms the basis of the Urban Design Review process and will be used to determine whether to grant urban design approval for Downtown development, redevelopment, expansion, demolition, or exterior alteration • improves consistency and predictability in the development approval process • assists the review of development applications • includes standards related to the Exchange District National Historic Site to conserve heritage value and maintain the national historic significance of this area	Planning, Property and Development		Priority
1.3.4	Review the Urban Design Review process to ensure it is clear, concise, and aligns with the Downtown Urban Design Standards.	Planning, Property and Development		Short / Medium
1.3.6	Identify buildings that have heritage value and should be protected/added to the List of Historical Resources.	Planning, Property and Development		Short / Medium
Goal 1.4	**Focus Services where they are needed most**			
1.4.2	Partner with the Y Winnipeg (Downtown) and other potential partners like educational institutions to expand and subsidize programming for residents and people living on lower incomes.	Community Services		Medium / Long

Goal	Action	Proposed Lead	Proposed Support	Implementation Time frame
1.4.3	Expand access to existing facilities and programming for recreation, library, community gathering, and 24/7 safe spaces.	Community Services		Medium / Long
1.4.5	Install water fountains/stations at Air Canada Window Park, Central Park, Gord Dong Park, Bonnycastle Park, Old Market Square, Stephen Juba Park, and Millennium Library Park.	Public Works	Water and Waste	Short / Medium
1.4.6	Provide funding to increase hours of service and assess funding requirements for 24/7 staffing and peer support for Amoowigamig (public washroom by Thunderbird House).	Community Services		Short / Medium
1.4.7	Identify locations and explore how to provide funding for additional public washroom facilities with relevant supports tailored to specific community needs and contexts.	Community Services		Short / Medium
1.4.8	Explore options for increasing hours and adding staffing support at existing washroom facilities at Portage Place, Winnipeg Square, Central Park, the Susan A. Thompson Building at City Hall, and other City facilities Downtown, including costing and staffing in alignment with the City's Sustainable Procurement Action Plan.	Community Services		Medium / Long
1.4.9	Create incentives (e.g. grants, waived permit fees) for businesses, non-profit organizations, and new developments to encourage washrooms for public use, which may include assistance with upgrading facilities to be universally accessible.	Community Services		Medium / Long

Goal	Action	Proposed Lead	Proposed Support	Implementation Time frame
1.4.11	Increase garbage and recycling storage capacity and collection frequency in areas with documented higher service needs, by: • increasing resources dedicated to the City's litter control and clean-up programs • working collaboratively with Business Improvement Zone (BIZ) organizations, service providers, and other agencies Downtown (e.g. organizations working with vulnerable populations) to ensure waste management approaches meet the specific needs of these areas • ensuring property owners are aware of their responsibility to have sufficient and secured waste storage capacity and collection frequency • ensuring a coordinated and timely response to reports of abandoned waste and other waste complaints (through 311, inspections, bylaw enforcement and clean-up)	Water and Waste		Priority
Goal 1.5	**Forge a Downtown for all**			
1.5.6	Partner with and provide ongoing resources to community, volunteer, or Indigenous-led organizations that give peer support, emergency, and/or non-emergency response to those in the community in need of support and assistance.	Community Services		Medium / Long
Strategic Move 2 – Re-envision streets to foster urban life				
Goal 2.1	**Re-envision how we design our streets**			
2.1.3	Implement a pilot program to encourage and facilitate innovative freight delivery methods (off-hours deliveries, remote consolidation centres, etc.).	Public Works		Medium / Long

Goal	Action	Proposed Lead	Proposed Support	Implementation Time frame
2.1.4	Work with key stakeholders to divert unnecessary truck through-traffic from the Downtown core to increase small business retention, encourage pedestrian traffic, and boost economic activity.	Public Works		Medium / Long
2.1.6	Develop “shared street” guidelines compatible with the Provincial Shared Street Regulation.	Public Works	Planning, Property and Development	Short / Medium
2.1.11	Create a new Downtown Streetscape Design Standards Manual, to guide street reconstruction and design. The Downtown Streetscape Design Standards Manual will categorize Downtown streets by types, based on their function in the roadway network and the planned adjacent land uses. For each street type, the Manual will provide recommendations for how space is to be allocated within the sidewalk area for each type of street, including placement of furnishings, secure bike storage, trees, and other streetscape elements.	Planning, Property and Development	Public Works	Priority
2.1.13	Prioritize completion of the following street improvements as identified in the Exchange Waterfront Neighbourhood Development Program (2014-2018) and in alignment with the Downtown Streetscape Design Standards Manual: • Pacific Avenue • Amy Street • Rupert Avenue • Martha Street • Alexander Avenue	Public Works	Planning, Property and Development	Medium / Long

