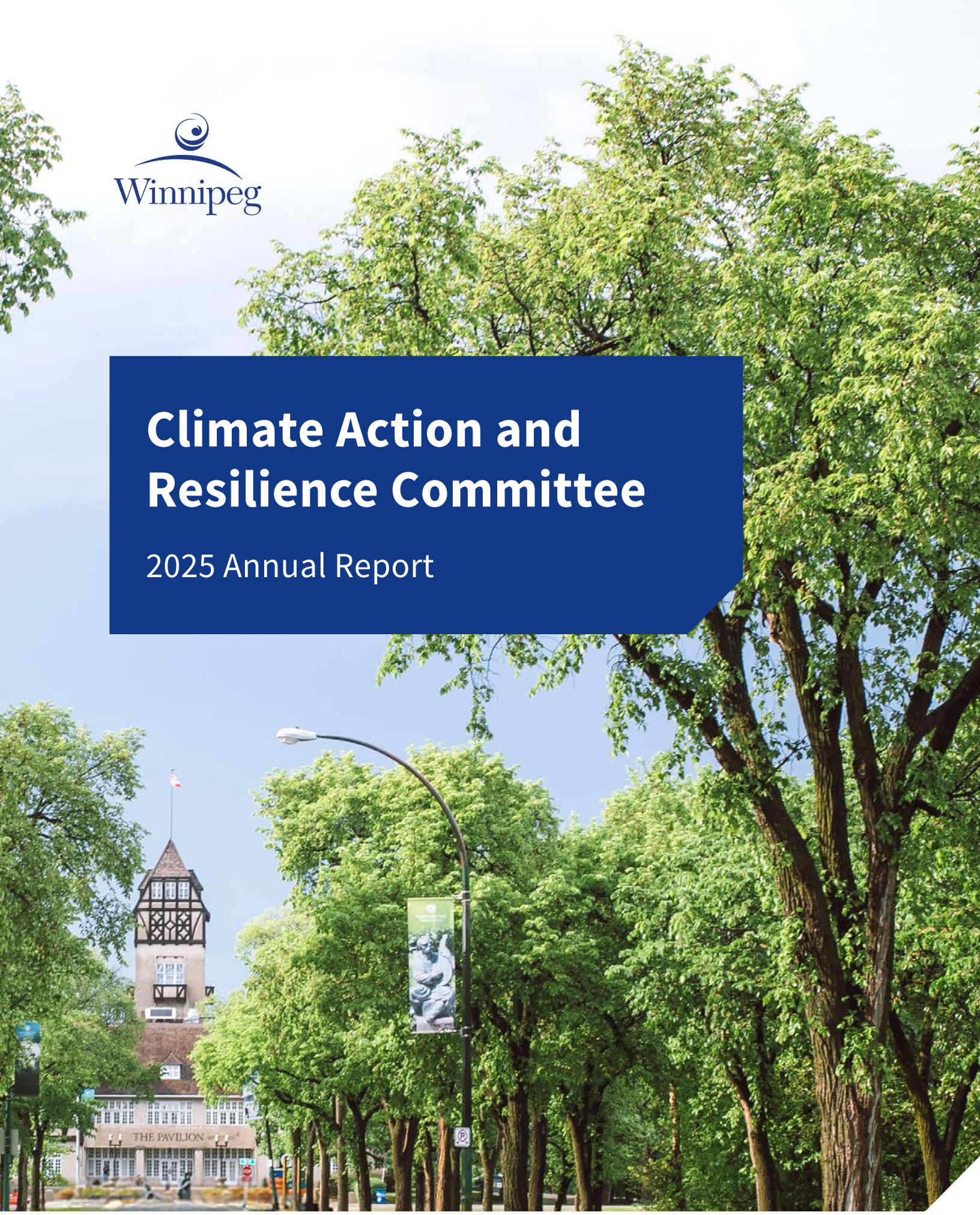
Winnipeg

# Climate Action and Resilience Committee

## 2025 Annual Report





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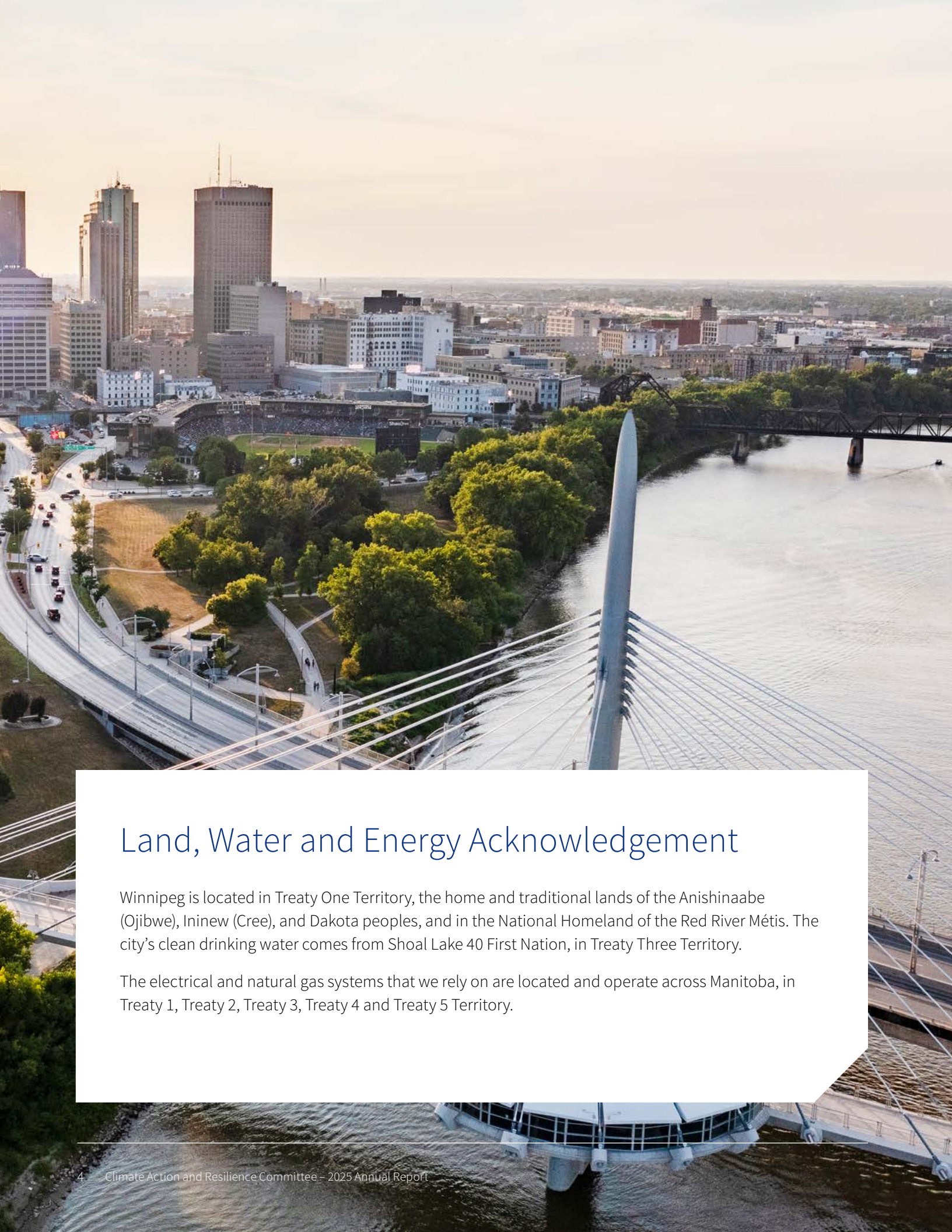


# Land, Water and Energy Acknowledgement

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. The city's clean drinking water comes from Shoal Lake 40 First Nation, in Treaty Three Territory.

The electrical and natural gas systems that we rely on are located and operate across Manitoba, in Treaty 1, Treaty 2, Treaty 3, Treaty 4 and Treaty 5 Territory.

