Minutes – Executive Policy Committee – July 8, 2025

REPORTS

Item No. 13 General Council of Winnipeg Community Centres Inc. – Plan 2045

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

The Executive Policy Committee concurred in the recommendation of the Winnipeg Public Service and recommended to Council:

1. That the General Council of Winnipeg Community Centres Inc. (GCWCC) Plan 2045 and related Appendices (Attachments A and B) be adopted by Council.

2. That the GCWCC include the following with their 2026 - 2028 Business Plan submission to Executive Policy Committee in support of Plan 2045's Strategic Goal of Improved Governance and that the Public Service be directed to refer the corresponding funding requirements to the 2026 Budget process in an accompanying Administrative Report for the GCWCC Business Plan:

    A. Funding in the amount of $250,000 annually, beginning in 2026, for a new GCWCC Programming/Wage Subsidy grant program to provide the ability for community centres to hire operational and programming staff in support of a transition from working boards to a governance board model.

    B. A one-time increase to the GCWCC 2026 operating grant in the amount of $35,000 to retain external legal advice to support community centres during the development and execution of management agreements between the City of Winnipeg and each community centre.

3. That the GCWCC report back to Executive Policy Committee at its June 2027 meeting with an update on the progress of the first phase of Plan 2045, along with recommendations to inform the 2028-2031 Multi-Year Budget.

4. That the Proper Officers of the City of Winnipeg be authorized to do all things necessary to implement the intent of the foregoing.

DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

Moved by Councillor Santos,

That the recommendation of the Winnipeg Public Service be concurred in and forwarded to Council.

Carried

Councillor Browaty was absent from the vote on the above motion.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Title: General Council of Winnipeg Community Centres Inc. – Plan 2045

Critical Path: Executive Policy Committee - Council

AUTHORIZATION

Author	Department Head	CFO	CAO
K. Lemoine	C. Fernandes	T. Graham	S. Armbruster, Interim CAO

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The General Council of Winnipeg Community Centres Inc. (GCWCC) was established in 1971 to provide leadership and guidance to volunteers. These volunteers develop and sustain community centres for Winnipeg citizens. The GCWCC and the City of Winnipeg have a collaborative partnership. They are both committed to working together to continue the community centre model.

In 2009, Council adopted the GCWCC's Plan 2025. This was a 20-year strategic plan for the future direction of the community centres in Winnipeg. In 2022, Council approved a $300,000 grant to the GCWCC to update the GCWCC Plan 2025. The new 20-year strategic plan is called the GCWCC Plan 2045 (Plan 2045).

Plan 2045 includes actions to help support community centres to respond to changing needs of their community. It will also guide actions, direction and resource allocations.

To support the future of community centres, the Public Service recommends Council adopt Plan 2045. The Public Service also recommends Council support the GCWCC and community centres with funds through the 2026 budget process. The GCWCC is also asked to provide an update of the progress of the first phase of Plan 2045 in 2027.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the General Council of Winnipeg Community Centres Inc. (GCWCC) Plan 2045 and related Appendices (Attachments A and B) be adopted by Council.

2. That the GCWCC include the following with their 2026 - 2028 Business Plan submission to Executive Policy Committee in support of Plan 2045's Strategic Goal of Improved Governance and that the Public Service be directed to refer the corresponding funding requirements to the 2026 Budget process in an accompanying Administrative Report for the GCWCC Business Plan:

A. Funding in the amount of $250,000 annually, beginning in 2026, for a new GCWCC Programming/Wage Subsidy grant program to provide the ability for community centres to hire operational and programming staff in support of a transition from working boards to a governance board model.

B. A one-time increase to the GCWCC 2026 operating grant in the amount of $35,000 to retain external legal advice to support community centres during the development and execution of management agreements between the City of Winnipeg and each community centre.

3. That the GCWCC report back to Executive Policy Committee at its June 2027 meeting with an update on the progress of the first phase of Plan 2045, along with recommendations to inform the 2028-2031 Multi-Year Budget.

4. That the Proper Officers of the City of Winnipeg be authorized to do all things necessary to implement the intent of the foregoing.

REASON FOR THE REPORT

In accordance with the Funding Agreement between the City of Winnipeg and the GCWCC for provision of a $300,000 grant to GCWCC to support the Plan 2045 project, the GCWCC is required to present the final report to Executive Policy Committee. Further, in accordance with the Management Agreement between the City of Winnipeg and the GCWCC, in terms of governance, GCWCC reports to Executive Policy Committee.

