Minutes – Standing Policy Committee on Community Services – February 3, 2026

REPORTS

Item No. 3 Winnipeg Fire Paramedic Service Strategic Direction – Annual Report

STANDING COMMITTEE DECISION:

The Standing Policy Committee on Community Services concurred in the recommendation of the Winnipeg Public Service and approved the following:

1. That this report be received as information.

2. That the annual Strategic Direction Update be submitted to the Standing Policy Committee on Community Services in February each year commencing in 2027.

3. That the Proper Officers of the City be authorized to implement the intent of the foregoing.

DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

Moved by Councillor Allard,

That the recommendation of the Winnipeg Public Service be concurred in.

Carried

STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On December 2, 2025, the Standing Policy Committee on Community Services concurred in the recommendation of the Winnipeg Public Service and granted an extension of time of 60 days to report back on the Winnipeg Fire Paramedic Service Strategic Direction - Annual Report.

COUNCIL DECISION:

On June 22, 2023, Council concurred in the recommendation of the Standing Policy Committee on Community Services and adopted the following:

1. That Recommendations 6 and 7 of the Winnipeg Fire Paramedic Service Strategic Direction, approved by Council on March 20, 2020 be rescinded.

2. That the Winnipeg Public Service be directed to provide an annual report to the Standing Policy Committee on Community Services, commencing in 2024, containing updates on:

    A. Implementation of the Master Plan including investment strategies and action plans coordinated with all city departments that leverages respective expertise.

    B. Data updates (growth strategies, community risk factors) that impact planning, prioritization, relationship with stakeholders of key risk types given fire and life safety risks.

    C. Progress updates on the construction of a Fire Station in the Waverley West Ward.

3. That the Proper Officers of the City be authorized to do all things necessary to fulfill the intent of the foregoing.

DECISION MAKING HISTORY (continued):

COUNCIL DECISION (continued):

On March 20, 2020, Council concurred in the recommendation of the Standing Policy Committee on Protection, Community Services and Parks and adopted the following:

7. That the Winnipeg Public Service provide verbal updates every quarter to the Standing Policy Committee on Protection, Community Services and Parks with respect to progress on Waverley West as a priority, identifying steering committee or a project core team members to consider project scope.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Title: Winnipeg Fire Paramedic Service Strategic Direction Update – 2025

Critical Path: Standing Policy Committee on Community Services

AUTHORIZATION

Author	Department Head	CFO	CAO
C. Schmidt	C. Schmidt	T. Graham	J. Dunford

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Winnipeg population continues to grow. Growth in population plus poverty and older housing has put more pressure on the Winnipeg Fire Paramedic Service (WFPS). There are more fires, rescues, and medical emergencies now than ever before.

The Fire Underwriters Survey, Community Risk Assessment Standards of Cover, and the 2018 Winnipeg Fire Paramedic Service Master Plan contain recommendations to help plan for our current and future needs.

Many of these recommendations have been completed with the resources we already have. Recommendations that require more money are included in the budget process.

In line with Master Plan recommendations, the WFPS completed a number of key projects in 2025:

- Consolidation of stations 9 and 15 with the new station at Autumnwood and Cottonwood opening April 2, 2025, and officially commissioned on June 18, 2025.
- Installation of a modular station at 1310 Eaglewood Drive in Waverley West, officially commissioned on January 11, 2025, in advance of the permanent station which will be located at Ruth Crossing and Bison Drive.
- Implementation of Traffic Pre-emption Pilot study.

The Operating Budget highlights for 2026 (approved on December 16, 2025) include the following:

- 40 additional firefighter Full Time Equivalents (FTEs).
- 11.5 new paramedic FTEs from Shared Health for community paramedicine.
- WFPS Wellness Clinic to support members in the prevention and recovery from illness and injury.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That this report be received as information.
2. That the annual Strategic Direction Update be submitted to the Standing Policy Committee on Community Services in February each year commencing in 2027.