# Message from the Chairperson



**Councillor Brian Mayes**
Chairperson

Thank you to CARC for sharing their time and expertise in our second year of working together. We accomplished a lot! I see significant progress and momentum building to provide more meaningful advice to Council.

Thanks to Council for seeking CARCs advice on the Building Emissions Reduction Strategy. I invite my colleagues to reach out to collaborate on climate action pathways and explore the benefits between our priorities.

The Prairie Climate Centre research was an important reminder that climate change impacts put a “strain on City services, increase maintenance costs, and disproportionately affect communities more vulnerable to change”. The City should act now to “protect residents, avoid higher costs in the future, and ensure that Winnipeg is prepared for the risks that are already here and those yet to come.”

This research, the public opinion poll results on Winnipeggers’ perspectives on climate change, and the thoughtful insights shared between citizen committees at the Fall gathering, sets CARC up with a strong foundation to advise on specific actions in Winnipeg’s context in 2026.

# Message from the Vice-Chairperson



**Matt Dryburgh**
Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, Vice-Chairperson

I would like to thank the Chairperson and CARC committee members for the opportunity to participate as your Vice- Chairperson during this past year. Your input and advice is greatly appreciated.

In addition to being the Vice–Chairperson, I have the benefit of being an information bridge between CARC and Senior Management Team Climate Steering Committee (SMTCSC). SMTCSC steers climate action initiatives across City departments, guides the update to the Winnipeg Climate Action Plan, and fosters ownership for climate leadership and action in departments. Collaboration between and within governments and the community is critical to strengthen what the City is already doing to integrate climate action into core operations.

I look forward to continuing our important work in 2026.



*CARC members at the citizen committee gathering. From left to right: Laura Rempel (coordinator), Laura Tyler, Josep Seras Gubert, Councillor Brian Mayes, Casey Clair, Donald Hester and Lisa Richards.*

# Message from the Committee

Winnipeg is experiencing the effects of climate change and severe weather events with risks and costs set to increase. Heat waves, drought, wildfires, poor air quality, and shorter winters are increasing in frequency with compounding impacts. Climate change puts the people and the places we love at greater risk.

Climate change action is important and complex. It can be slow and frustrating; it can also build unexpected and meaningful relationships and solutions. The City of Winnipeg is not alone experiencing uncertainties and steep learning curves. We must work together to face them. We echo the Prairie Climate Centre research (2025) to acknowledge that "While Winnipeg has taken steps toward climate action, the pace and scale of implementation must increase to meet the challenges ahead."

Steps forward include streamlining implementation of existing plans and strategies like the Community Energy Investment Roadmap and the Poverty Reduction Strategy, with appropriate funding and resources. It means being proactive in communications on what the City is doing or not doing and why. It looks like more collaboration with climate change experts and community to develop new initiatives that meet community needs. We invite Council to seek more proactive and meaningful advice from CARC earlier in the development of motions or reports.

We laid the groundwork for action on transparency, accountability, communications, and relationship building in 2024, that we delivered on this year. We hosted climate change communications training and participated in community networks and events. We created guidelines to establish public service, CARC and community working groups. A highlight was starting to work with related citizen committees of Council on shared mandates.

We look forward to more collaborative action in 2026 and invite you to join us.

# Committee Members

- Councillor Brian Mayes *(Chairperson)*
- Matt Dryburgh *( Vice-Chairperson), Deputy Chief Administrative Officer*
- Casey Clair
- Donald Hester
- Josep Seras Gubert
- Laura Tyler
- Lisa Richards
- Darcy Granove *(January- February)*
- Lynsie Villeneuve *(March- July)*