Goal	Action	Proposed Lead	Proposed Support	Implementation Time frame
2.1.14	Review the one-way street systems for their effect on safety for vulnerable road users, economic vibrancy, and effectiveness in moving people Downtown.	Public Works	Planning, Property and Development	Medium / Long
2.1.15	Review the City of Winnipeg Manual of Temporary Traffic Control on City Streets (MTTC) to reflect best practices during Downtown development, to improve pedestrian and cyclist access, connectivity, and accessibility during street and building construction.	Public Works	Planning, Property and Development	Medium / Long
Goal 2.2	**Improve connectivity Downtown and to adjacent neighbourhoods**			
2.2.2	Open the ground level intersection of Portage Avenue and Main Street to pedestrians.	Public Works	Planning, Property and Development	Short / Medium
2.2.5	Improve existing pedestrian crossings at Main Street, particularly in places where Main Street is extra wide or impeded by additional turn lanes or angled streets (e.g. Broadway, York Avenue, St. Mary Avenue, James Avenue, Disraeli Freeway, and Higgins Avenue).	Public Works / Winnipeg Transit		Medium / Long
2.2.6	Build the Osborne to Downtown active transportation bridge as outlined in the Winnipeg Cycling and Pedestrian Cycling Strategies.	Public Works		Medium / Long

Goal	Action	Proposed Lead	Proposed Support	Implementation Time frame
2.2.7	The City should strengthen connections between The Forks and the rest of Downtown through the following actions: • Explore the creation of a new pedestrian connection under the train tracks into Railside at The Forks development by the property at the southwest corner of William Stephenson Way and Israel Asper Way • Improve existing connections to, and across, Main Street through active transportation crossings, lighting, plantings, trees, benches, and gateway features • Improve the pedestrian environment on Portage Avenue East, Westbrook, Sir William Stephenson Way and Pioneer Avenue as primary pedestrian routes linking Portage & Main to the Forks, St. Boniface and Waterfront Drive	Public Works / Winnipeg Transit	Planning, Property and Development	Medium / Long
Goal 2.3	**Create a Downtown for pedestrians**			
2.3.2	Implement Downtown-related pedestrian safety improvements in the Road Safety Strategic Action Plan, particularly in areas that have high collision rates. This will include reviewing lower speed limits to reduce collision frequency and severity, and improve safety and livability.	Public Works	Planning, Property and Development	Medium / Long
2.3.4	Review pedestrian crossings of streets with more than two lanes to improve the pedestrian experience across these roads, including two-stage crossings with refuges or longer walk times.	Public Works	Planning, Property and Development	Medium / Long
Goal 2.4	**Create a Downtown for cyclists**			
2.4.2	Accelerate the implementation of the Downtown bike network as outlined in the Winnipeg Pedestrian and Cycling Strategies.	Public Works		Short / Medium

Goal	Action	Proposed Lead	Proposed Support	Implementation Time frame
2.4.3	Create a program to collect detailed pedestrian and cyclist counts and other data on a regular basis.	Public Works		Medium / Long
2.4.5	Partner with BIZ organizations, businesses, property owners, and community partners to implement long-term secure bicycle parking such as bike cages and lockers.	Public Works		Medium / Long
2.4.5	Partner with BIZ organizations, businesses, and community partners to implement short-term bicycle parking and where possible secure bicycle maintenance stations through the Bicycle Parking Partnership Grant as budget allows.	Public Works		Short / Medium
Goal 2.5	**Create a Downtown for public transit**			
2.5.1	Accelerate construction of Downtown Rapid Transit infrastructure as outlined in the Winnipeg Transit Master Plan.	Winnipeg Transit	Public Works	Short / Medium
2.5.2	Implement the new Winnipeg Transit Master Plan route network by June 2025	Winnipeg Transit		Priority
2.5.3	As part of Winnipeg Transit Master Plan implementation, transform Main Street and Portage Avenue (including pedestrian areas) into high-quality Rapid Transit corridors and image routes through Downtown. This should include prioritizing accessibility and life safety, and improving pedestrian amenities like public art, lighting, trees, wide sidewalks, and benches. Pedestrian areas and transit infrastructure will be constructed at the same time.	Winnipeg Transit	Public Works / Planning, Property and Development	Short / Medium
2.5.5	Identify opportunities to co-locate Rapid Transit Stations with adjacent developments to improve safety, convenience and comfort of transit riders.	Winnipeg Transit		Short / Medium