3. That the Proper Officers of the City be authorized to implement the intent of the foregoing.

REASON FOR THE REPORT

On June 22, 2023, Council concurred in the recommendation of the Standing Policy Committee on Protection and Community Services and adopted the following:

2. That the Winnipeg Public Service be directed to provide an annual report to the Standing Policy Committee on Community Services, commencing in 2024, containing updates on:

A. Implementation of the Master Plan including investment strategies and action plans coordinated with all city departments that leverages respective expertise.

B. Data updates (growth strategies, community risk factors) that impact planning, prioritization, relationship with stakeholders of key risk types given fire and life safety risks.

C. Progress updates on the construction of a Fire Station in the Waverley West Ward.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS

There are no implications associated with this report as it is for information only.

Having the next report due in February 2027 will allow for the inclusion of the complete 2026 data set due to the report submission timelines.

HISTORY/DISCUSSION

A. Implementation of the Master Plan

The 2018 Winnipeg Fire Paramedic Service (WFPS) Master Plan recommendations address infrastructure and operating capacity deficits that challenge the ability of the Department to fulfill its response and regulatory mandates.

The WFPS Master Plan provides recommendations to address the gaps identified in the Fire Underwriters Survey and Community Risk Assessment Standards of Cover reports to prepare the City for its current and future emergency service needs.

The Winnipeg Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) and the City of Winnipeg have grown significantly over the last several years like most urban areas in Canada. The CMA grew by 30,912 people from 2023 to 2024 while the City of Winnipeg grew by 27,543 people. Looking forward, the Winnipeg CMA is anticipated to have a population of 951,758 and the City a population of 850,260 as of July 1, 2025. This represents a projected increase of 11,748 (1.2 per cent) for the CMA and 8,245 (1.0 per cent) for the city compared to 2024. The long-term population projections for the Winnipeg CMA and City of Winnipeg, estimate both regions exceeding 1 million people by 2049: https://legacy.winnipeg.ca/cao/pdfs/2025-Population-Projections.pdf

The WFPS Master Plan provides a roadmap for the Department to respond to community growth and development. It is an effective policy-making and budgeting tool as well. Knowing where and how the community will grow into the future and what the Fire Paramedic Service will need in terms of policy and budget support to address it, well in advance, is a critical element for Council deliberation.

A significant recommendation of the WFPS Master Plan report is that no reduction of response personnel or vehicles should occur. The report recommends increasing and re-purposing of response and support resources for greatest efficiency and efficacy.

In line with Master Plan recommendations, the Service completed a number of key projects in 2025:

- Consolidation of stations 9 and 15 with the new station at Autumnwood and Cottonwood opening April 2, 2025, and officially commissioned on June 18, 2025.

- Installation of a modular station at 1310 Eaglewood Drive in Waverley West, officially commissioned on January 11, 2025, in advance of the permanent station which will be located at Ruth Crossing and Bison Drive. The procurement process of the permanent station is currently being finalized.

- Implementation of Traffic Pre-emption Pilot study.

The Master Plan recommends investments to the following areas:

- Updating stations to meet current health and safety requirements
    - minimize personnel exposure to fire-contaminated equipment
    - minimize personnel exposure to vehicle exhaust

- Updating stations to ensure there is no negative effect on the City's fire insurance rating
    - In 2024, the Winnipeg Fire Paramedic Service (WFPS) updated its Fire Underwriters Survey (FUS) and recently received the finalized scoring. The scores related to the FUS help determine insurance rates across Canada. Thanks to improvements made since the 2014 FUS, Winnipeg's fire protection for larger buildings — like apartments, commercial, and industrial properties — was previously a Class 3 and is now rated Class 2. This improved rating means the city has stronger fire department performance, a reliable water supply, better fire safety measures, and improved communication systems. The new rating

reflects major investments in infrastructure, training, and emergency readiness. It could lead to lower insurance costs, especially for commercial properties. Winnipeg also kept its top rating of Class 1 for single-family homes.

- Updating the training facility to meet capacity needs
    - live fire training
    - fire investigation training
    - scenario based team medical training

- Increasing the current staffing complement in the fire and injury prevention branch

- Improving fire heavy fleet
    - additional ladder units
    - spare engine and rescue capacity

The accepted recommendations pertaining to station capital infrastructure required to prepare the Service to appropriately meet the current and future fire and paramedic protection and response needs of the City of Winnipeg have been integrated into the Service's annual budget submissions.