**Coordinator:**

- Laura Rempel, *Sustainability Planner, City of Winnipeg*

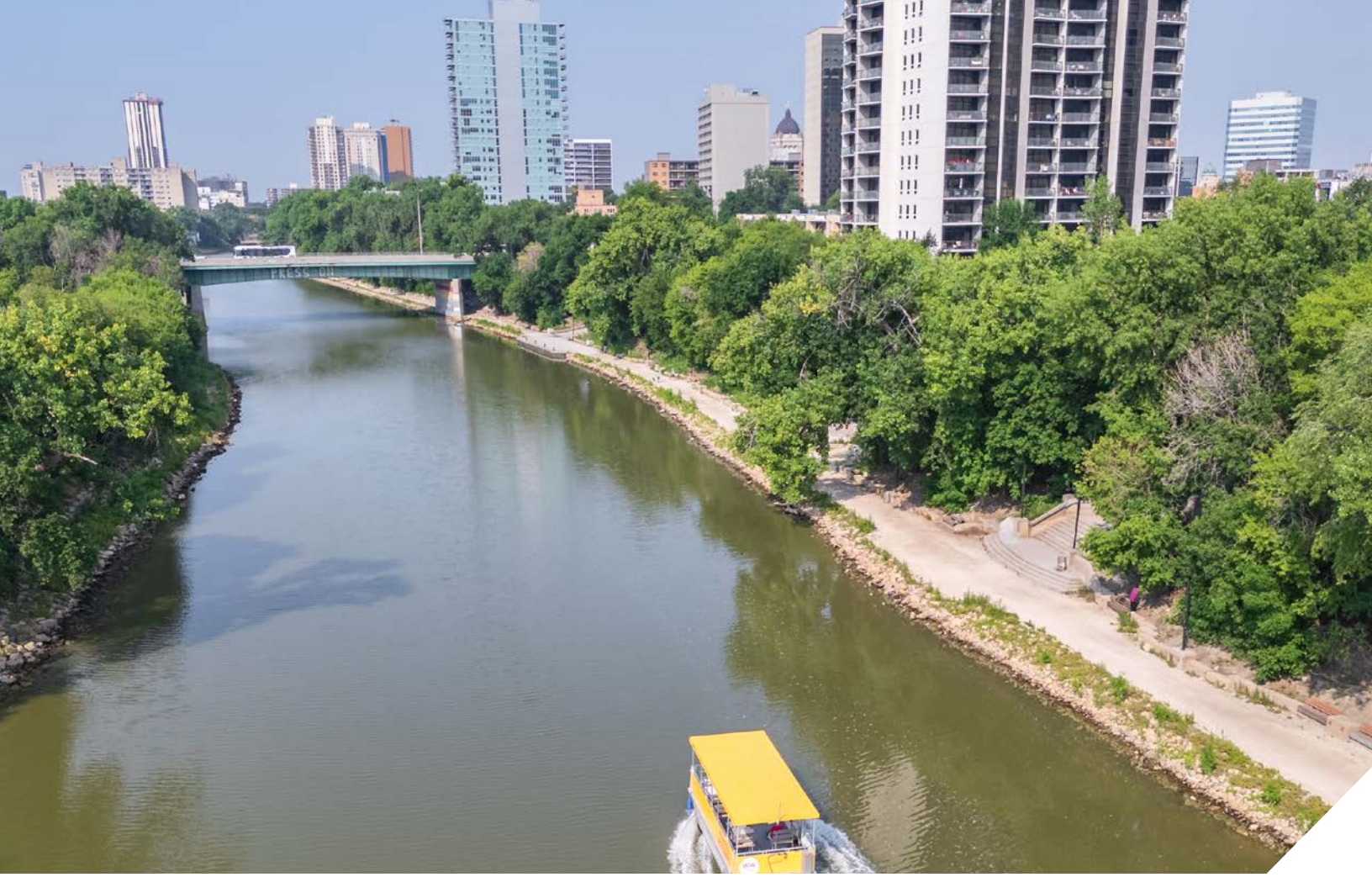
**Clerks:**

- Leah Cowan, *Senior Committee Clerk, City of Winnipeg*
- Zachary Mohan, *Committee Clerk, City of Winnipeg*

**Contact us:** CARC@winnipeg.ca




> *"I am grateful to bring a public health lens to inform the update of Winnipeg's Climate Action Plan. It is critical to create bridges between community and governments to address the impacts and act on the solutions."*
>
> **Dr. Lisa Richards**,
> **Public Health Physician & Assistant Professor, Department of Community Health Sciences, University of Manitoba**



# Our Purpose

Climate change action requires comprehensive and strategic paths to achieve net zero by 2050. The Climate Action and Resilience Committee (CARC) is one tool identified in the Community Energy Investment Roadmap to amplify and build support for that work. The Terms of Reference define CARCs purpose, its responsibilities and the tools and mechanisms it has available to act.