Goal	Action	Proposed Lead	Proposed Support	Implementation Time frame
2.5.7	Identify pedestrian realm improvements to improve wayfinding, signage, and accessibility related to the Rapid Transit stations and transit stops.	Winnipeg Transit	Public Works	Short / Medium
2.5.8	Work with BIZ organizations to improve comfort, safety, placemaking, and wayfinding at transit stop locations where bus routes intersect, to assist transit riders transferring buses at these intersections.	Winnipeg Transit		Short / Medium
2.5.9	Integrate the Weather Protected Walkway Network with the transit network including enhancing street-level entrances that connect to transit stops and Rapid Transit stations.	Winnipeg Transit		Short / Medium
2.5.10	Create a Downtown “free zone” for public transit.	Winnipeg Transit		Medium / Long
Goal 2.6	**Rethink how motor vehicle parking is provided**			
2.6.1	Address illegal surface parking lots through enforcement.	Planning, Property and Development		Short / Medium
2.6.2	Establish surface parking licensing program and fees for Downtown standalone surface parking lots, to address landscaping and safety issues, encourage redevelopment, encourage addition of EV charging stations, and ensure surface parking lots are safe, high-quality, visually appealing, and functional, in accordance with the Downtown Parking Strategy.	Planning, Property and Development		Short / Medium

Goal	Action	Proposed Lead	Proposed Support	Implementation Time frame
2.6.4	Create a comprehensive assessment of City parking supply, co-led by Winnipeg Parking Authority and Public Works, to establish an expected level of service Downtown. This analysis should include the number of parking spaces, occupancy rates, and types of parking facilities (e.g., on-street, off-street, garages) for City and private sector parking.	Public Works / Winnipeg Parking Authority	CentreVenture	Short / Medium
2.6.6	Explore how to provide electric vehicle charging stations for both on- and off-street parking areas and establish targets and timelines for constructing/retrofitting electric vehicle (or electric vehicle ready) spaces.	Public Works / Winnipeg Parking Authority		Short / Medium
2.6.8	Repair the Millennium Library parkade while maintaining the size of the Millennium Library Park.	Winnipeg Parking Authority		Short / Medium
2.6.9	Collaborate with BIZ organizations to develop district-specific parking strategies and address curbside management and off-street parking issues.	Winnipeg Parking Authority	Planning, Property and Development	Short / Medium
2.6.11	Establish a parking revenue reinvestment model, where a portion of parking proceeds are used to fund actions in this plan.	Winnipeg Parking Authority	Planning, Property and Development	Short / Medium
2.6.12	Implement dynamic pricing for parking spaces to encourage turnover and reduce congestion. Higher prices during peak hours and lower prices during off-peak hours can incentivize alternative transportation modes.	Winnipeg Parking Authority		Short / Medium
2.6.13	Create a plan to reduce the number of on-street pay-stations while motivating more parkers to use mobile payment options rather than pay stations and informing them of how they can pay.	Winnipeg Parking Authority		Medium / Long

Goal	Action	Proposed Lead	Proposed Support	Implementation Time frame
2.6.14	Replace and modernize existing pay-stations, while looking at being more effective with the number and location of the pay-stations.	Winnipeg Parking Authority		Medium / Long
Strategic Move 3 – Grow a greener Downtown				
Goal 3.1	**Promote green infrastructure**			
3.1.2	Develop grant programs that complement funding programs associated with other governmental strategies (e.g. the National Adaptation Strategy), and support installation of green infrastructure.	Water and Waste	Public Works	Medium / Long
3.1.4	Explore the possibility of constructing reed beds and floating wetlands along the Red and Assiniboine Rivers.	Planning, Property and Development		Short / Medium
3.1.8	Strategically plant micro forests (or pocket forests) to augment green spaces, reduce urban heat island effect, provide opportunities to connect people with nature, and improve public access to green spaces.	Public Works	Planning, Property and Development	Medium / Long
Goal 3.2	**Ensure public spaces meet the needs of a growing residential population**			
3.2.3	Determine the targeted technical level of service for park amenities and maintenance of parks in the Downtown and adjacent neighbourhoods, and dedicate sufficient funding to meet this technical level of service for improvements, upgrades and ongoing maintenance.	Public Works		Medium / Long
3.2.4	Re-evaluate how park and recreational amenity needs are assessed Downtown, to account for residential growth targets, higher levels of poverty, desired amenities (like dog parks) and less private green space.	Public Works		Short / Medium