Capital budget highlights for the next six years include:

Facility optimizations:

- Stations 4 and 30 to be consolidated (2027-28) - $22.8 million
- Stations 19 (Whytewold Rd) and 36 (Portage Ave) to be consolidated (2027) – $2.7 million
- Stations 2 (Watt St.) and 3 (Rue Des Meurons) to be consolidated (2031) - $20.3 million

Station capital maintenance (2026-31) - $6.5 million
Replacement of equipment at end of life (2026-31) - $11.2 million
Emergency Vehicle Pre-emption implementation (2026) - $1.8 million

Operating Budget highlights for 2026:

- 40 additional firefighter FTEs to strengthen flexibility through a Resource Pool
- 11.5 new paramedic FTEs from Shared Health for community paramedicine
- WFPS Wellness Clinic to support members in the prevention and recovery from illness and injury. The new Clinic will include:
    - One occupational health nurse
    - One physiotherapist
    - One clinic coordinator
    - One mental health educator
    - Three additional health resource specialists
    - One clerk
    - One business analyst

Through consultation with City Planners, WFPS has been consulted on emergency services infrastructure and operating requirements for the following areas:

- Chief Peguis extension through to McPhillips Street
- The Public Markets major redevelopment site – Marion Street and Dawson Road
- South Transcona Precinct 'S' secondary plan

B. Data Updates

WFPS uses data to determine where resources are best located. WFPS is committed to using available resources in the most effective and efficient ways possible. As part of the Computer Automated Dispatch Capital project, WFPS is in the process of implementing Deccan International's decision-support software to improve response times and optimize resources. This predictive modeling tool uses historical CAD data, GIS map data and a rigorous projection algorithm to project the impact of deployment changes on response times and availability.

The WFPS is under extreme stress both in Fire and Paramedic Operations. Call volumes have increased significantly with population growth, more fires and the ongoing drug crisis. As well, increased call complexity, longer wait times for transferring patients, and lingering impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have put additional pressure on the Service.

Comparing the first three quarters of 2025 to the first three quarters of 2024:

1. Overall fires decreased by 4.4 percent. This is largely due to a significant decrease we saw in Q1.

2. Non-structure fires decreased approximately 7 percent

3. Structure fires increased approximately 1 percent

4. Vacant property fires decreased by approximately 8.3 percent

5. Vacant building/structure fires increased by 6.9 percent

    a. It is important to note that vacant property fires are a mix of both structure and non-structure fires

6. Outdoor - Trash Container fires (dumpsters or bins) decreased by nearly 23 percent

Total Fires Summarized by Cause	Jan	Feb	Mar	Q1	Apr	May	Jun	Q2	Jul	Aug	Sept	Q3	TOTAL	% of total
2024	218	204	214	636	364	352	325	1041	253	295	372	920	2,597	
Accidental	68	75	71	214	97	93	99	289	91	112	103	306	809	31.2
Incendiary	71	64	70	205	120	107	116	343	60	86	125	271	819	31.5
Undetermined	77	60	68	205	140	148	100	388	97	91	138	326	919	35.4
NULL	2	5	5	12	7	4	10	21	5	6	6	17	50	2
2025	191	137	168	496	291	469	309	1069	308	311	299	918	2,483	
Accidental	64	55	49	168	90	161	83	334	81	79	91	251	753	30.3
Incendiary	55	30	52	137	87	121	94	302	107	114	89	310	749	30.2
Undetermined	68	49	64	181	107	184	125	416	113	107	100	320	917	36.9
NULL	4	3	3	10	7	3	7	17	7	11	19	37	64	2.6