Recommendations of this report requires approval by Executive Policy Committee and Council.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS

The strategies and actions of Plan 2045 will help to ensure Winnipeg's community centre model is inclusive, sustainable, and responsive to the communities it serves including people, programs and places. Council's adoption of Plan 2045 will provide the support needed to guide the City, the GCWCC and communities centres over the next 20 years.

Recommendations for financial support in future budgets are required to implement many of the actions in Plan 2045. Without the recommended resources, the actions and resulting deliverables cannot be realized.

As per Recommendation 2, the GCWCC 2026 - 2028 Business Plan will include a request for $250,000 in additional funding beginning in 2026 for a new Programming/Wage Subsidy grant and $35,000 for external legal advice (to be referred to the 2026 budget process).

HISTORY/DISCUSSION

History

On May 25, 2009, Council adopted, in principle, the GCWCC Plan 2025, a 20-year strategic plan for the future direction of the community centres in Winnipeg. Comments of the Public Service contained in the Administrative Report accompanying Plan 2025 in relation to the Plan proposals were received as information. Primarily as a result of Council adoption of the Recreation, Leisure and Libraries Facility Policy (RLLFP) in May 2005, Plan 2025 addressed the future of community centres from an infrastructure, programming and volunteer perspective. While not a formal or official City policy document, as Plan 2025 was developed in alignment with the RLLFP Policy, it served as a guiding strategy and action document to support the community centre model.

Annually, through its three-year Business Plan, the GCWCC has provided updates to Executive Policy Committee and Council on the progress of Plan 2025.

On May 26, 2022, Council rescinded and replaced the RLLFP with the Winnipeg Recreation Strategy (the Strategy), which provides policy direction, strategies, level of service targets and recommended implementation investments and actions for all City-owned recreation facilities, including community centres. The Strategy addresses three recreation system components: Partnerships or Agreements, Programs and Services, and Facilities. Community centres figure prominently in these components with the community centre model as part of Partnerships or Agreements and community centres as part of part of Facilities. Community centres also contribute to Programs and Services providing physical literacy and skill development, fitness, active living and well-being, social inclusion and community connection, and leadership development. Section 7 of the Strategy provides the current level of service (2020), targeted level of service (2045), and how the target level of service will be achieved for community centres. It also provides a decision-making framework that indicates the priority factors for community centre facility investment to ensure a consistent, clear and transparent decision-making process.

Approval of the Strategy requires the Public Service to provide biennial updates to the Standing Policy Committee on Community Services on the implementation of the Actions Matrix, appended to the Strategy. The Action Matrix includes Action #7 “Assist and support the GCWCC-led process to update the community centre strategic plan GCWCC Plan 2025.”

With adoption of the 2022 Budget Update, Council approved a $300,000 grant in 2022 to the GCWCC, funded from the Recreation and Library Facility Investment Capital Program, for the development of GCWCC Plan 2045, as an update to Plan 2025.

On November 28, 2024 the Standing Policy Committee on Community Services received as information the Winnipeg Recreation Strategy Biennial Update which provided the following status update regarding Plan 2025:

- Community Services Department and the Municipal Accommodations Division of Asset and Project Management Department have worked collaboratively with GCWCC and support the GCWCC-led Plan 2045 project, including participation in various committees of the project.
- It is anticipated that GCWCC will be updating their strategic plan following the completion of Plan 2045 to ensure that the work and guidance of GCWCC aligns with Plan 2045.

Discussion

Led by HTFC Planning and Design, the development of Plan 2045 is the result of an extensive process that involved engagement and collaboration with community centre volunteers, GCWCC and City of Winnipeg staff, City Councillors, community organizations and stakeholders. In addition to the Winnipeg Recreation Strategy, it was also developed in alignment with other City policies including OurWinnipeg 2045, Complete Communities 2.0, Poverty Reduction Strategy, and Newcomer Welcome and Inclusion Policy.

Plan 2045 provides strategies and actions to help ensure Winnipeg's community centre model is inclusive, sustainable, and responsive to the community it provides for with a focus on people, programs, and places.

Research and engagement contributed to confirming key challenges facing community centres, but more importantly led to the development of recommended strategies, actions and resources required to sustain and improve the community centre model.

Plan 2045 is intended to guide actions, direction and resource allocation of GCWCC and the City over the next 20 years and includes an implementation plan, with the recommended actions categorized into four strategic goals represented as follows:

1. Improved Governance
2. Supported Volunteers
3. Responsive Programing
4. Contemporary and Maintained Facilities

The implementation plan includes short, medium and long-term timelines with the intent to roll it out in phases that align with the City's multi-year budget process. As new opportunities and challenges will arise over time, GCWCC will report back to Executive Policy Committee on the progress of Plan 2045 with requests for future funding defined as each phase is executed to ensure it remains current and relevant in meeting community needs.