## Purpose

1. Advise Mayor and Council on climate change issues
2. Engage community to help shape implementation of the Community Energy Investment Roadmap, update the Winnipeg Climate Action Plan and development of a Resilience Strategy
3. Support the work of the community in advancing climate action

## Responsibilities

CARC is responsible to work on the following related to City Council, City departments and the public:

### City Council

- Review and offer advisory input into steps City Council can take for climate action and resilience, including transportation, green buildings, land use, waste, food security and sustainable development goals.
- Receive referrals from Council or Standing Policy Committee on Water, Waste and Environment for review and recommendation.
- Recommend areas of research or work to be undertaken by the Winnipeg Public Service.

### City Departments

- Support the updating, implementation, and evaluation of the Winnipeg Climate Action Plan.
- Support climate action and resilience opportunities within and between City departments
- Assist the City of Winnipeg to respond to climate adaptation and mitigation related issues within its jurisdiction.
- Monitor progress of City departments in implementing Winnipeg Climate Action Plan targets.

### The Public

- Promote communication and involvement between the City and the community.
- Enhance and connect climate change-related initiatives from various sectors.
- Engage citizens, industry, other levels of government, and community groups on climate action and resilience as required.

## Tools and Mechanisms

CARC can achieve its purpose and responsibilities by staying informed of promising climate action practices through research and analysis, understanding what the City is doing on climate change and sharing information. CARC can bring people together to build relationships across sectors, and between the City and community.

CARC can also form sub-committees, working groups and action teams with participation from subject matter experts and community members. They can undertake in-depth work on behalf of the committee, to inform, provide advice and bring additional perspectives. CARC has an operating budget and a committee coordinator to support these activities.

> *“Climate determines everything about how we design, build and live in our communities.”*
>
> **Prairie Climate Centre, 2025**

# Our Activities

## **PURPOSE 1:**
## Advise Mayor and Council on climate change issues

During its second year, CARC continued to learn about its role within administrative, political, and citizen committee processes. CARC identified that a consistent analysis of climate impacts, of action or inaction, is critical when reviewing reports or providing advice to Council.

CARC monitored climate change related processes, discussions and motions from Council Committees, including:

- Route 90 Improvements
- Impact of Diesel Bus Procurement Beyond the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program
- City of Winnipeg Tree By-law
- Greenspace Plan and Biodiversity Policy engagement process

CARC shared ways to improve the advice referral process from Council or Committee. This included more time for proactive and meaningful review and understanding of technical reports. For example, CARCs feedback can be requested when projects are being planned (e.g. Winnipeg's Climate Action Plan update process). The Senior Management Team Climate Steering Committee relationship with CARC also enables interdepartmental oversight and subject matter expert support for CARC input through initiating sub-committees or working groups.

CARC received its first request to advise Council on the *Building Emissions Reduction Strategy*. They received two requests for feedback initiated at Community Committees, the *Construction Waste Diversion Strategy* (City Centre) and *Promoting Adaptive Re-Use and Preservation of Heritage* (Riel).

> *"Three-quarters (77%) of Winnipeggers are concerned about climate change but are split on how much of a priority it is to address. 38% say climate change is a high priority."*
>
> **Probe Research, 2025**

> *"I realized how interconnected citizen advisory committee work can be. CARCs advice to City Council can positively impact interdependent climate change issues like food, safety, human rights and emergencies."*
>
> **Josep Seras Gubert, CARC member**

## Building Emissions Reduction Strategy

Council, May 2, 2025

CARC held a Special Meeting on May 12, 2025, and fully supported adopting the report, strategy and funding recommendations. It is an important step to reduce emissions in City-owned buildings through energy efficiency and renewable energy retrofits.