Total Fires Summarized by Property Type	Jan	Feb	Mar	Q1	Apr	May	Jun	Q2	Jul	Aug	Sept	Q3	Total
2024	218	204	214	636	364	352	325	1041	253	295	372	920	2597
Structural	79	79	90	248	90	60	106	256	69	99	77	245	749
Non-residential Building	8	19	15	42	17	10	15	42	9	16	8	33	117
Residential (1&2 Family)	31	30	26	87	47	19	54	120	36	36	37	109	316
Residential (Apartment)	20	16	23	59	10	10	20	40	8	19	16	43	142
Residential (Misc)	14	9	20	43	4	8	9	21	7	11	5	23	87
Storage (Vehicle)	4	5	4	13	9	8	6	23	7	15	10	32	68
Storage Propety (Misc)	2	0	2	4	2	5	2	9	1	2	0	3	16
Vacant Property	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	2	3
Non-Structural	137	124	122	383	272	291	215	778	183	194	290	667	1828
Miscellaneous	12	9	12	33	11	23	11	45	13	9	11	33	111
Outdoor (Brush/Grass)	8	10	7	25	45	44	31	120	29	28	37	94	239
Outdoor (Trash Container)	48	38	45	131	91	79	79	249	64	68	113	245	625
Outdoor Property (Misc)	49	52	50	151	110	123	76	309	63	65	112	240	700
Vehicle (Car/Truck/MV)	19	15	7	41	15	18	16	49	13	21	15	49	139
Vehicle (Other)	1		1	2		4	2	6	1	3	2	6	14
Null	2	1	2	5	2	1	4	7	1	2	5	8	20
2025	191	137	168	496	291	469	309	1069	308	311	299	918	2483
Structural	82	64	61	207	91	113	85	289	91	85	83	259	755
Non-residential Building	17	7	6	30	12	16	14	42	14	21	20	55	127
Residential (1&2 Family)	29	20	27	76	42	56	40	138	40	29	26	95	309
Residential (Apartment)	15	21	19	55	12	16	13	41	12	15	20	47	143
Residential (Misc)	11	8	5	24	15	12	9	36	12	8	8	28	88
Storage (Vehicle)	10	8	4	22	9	12	7	28	12	10	7	29	79
Storage Propety (Misc)	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	4	1	2	1	4	8
Vacant Property	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1
Non-Structural	109	73	103	285	194	354	219	767	213	223	207	643	1695
Miscellaneous	7	5	3	15	11	21	13	45	9	18	14	41	101
Outdoor (Brush/Grass)	3	3	10	16	38	95	59	192	43	38	27	108	316
Outdoor (Trash Container)	36	25	36	97	58	70	56	184	65	64	72	201	482
Outdoor Property (Misc)	34	15	41	90	74	142	72	288	69	84	71	224	602
Vehicle (Car/Truck/MV)	28	23	12	63	13	24	16	53	25	16	22	63	179
Vehicle (Other)	1	2	1	4	0	2	3	5	2	3	1	6	15
Null			4	4	6	2	5	13	4	3	9	16	33

Vacant Property Fires	Jan	Feb	Mar	Q1	Apr	May	Jun	Q2	Jul	Aug	Sept	Q3	Total
2024	14	19	17	50	27	20	18	65	26	16	24	66	181
Structural	7	12	10	29	21	12	9	42	15	13	17	45	116
Non-residential Building	1	4	1	6	0	2	1	3	1	1	0	2	11
Residential (1&2 Family)	2	7	4	13	16	5	5	26	11	6	12	29	68
Residential (Apartment)	2	0	0	2	0	2	1	3	0	0	1	1	6
Residential (Misc)	0	0	3	3	0	1	2	3	1	5	2	8	14
Storage (Vehicle)	1	1	2	4	4	0	0	4	1	1	2	4	12
Storage Propety (Misc)	1	0	0	1	0	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	3
Vacant Property	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	2
Non-Structural	7	7	7	21	6	8	9	23	11	3	5	19	63
Miscellaneous	1	2	3	6	2	2	2	6	1	1	1	3	15
Outdoor (Brush/Grass)	0	1	0	1	0	2	5	7	1	0	0	1	9
Outdoor (Trash Container)	1	2	2	5	1	3	0	4	0	0	1	1	10
Outdoor Property (Misc)	5	2	2	9	3	1	2	6	9	2	3	14	29
NULL											2	2	2
2025	18	3	18	39	18	16	19	53	30	26	18	74	166
Structural	14	2	16	32	14	11	13	38	22	18	14	54	124
Non-residential Building	2	0	0	2	2	3	0	5	1	0	5	6	13
Residential (1&2 Family)	9	2	13	24	8	4	10	22	17	10	4	31	77
Residential (Apartment)	2	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	4
Residential (Misc)	1	0	1	2	2	1	1	4	3	3	1	7	13
Storage (Vehicle)	0	0	1	1	2	3	2	7	1	3	2	6	14
Storage Propety (Misc)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	2
Vacant Property	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1
Non-Structural	4	1	2	7	4	5	5	14	8	8	4	20	41
Miscellaneous	1	1	0	2	0	1	2	3	1	2	1	4	9
Outdoor (Brush/Grass)	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
Outdoor (Trash Container)	0	0	1	1	2	1	1	4	2	3	3	8	13
Outdoor Property (Misc)	2	0	1	3	1	1	2	4	5	3	0	8	15
Vehicle (Car/Truck/MV)	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Vehicle (Other)	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
NULL							1	1					1