The following are the phases and reporting periods for the Plan:

Phase 1: 2025 through 2027, with a report to EPC in 2027 to inform the 2028-2031 Budget
Phase 2: 2028-2031 with a report to EPC in 2031 to inform the 2032-2035 Budget
Phase 3: 2032-2035 with a report to EPC in 2035 to inform the 2036-2040 Budget
Phase 4: 2036-2040 with a report to EPC in 2040 to inform the 2041-2045 Budget

Implementation of many recommendations in Plan 2045 will depend upon the availability of human and financial resources in future phases. Resource needs will be identified in future administrative reports to EPC, including the future annual business plans of GCWCC. Without them, the actions and resulting improvements cannot be realized.

The following is an overview of Phase 1 of the Plan:

Phase 1: 2025 through 2027

The first phase of the Plan will focus on the strategic goal of Improved Governance and includes two areas of focus: improved governance through governance review and reform and accountability assessments.

Improved Governance

Much of the governance model for community centres was established over 30 years ago and requires updating to meet current realities and challenges. By-laws, policies and accountability procedures require streamlining to include what is important and reduce the burden on volunteers.

Plan 2045 calls for a review of the governance model, moving from working boards to governance boards. This includes review of the governance model for GCWCC, District Boards, and Community Centre boards along with reforming the current standardized Constitution and Bylaws.

Feedback from the engagement process identified that some community centres experience difficulties in establishing a governance model as they do not have the resources to hire staff. Instead, board members become responsible for operations and programming.

To address this and successfully implement the actions leading to improved governance, it is recommended that a new annual $250,000 GCWCC Programming/Wage Subsidy grant be established, beginning in 2026. While the program is still to be developed, the intent is to provide support to community centres allowing them to hire paid staff for operations and/or programming.

It was also identified that clarity and formalized roles and responsibilities to improve governance are required. A key initiative to address this is the establishment of management agreements between the City and each community centre to ensure clear roles and responsibilities. This involves standardized agreements covering facility use, responsibilities of the City and community centre, and other key terms.

To address this, the Public Service recommends a one-time increase of $35,000 to GCWCC's 2026 operating grant to retain external legal advice to support community centres during the development and execution of these management agreements.

Accountability Assessments

Optimizing accountability and transparency is an objective of Improved Governance. A key initiative of the Plan to meet this objective is to establish a regular assessment process and tools to evaluate the health/risk level of each community centre related to organization (governance), finances, programming, and facilities.

Co-led by GCWCC and the City, the development of the process and tools will provide a realistic reporting mechanism on the status of each community centre with the initial assessments completed for the 2027 report to Executive Policy Committee. Additional resources are not being requested for this initiative.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Financial Impact Statement Date: June 24, 2025

Project Name:

General Council of Winnipeg Community Centres Inc. – Plan 2045

COMMENTS:

There are no immediate financial implications associated with this report.

As per recommendation 2 of this report, General Council of Winnipeg Community Centres (GCWCC) 2026 - 2028 Business Plan will include a request for additional funding of $250,000 beginning in 2026 for a new Programming/Wage Subsidy grant and $35,000 for external legal advice. With the amounts to be referred to the 2026 budget process.

Ozzy Garrett - June 24, 2025
Ozzy Garrett, CPA, CGA
Manager of Finance
Community Services Department

CONSULTATION

This Report has been prepared in consultation with:

- General Council of Winnipeg Community Centres Inc.
- Assets and Project Management Department, Municipal Accommodations Division
- Public Works Department, Parks and Open Spaces Division
- Legal Services

OURWINNIPEG POLICY ALIGNMENT

Goal: Good Health and Well-Being
Policy 4.11 Equitable Service access
Policy 4.12 Inclusive Public Places

Goal: Social Equity
Policy 5.1 Equitable Service Access

Goal: City Building
Policy 6.8 Plan for and accommodate Forecasted Growth
Policy 6.29 New Communities

WINNIPEG CLIMATE ACTION PLAN ALIGNMENT

Consideration was given as to whether this report connects to the Winnipeg Climate Action Plan (CAP), and it was determined that the CAP is not applicable to this specific report.

WINNIPEG POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY ALIGNMENT

Goal 6: All City Services are Equitable, Inclusive and Accessible

SUBMITTED BY

Department: Community Services Department
Division: Community Centres
Prepared by: Kelly Lemoine
Date: June 24, 2025
File No: CMS-2025-10

Attachments:
Attachment A – GCWCC Plan 2045

Attachment B – Plan 2045: Appendices