On June 26, 2025, Council adopted the recommendations and referred them to the 2026 Budget Review Process. The motion included the Public Service providing annual verbal updates to CARC. The 2026 Preliminary Budget, published in November, recommended $163,000 for Priority 1 implementation or upgrading Building Management Systems (Metasys) and SkySpark analytics in city-owned buildings. If implemented, this will deliver real-time data and insights to optimize building performance.

## Construction Waste Diversion Strategy

Standing Policy Committee on Water, Waste and Environment, September 9, 2025

The motion directs review of best practices on contractor construction and demolition waste diversion strategies and exploration of potential regulatory and policy tools. The motion directs the Public Service to work with CARC to assess policy options and provide guidance on integrating waste reduction into broader emissions reduction efforts. The review hasn't been initiated, pending a related report from the Province.

## Promoting Adaptive Re-Use and Preservation of Heritage

Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development, November 7, 2025

The motion directs the Public Service to meet with CARC in undertaking the work to:

- Promote adaptive re-use of existing residential buildings as an alternative to demolition and disposition in the City landfill; and
- Complete cross jurisdictional research of heritage development agreements whereby preservation of existing buildings can be encouraged through providing land use incentives.

> *"Seven in 10 Winnipeggers agree the City should do more to stop pollution."*
>
> **Probe Research, 2025**

> *"69% Winnipeggers think climate change should be part of every decision City Councillors make"*
>
> **Probe Research, 2025**

## Researching Methods to Align Actions with Climate Targets

Climate Action and Resilience Committee, July 5, 2024

### Project:

The Prairie Climate Centre, was hired to research how cities align local climate actions with municipal climate targets. The recommendations included promising tools and mechanisms to mainstream climate action into government planning and decision-making. If implemented, they could also strengthen communications, transparency, and accountability between the City of Winnipeg and residents. The Consulting Services contract was $20,000.

### Recommendations:

**Equity and Justice**

- Adopt a climate justice charter and incorporate it into municipal employee training

**Mainstreaming and Strategic Implementation**

- Mainstream climate action into core operations through project-level assessment tools and policy alignment
- Align indicators across municipal departments and government levels
- Increase climate literacy and training for all municipal employees to embed climate action across city operations
- Integrate climate risk and vulnerability assessment data into decision-making through annual departmental risk registries to guide targeted climate action
- Create a clear implementation framework to prioritize, assign, and track climate action

**Transparency and Communications**

- Create a Winnipeg Climate Budget to increase transparency in climate budgeting plans and justify spending through the cost of inaction
- Provide accessible and annually updated greenhouse gas emissions data to strengthen accountability and engagement from the public
- Increase public awareness and education through effective online communications strategies

### Results:

On October 10, 2025, the Standing Policy Committee on Water, Waste and Environment received the report and recommendations as information. The report was shared with Senior Management Team Climate Steering Committee to enable systems and activity integration into the Climate Action Plan update. CARC will decide how to apply the research in their 2026 work plan and the advice they share with Council.

> *With technical know-how, political will, targeted investments and collective commitment we can mitigate the severity of climate change and build resilience to its hazards and impacts*
>
> **Prairie Climate Centre, 2025**



*A hybrid CARC working meeting with Prairie Climate Centre sharing their research. From left to right: In person: Josep Seras Gubert, Donald Hester, Izabella Robak and Christey Allen. Virtually: Laura Tyler, Casey Clair and Lisa Richards.*

## **PURPOSE 2:**
## Engage community to help shape implementation of the Community Energy Investment Roadmap, update the Winnipeg Climate Action Plan, and development of a Resilience Strategy

Winnipeg's Climate Action Plan update project team from the Office of Sustainability provided regular updates to CARC at working meetings. Progress included:

- Establishing an interdepartmental Core Working Group of City subject matter experts
- Developing a Request for Proposals that resulted in hiring Intelligent Futures Inc. Consultants
- Defining project delivery details for emission reduction and climate resilience including background and context analysis, climate hazard, risk and vulnerability assessment, and plans for public and interest-holder engagement and communication
- Discussions on CARCs role within the project

**PURPOSE 3:**

# Support the work of the community in advancing climate action

## Sub-committee, Working Group and Action Team Guidelines

The Coordinator developed guidelines for how CARC can initiate a sub-committee, or working group/ action team. This included:

- Defining the scope of work, composition, anticipated timeframe and reporting on activities
- Requests for Public Service and community subject matter expert participation
- Chair, Vice-Chairperson and Senior Management Team Climate Steering Committee approvals.

## Public Opinion Research on Winnipeg Climate Action

Climate Action and Resilience Committee, October 28, 2024

### Project:

Probe Research Inc. was hired to conduct a public opinion poll in the March Omnibus Survey on personal views on climate change, level of awareness of City of Winnipeg efforts on climate change and priorities to inform CARCs work. The Consulting Services contract was $11,550.

Seven questions explored residents' level of concern about climate change and its impact on City services, familiarity and level of satisfaction with what the City is doing on climate change, priority actions among City services, and experiences with impacts of climate change. Full results are available on the City's Open Data Portal.

### Key Findings:

- Concern about climate change in Winnipeg is strong, but Winnipeggers are split on how much of a priority it is to address.
- Residents agree the City should do more to address climate change.
- Few know what the City is doing to address climate change, therefore more than two-thirds of Winnipeggers are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with what the City is doing to address climate change.
- Significant proportions of Winnipeggers feel they are affected by climate change.
- Winnipeggers are concerned about the effect of climate change on all city assets.
- Winnipeggers prioritize improvements to public transit and green spaces to mitigate the effects of climate change.

### Result:

On May 22, 2025, Council adopted recommendations of the Standing Policy Committee on Water, Waste and Environment. The Public Service was directed to:

1. Review the survey questions and results to inform departmental analysis of citizen needs and satisfaction on climate change action.
2. Integrate climate change questions when Departments conduct in-depth citizen polls on a specific topic or service.

## Climate Change Communications Training

October 22, 2025 hosted at the Bill and Helen Norrie Library

### Project:

CARC hired Re.Climate to facilitate a half-day climate change communications training. Re.Climate is a centre for training, research and strategy on climate change communications and engagement at Carleton University. CARC invited community leaders and communications professionals from environmental organizations to attend the training. The Consulting Services contract was $4,775.00.

### Result:

Re.Climate delivered a “Where Things Are At” report on climate change and affordability research trends and public polling nationally, in Manitoba and Winnipeg. Twenty-two participants learned about best practices in climate change communications. This included trends and opinions, principles and barriers, effective messaging, storytelling and narratives, language, and framing. The training combined information sharing, peer discussions, outreach examples, and applied lessons learned. Participants shared experiences, expanded networks, and strengthened skills to support more meaningful and effective climate action communications.

> *“CARCs Climate Change Communications Training was enlightening, with its emphasis on listening and empathizing versus lecturing.”*
>
> **Don Hester, retired city planner and landscape architect**




*Re.Climate facilitates climate communications training for CARC and community stakeholders.*

> *81% of Winnipeggers are unfamiliar with what the City is doing on climate change.*
>
> **Probe Research, 2025**

> *68% of Winnipeggers are neither satisfied or dissatisfied with what the City is doing on climate change.*
>
> **Probe Research, 2025**

## Citizen Committee Event

September 26, 2025, hosted at Sergeant Tommy Prince Place

**Project**: CARC hosted twenty-six committee members from the Winnipeg Food Council, Community Emergency Advisory Committee, Winnipeg Committee for Safety, and the Human Rights Committee including chairs, coordinators and citizen members. The event purpose event was to:

- Share common interests and opportunities between ad hoc or citizen committees, both in function and topics they make recommendations on
- Relationship building and peer learning
- Identify areas to work together

**Results**: Participants shared experiences about how their committees work, including priorities, activities, challenges, and opportunities. They also identified shared interests through small group discussions on the following themes:

- Advice and recommendations
- Information sharing, networking and coordination
- Education, skill building and training
- Tools and mechanisms to support action
- Committee process improvements

Committees will continue to collaborate and determine the next steps for 2026.