Medical Response Data:

On April 23, 2025, the WFPS changed the way calls were assigned to emergency response resources. Over the past number of years, demand for emergency services has continued to increase, and response times to life threatening or critical emergencies had begun to exceed the department's performance standard of less than eight (8) minutes and 59 seconds. Prior to the change in April, all calls were categorized as either emergent (Priority 1) or non-emergent (Priority 2). The new categories are emergent (Priority 1), urgent (Priority 2), non-emergent (Priority 3), public assistance (Priority 4), and health referral (Priority 5). A review of several years of clinical data assisted in categorizing each call into one of these new priorities. This process assists the WFPS in ensuring the correct resource was assigned to the event based upon the greatest clinical need.

Figure 1: Medical Call Volumes

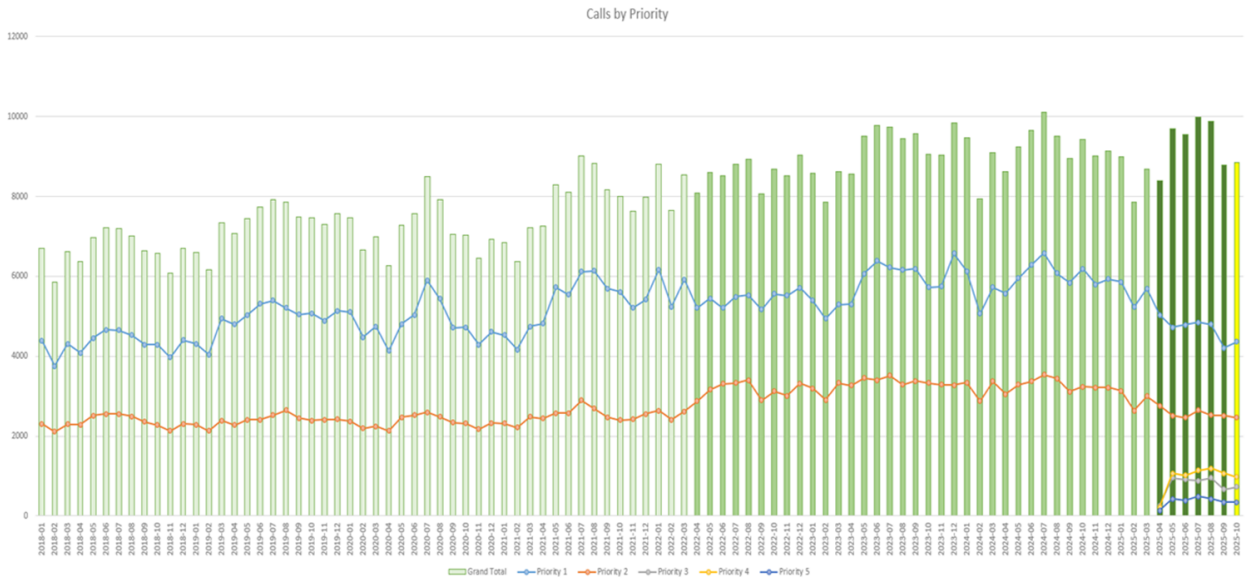
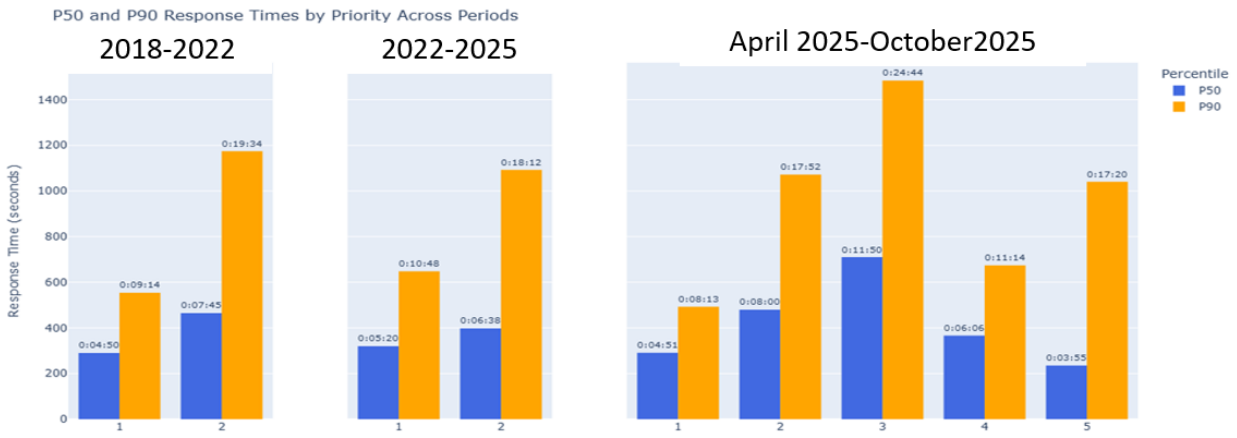