Goal	Action	Proposed Lead	Proposed Support	Implementation Time frame
3.2.6	Update the Zoning Bylaw to create a zoning category for parks Downtown, and to ensure that parks are designated appropriately in accordance with the Winnipeg Zoning Bylaw.	Planning, Property and Development		Short / Medium
3.2.7	Assess how much additional investment is required to meet the targeted levels of service of 30 square metres per person, as identified in the City of Winnipeg Recreation and Parks Strategies for the Downtown, with consideration to anticipated population increase.	Public Works	Planning, Property and Development	Short / Medium
3.2.9	Create a new community park to improve connectivity and access to multi-use greenspace between the SHEDPortage Avenue and the Exchange District.	Public Works	Planning, Property and Development	Medium / Long
3.2.11	Secure land for and construct a four-season Parks' maintenance facility to service Downtown.	Public Works		Medium / Long
Goal 3.3	**Increase programming options through partnerships**			
3.3.4	Work with BIZ organizations to develop a "Parks on tap" travelling beer gardens program and/or other programming that supports and expands opportunities for local businesses.	Planning, Property and Development	Public Works	Short / Medium
Goal 3.4	**Transform Graham Avenue into a destination**			
3.4.2	Transform Graham Avenue into a linear park and plaza that is a unique Downtown destination. The design should include considerations for green infrastructure, public art, programming, urban forest enhancement, green space, cycling infrastructure, and plaza space with amenities, like water and electrical hookup, to support events and vendors.	Planning, Property and Development / Public Works		Short / Medium

Goal	Action	Proposed Lead	Proposed Support	Implementation Time frame
3.4.3	Create construction drawings based on Graham Avenue engagement activities.	Planning, Property and Development / Public Works		Priority
3.4.4	In collaboration with Downtown partners, create a Graham Avenue Animation Strategy that outlines commitments and responsibilities of public, private, and non-profit partners, to ensure the street is a successful, safe, and well-maintained public space year-round.	Planning, Property and Development / Public Works		Priority
3.4.6	Initiate a pilot project to animate Graham, to begin on July 1, 2025, as soon as the buses come off Graham Avenue	Planning, Property and Development / Public Works	Downtown Biz	Priority
3.4.7	Initiate a retail strategy to support existing businesses, attract new businesses, encourage affordable rents, assist in animation and decrease vacancy along Graham Avenue	Planning, Property and Development		Short / Medium
Goal 3.5	**Increase the tree canopy Downtown**			
3.5.6	Establish landscaping requirements in the Zoning Bylaw where private yards are provided or required as part of development.	Planning, Property and Development	Public Works	Short / Medium

Goal	Action	Proposed Lead	Proposed Support	Implementation Time frame
Goal 3.6	**Foster and demonstrate climate change action**			
3.6.2	Work with Manitoba Hydro to ensure Downtown has the electric power requirements (power generation and distribution system) to support an energy transition from fossil fuel and accommodate a growing population.	Planning, Property and Development		Short / Medium
3.6.4	Conduct a climate risk and vulnerabilities assessment for Downtown to inform appropriate adaptation, response and recovery measures. This may include incorporating strategies to protect public safety (e.g. extreme heat, weather events, green infrastructure) and minimize damage to infrastructure and systems.	Water and Waste		Short / Medium
Strategic Move 4 – Create a lively Downtown				
Goal 4.1	**Strengthen Downtown as Winnipeg's entertainment and cultural hub**			
4.1.1	Explore how to renew and enhance wayfinding Downtown, including the use of web-based and technological solutions and connections to transit infrastructure.	Planning, Property and Development	Public Works / Winnipeg Transit	Short / Medium
4.1.3	Work with the Exchange District BIZ to create an Exchange District Festival Campus (centered around Old Market Square) as a collection of linked entertainment spaces that can be managed as a whole, using bollards and branding to create an appropriately scaled and supported festival area. Approvals and processes would be streamlined to ensure event planning in this area is simple and straightforward.	Planning, Property and Development	Chief Administrative Office / Public Works / Exchange District Biz	Priority