*Members of five citizen committees of Council at the gathering hosted by CARC.*




*Councillor Mayes welcoming participants from five citizen committees of Council.*



*Small group discussions at the citizen committee gathering.*

## Relationship Building

CARC continued to build relationships with community organizations, attending events, inviting community organizations to attend theirs, keeping informed about priorities, activities, and opportunities for collaboration.

CARC discussed a meaningful approach to integrate community expert feedback and priorities on Zero Emission Buildings into upcoming City processes, projects and working groups. CARC will revisit this in 2026.

CARC requested that the Coordinator attend monthly community-based, climate change meetings hosted by the Manitoba Eco-Network. The purpose was to share information on priorities, projects, and policy.

CARC received invitations to several climate action and resilience related learning and relationship building events including the Human Rights Committee of Council, Institute for Catastrophic Loss Reduction, ClimateWest, and Seniors for Climate.

The coordinator attended the Human Rights Committee of Council, Cafe Conversation on January 14, 2025, to discuss human rights priorities, of which many are related to and impacted by climate change. The Advancing Winnipeg as a Human Rights City: January 2025 Café Conversation Event Report was reviewed.

CARC attended Earth Day celebrations on April 22, 2025, hosted by a coalition of community groups and students who shared their experiences, intergenerational impacts of climate change, and solutions for the future.

Several CARC members attended the Manitoba Climate Convergence on October 7-8, 2025, hosted by the Manitoba Climate Action Team. The purpose of the gathering was to "bring together organizations and community leaders working on climate policy, advocacy, and campaigning in Manitoba to build relationships, identify opportunities for collaboration, and align strategy where possible."



*CARC members attend Earth Day celebrations in April. From left to right: Councillor Mayes, Josep Seras Gubert, Laura Tyler, Casey Clair and Laura Rempel*

## **PURPOSE 4**:
## Other processes or activities

CARC members actively participated in meetings, reviewed material, and shared information well beyond the 5-6 hours per month identified in the terms of reference. They held four public meetings, one special public meeting, and nine working meetings.

### Coordinator Activities

- Applied CARCs Terms of Reference, navigated City procedures, and clarified citizen committee processes related to municipal elections
- Reviewed annual Boards and Commissions applications and facilitated mid-term membership changes
- Prepared CARCs annual budget and work plan activities, and provided a mid-year accountability update
- Developed and facilitated working meeting agendas and compiled meeting summaries
- Shared written and verbal reports at quarterly meetings
- Responded to CARC information requests
- Compiled background research for motions
- Shared updates with the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson, as well as the Senior Management Team Climate Steering Committee
- Facilitated quarterly meetings with Coordinators from four citizen committees
- Project managed two single source purchasing procedures
- Planned two learning events
- Prepared an annual report

# Financial Report

CARCs $47,000 operating budget was approved by Council in May 2025 and is reviewed annually. CARC is supported and coordinated by a Sustainability Planner in the Office of Sustainability. Eligible expenses include public consultations, strategic planning, production, printing and distribution of materials, training opportunities, and membership in relevant organizations.

| **Revenue** | | |
|---|---|---|
| 2025 Annual Budget | $47,000.00 | |

| **Expenses** | **Budget** | **Actuals** |
|---|---|---|
| Meetings | $3,500.00 | $2,347.70 |
| Education and Training | $3,500.00 | $3,500.00 |
| Consulting Services | $40,000.00 | $37,154.63 |
| **Total** | **$47,000.00** | **$43,002.33** |

**Note:** The 2024 annual report listed $4,000 in the Printing and Graphic Design budget line. Due to the invoice timing, this amount was paid in the 2025 budget, not 2024.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