Figure 2: Response time to medical events



The first six months of the new priorities show many promising results, and further refinements

will occur over the next several months with a focus on ensuring that patients receive timely responses for emergency events.

Encampment Data

In collaboration with our community partners, the City of Winnipeg and the WFPS employ a human rights-based approach to responding to reports of encampments on public property.

On assessing whether to vacate an encampment, WFPS personnel will intervene if there is an immediate risk to public or personal safety as a result of the activity in the encampment. In such circumstances, the WFPS works collaboratively with other City departments and outside partner agencies to provide residents with information on risk reduction. If there is a pattern of persistent behavior that is a risk to life and safety, residents may be directed to vacate the site. Partner agencies will continue to work with the residents, explaining the need to vacate the site and identifying necessary supports.

In 2025, WFPS Fire Prevention changed the way they dispatch to encampments. Instead of a dedicated team member that solely visits encampments, all fire prevention officers visit encampments regularly but based on reports of risks. These reports may come in from the public directly, 311, our operations teams or other community contacts. These visits also include subsequent visits to areas of previous complaints to ensure fire safety risks are being addressed. From January to December 2025, there were 576 visits to encampments for fire safety purposes.

Between January and November 2025, 311 received 1670 reports relating to encampments, most of which were referred to outreach service providers. The WFPS also helped in resolving some of these reports.

Between January and November 30, 2025, there have been 543 encampment fires noted by WFPS crews. This number reflects fires indicated as associated with homelessness by attending operational crews.

Substance Use Data

Appendix 1 depicts substance use statistics from 2016 to November 30, 2025, broken down by month and by substance type as reported by the chief complaint.

The chief complaint traditionally reflects the patient's description of events. Therefore, true numbers of calls involving substance use are likely higher because in some incidents, the chief complaint may instead be reported as a symptom of what the patient is feeling (shortness of breath, chest tightness, dizziness, etc.).