Goal	Action	Proposed Lead	Proposed Support	Implementation Time frame
4.1.4	Create a program to promote public education about heritage buildings and the history of Winnipeg's development from the pre-Colonial settler era to the recent past.	Planning, Property and Development	Indigenous Relations Division	Medium / Long
4.1.5	Support existing events and festivals by developing a system to assess infrastructure needs and streamline approvals from year-to-year.	Planning, Property and Development	Public Works / Winnipeg Transit	Short / Medium
4.1.6	Work with BIZ organizations and other Downtown partners to amend relevant bylaws and develop policies outlining when parking meter, street closure, and other event fees can be waived Downtown to support arts and cultural events, with a focus on events that align with the City's reconciliation commitments.	Planning, Property and Development	Public Works / Winnipeg Parking Authority	Short / Medium
4.1.9	Transition the temporary patio program into a permanent program, allowing businesses to set up temporary patios in the public right-of-way, with a focus on flexibility, lower costs, and streamlining the approval process.	Planning, Property and Development		Priority
Goal 4.2	**Integrate more public art**			
4.2.3	Establish a "percentage for public art" policy, where one per cent of all Downtown City infrastructure projects is pooled into the Public Art Program to fund public art projects Downtown.	Planning, Property and Development		Short / Medium
4.2.4	Reinstate an annual base amount for the Winnipeg Arts Council's Public Art Program that considers annual inflationary increases, to ensure effective policy implementation, project planning, and program and collection management.	Chief Administrative Office		Medium / Long

Goal	Action	Proposed Lead	Proposed Support	Implementation Time frame
4.2.6	Work with the Winnipeg Arts Council, BIZ organizations, and Winnipeg's philanthropic community to explore the creation of a matching grant program.	Planning, Property and Development		Medium / Long
Goal 4.3	**Honour Indigenous history and culture**			
4.3.4	Develop a plan to interpret and share stories of our shared history through Indigenous perspectives and art.	Planning, Property and Development	Indigenous Relations Division	Medium / Long
Goal 4.4	**Foster learning, innovation, and local busuiness**			
4.4.2	Collaborate with School Divisions and educational institutions to maintain existing school sites and post-secondary campus facilities within Downtown and, where possible, create new sites and facilities.	Planning, Property and Development		Medium / Long
4.4.3	Collaborate with technology carriers to provide infrastructure (hardware) that allows fast and reliable digital connectivity, to attract more business Downtown.	Planning, Property and Development	Public Works	Medium / Long
4.4.5	Create and enhance programs to address Downtown lighting, window cleaning and repair, and graffiti removal.	Planning, Property and Development		Medium / Long
4.4.6	In partnership with BIZ organizations, support a storefront improvement program to improve customer comfort and safety and contribute to the economic development and promotion of businesses Downtown.	Planning, Property and Development		Medium / Long
4.4.7	Work with Economic Development Winnipeg to develop a Downtown First economic strategy.	Chief Administrative Office		Short / Medium

Goal	Action	Proposed Lead	Proposed Support	Implementation Time frame
4.4.8	Explore options around re-tenanting vacant space in the old Canada Post tower.	Chief Administrative Office		Short / Medium
Goal 4.5	**Make Downtown a destination in all seasons**			
4.5.2	Extend the time frame associated with the temporary patio program to allow patios in shoulder seasons.	Planning, Property and Development		Short / Medium
4.5.3	Update pedestrian-level wind regulations for buildings to provide clarity about when an assessment is required, and the requirements and criteria for wind assessments to enhance pedestrian comfort and safety.	Planning, Property and Development		Medium / Long
4.5.5	Increase level of service related to snow removal on sidewalks and bike routes and find alternatives to the practice of using Downtown sidewalks as snow storage areas.	Public Works	Planning, Property and Development	Medium / Long
4.5.6	Explore partnership opportunities with organizations and facilities like the Y Winnipeg (Downtown) to provide more indoor and outdoor recreation options to Downtown residents.	Community Services		Medium / Long
4.5.7	Encourage and support Downtown partners to provide more opportunities for outdoor activities in all seasons.	Planning, Property and Development	Public Works	Short / Medium
4.5.8	Identify appropriate locations and provide a timeline for building universally accessible year-round and seasonal river access to Winnipeg's waterways.	Public Works		Short / Medium