Waverley West Station Update

Modular Station

Installation of a modular station at 1310 Eaglewood Drive in Waverley West occurred on time and on budget with the station being officially commissioned on January 11, 2025.

Permanent Waverley West Station

The permanent station will be located at Ruth Crossing and Bison Drive. The procurement process of the permanent station is currently being finalized.

Emergency Traffic Pre-emption Pilot

Between April 2024 and April 2025, a pilot project in Osborne Village was completed involving nine emergency vehicles from Stations 1, 4, 5, 13 and 30. The Emergency Vehicle Pre-emption (EVP) system involves wireless connection between emergency vehicles and select traffic signals.

The key benefits of EVP are that it makes travelling through intersections safer and decreases the time it takes first responders to arrive at an emergency scene. Safety and response times are two foundational aspects of the Winnipeg Fire Paramedic Service.

The results validate the technical solution and demonstrate the response time and safety benefits. The pilot supports the merits of this project going forward to city-wide implementation as proposed in WFPS's 2026 capital budget request. The response time improvements are estimated to be 15-20 percent faster than typical emergency travel response times. This is a very important opportunity to improve response times and extend service coverage safely as the city continues to grow and roads become busier.

The Traffic Signal Branch manages approximately 693 intersections. The project team is proposing to implement EVP units in 437 higher risk intersections (this includes the 17 pilot intersections). The implementation will take two years, starting in 2026. This gradual roll-out will allow the Traffic Management Centre to monitor the impact of EVP to traffic flow and make system adjustments as necessary. In-vehicle units will be installed concurrent to a scheduled replacement of vehicle radio equipment in 2026.

Implementation of EVP across the city will make working as a firefighter or paramedic safer. It will result in faster, safer, emergency service. It is a key element of WFPS' strategy to reach our target service times as the city and population grow.

Next Steps

The WFPS plans to submit an Annual Report soon, which will include call data for 2025.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Financial Impact Statement Date: Jan 12, 2026

Project Name:

Winnipeg Fire Paramedic Service Strategic Direction Update - 2025

COMMENTS:

There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

John Hall FCMA, CGMA
Financial Controller
Fire Paramedic Service

CONSULTATION

This Report has been prepared in consultation with:

N/A

OURWINNIPEG POLICY ALIGNMENT

01-2a Collaborate to make safe communities
01-2b Emergency Preparedness, Response and Recovery

WINNIPEG CLIMATE ACTION PLAN ALIGNMENT

Strategic Opportunity #5 Low Carbon and Energy Efficient Buildings

Key Directions and Actions

1.3 Implement Low Carbon and Energy Efficient City Facilities and Buildings
1.5 Reduce Employee Vehicle Kilometers Travelled (VKT) and associated GHGs
1.6 Reduce Consumption and Increase Waste Diversion
3.5 Reduce Traffic Congestion
4.1 Increase Strategic Infill Development That Provides Access to and Capitalizes on Existing and Planned Corridors with Frequent Transit Service
4.2 Ensure New Areas of Growth are Designed According to the Principles of Complete Communities
5.1 Increase Energy Performance of Existing Buildings
5.2 Improve Energy Performance of New Buildings
7.1 Implement Opportunities to Improve Winnipeg's Resilience and Adaptability to the Effects of a Changing Climate

The WFPS sees firsthand the impacts of climate change with the increased frequency of severe/extreme weather events. As climate changes the Service also sees increased risks such as wildland-urban interface (WUI) fires threatening city homes and businesses and flooding.

As such, the WFPS strives to be a leader in climate change action, adapting processes, policies and strategies with environmental factors in mind. For example, recommendations include building new, energy-efficient facilities as well as implementing a traffic pre-emption system which will reduce fuel consumption.

WINNIPEG POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY ALIGNMENT

Consideration was given as to whether this report connects to the Winnipeg Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) and its Goals and Objectives, and it was determined that the PRS is not applicable to this specific report.

SUBMITTED BY

Department: Fire Paramedic Service
Division: Executive
Prepared by: Christian Schmidt, Fire and Paramedic Chief
Date: December 23, 2025

Attachment:

Appendix 1 – Substance Use Data