Goal	Action	Proposed Lead	Proposed Support	Implementation Time frame
Strategic Move 5 – Improve Downtown governance and implementation				
Goal 5.1	**Fund the plan and measure progress**			
5.1.2	Establish a tri-level agreement with the federal and provincial governments (like the Winnipeg Core Area Initiative model) to assist with CentrePlan 2050 implementation.	Chief Administrative Office	Planning, Property and Development	Priority
5.1.3	Explore how to finance Plan implementation through the capital and operating budgeting process, which could include exploring how the business tax levied from downtown businesses is allocated.	Chief Administrative Office	Planning, Property and Development	Priority
5.1.4	Measure progress related to the indicators outlined in Appendix A of this document			
5.1.5	Create a Downtown neighbourhood profiles data set on the City of Winnipeg Neighbourhood Profiles Census Information website that aligns with the Downtown boundaries as outlined in this Plan.	Planning, Property and Development		Short / Medium
Goal 5.2	**Make service delivery a priority Downtown**			
5.2.1	Explore how to better coordinate and communicate about City infrastructure projects and timelines.	Public Works	Planning, Property and Development	Short / Medium
5.2.2	Create a process to engage Downtown stakeholders and other governments on Plan implementation and provide a venue for on-going dialogue to discuss operational issues and coordination of Downtown initiatives.	Planning, Property and Development		Short / Medium
5.2.3	Change Public Service processes and re-align employees to ensure Downtown is managed as a cohesive service delivery unit to implement this plan, with a customer service lens and enough flexibility to adapt to unique situations and ongoing changes.	Chief Administrative Office	Planning, Property and Development	Short / Medium

Goal	Action	Proposed Lead	Proposed Support	Implementation Time frame
5.2.5	Enhance the Downtown maintenance program to ensure healthy and vigorous trees and plants, including well-maintained planters and flower beds.	Public Works		Short / Medium
5.2.8	Increase the frequency, resources and quality of care dedicated to fixing or replacing sidewalks, benches, lighting, curbs and other public realm infrastructure in the right-of-way and in parks and plazas.	Public Works		Short / Medium
5.2.10	Work with other governments, BIZ organizations, social enterprises, and social service agencies (e.g. Siloam Mission's MOST program and DCSP's Clean Slate program) to develop innovative ways to keep downtown clean and support people through income generation opportunities.	Community Services	Public Works / Water and Waste	Short / Medium
Goal 5.3	**Ensure zoning and other City regulations reflect Downtown priorities**			
5.3.1	Update the Zoning Bylaw to align with the Downtown Winnipeg Urban Design Standards, other City bylaws, and the objectives of this Plan.	Planning, Property and Development		Short / Medium
5.3.3	Review the Encroachment Bylaw to reflect Downtown development priorities and realities, ensure encroachment fee agreements reflect the annual revenue generated by the proposed encroachment, and further specify which (and how far) architectural features may project into the public realm.	Planning, Property and Development		Short / Medium
5.3.4	Create policy and criteria to determine when a property made up of multiple lots is not required to complete a Short Form Subdivision Application prior to the issuance of a Development Permit.	Planning, Property and Development		Short / Medium

Goal	Action	Proposed Lead	Proposed Support	Implementation Time frame
5.3.5	Review land dedication fee policy for consistency and specify develop criteria for when fee exemptions can be made, to support CentrePlan 2050 objectives.	Planning, Property and Development		Short / Medium
5.3.6	Explore exempting change-of-use applications from requiring a development permit, provided it is for a permitted use in the zoning district, and that there are no other City regulations required to allow the proposed use.	Planning, Property and Development		Short / Medium
Goal 5.4	**Improve coordination with partners**			
5.4.3	Work with agencies (e.g. BIZ organizations, Economic Development Winnipeg, CentreVenture) to establish clear areas of responsibility, reduce duplication and overlap of mandates, and align with City goals and policy outcomes.	Chief Administrative Office		Short / Medium
5.4.5	Work with CentreVenture Development Corporation under their renewed mandate to increase the number of new housing units developed Downtown and accomplish economic growth and community well-being goals of CentrePlan 2050, as well as OurWinnipeg 2045 Sustainable Development goals.			
5.4.7	Work with CentreVenture to create and administer, where feasible, financial incentive programs (such as Tax Increment Financing (TIF) and Housing Accelerator Funds, and its gap financing fund) in a coordinated manner with the goal of maximizing the number of revitalization projects.	Chief Administrative Office		Short / Medium
5.4.11	Prepare a coordinated brand strategy for Downtown neighbourhoods in partnership with CentreVenture, Economic Development Winnipeg, The Forks North Portage, and the BIZ organizations.	Planning, Property and Development		Short / Medium



City Contact Information

Information on the City of Winnipeg is available at **winnipeg.ca**
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