Chief of Police
Update Report to the Winnipeg Police Board

To: Chair and Members
Winnipeg Police Board

From: Gene Bowers, Chief of Police

Subject: Update Report

Date: March 6, 2026

As part of my submission to the Board, you will find our year end updates for our 2025 Finance and Business Plan Reports. You will also find additional annual reports posted on our website.

Our detailed Finance and Business Plan updates speak for themselves. However, I will discuss some of the highlights from both the business plan and finance reports at the meeting. Additionally, I will discuss portions of the Winnipeg Police Service 2026 Business Plan.

A. CHANGE MANAGEMENT

1. Technological Advancements

In October 2025 both the frontline Connected Officer Program (COP) and the Service-wide Digital Evidence Management System (DEMS) rollouts reached full deployment.

Through the COP program, frontline officers equipped with smartphones, police applications and mobile access to police databases have improved the efficiency of report processing, evidence gathering and overall police response. The DEMS program allows officers to more efficiently capture, manage and share digital evidence. Both programs leverage technology to increase efficiency, promote community safety and support victims of crime.

These technologies are the foundation which will allow the Winnipeg Police Service (WPS) to fully leverage our Body-Worn Camera Pilot Project (2026) and embrace emerging AI (artificial intelligence) tools to enhance transparency, strengthen accountability and create efficiencies.

Subject to contract approval from the City of Winnipeg, the WPS has made the decision to implement Axon Interview, a replacement to our current video interview recording system.

Axon Interview meets the current business requirements of the WPS while bringing in additional features that will enhance the quality of interviews and investigations through transcription and seamless DEMS integration. Additionally, Axon Interview Mobile Kit provides enhanced capacity and allows for off-site interviews.

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Number of officers assigned to Connected Officer Program*				
Smart Squad	512	652	717	749
DEMS	N/A	91	91	91
Number of officers assigned as DEMS desktop users	N/A	77	1,294	1,294
Number of audio statements produced				
Smart Squad	1,492	1,688	1,757	1,859
DEMS	N/A	27	31	35
Number of photographs collected through mobile applications				
Smart Squad	5,059	6,571	7,555	7,511
DEMS	N/A	314	698	909
Number of digital notes produced	18,812	23,879	26,401	30,969
Quantity of digital evidence collected through DEMS	N/A	5,660	12,195	21,115

*Cumulative total since COP training began in October 2023

2. Electronic Ticketing Rollout (E-Ticketing)

The WPS has leveraged our Connected Officer Program technology to include E-Ticketing.

E-Ticketing provides enhanced data integrity and transparency, reduces human errors, creates both efficiencies and organizational accountability.

Feedback from members using E-Ticketing has been overwhelmingly positive. Members have reported the system to be user-friendly and efficient when compared to manually written tickets. The electronic process greatly reduces the time required to issue the ticket, as well as administrative work, and allows members to return to enforcement duties without delay.

Additionally, we are realizing a significant reduction in the time required for our administrative support to enter tickets into our Records Management System for submission to the courts. This increased efficiency allows tickets to be reviewed and processed more promptly, supporting timelines for court proceedings.

To date, 34 members from our Traffic Division have been trained with the remaining five members scheduled to complete training in the days ahead. Additionally, this month, all Divisional Community Support Unit Traffic members will be trained.

Between November 26, 2025, and February 19, 2026, a total of 3,365 E-Tickets.

B. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

1. Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak (MKO) Assembly

I, along with several senior members of the WPS and Indigenous Relations Advisor Sheila North attended to the MKO Assembly on Emergency Management. Our purpose in attending was to share how the WPS and its many units work with leadership and others to help keep First Nations people safe when they are evacuated to Winnipeg from their home communities.

Grand Chief Settee shared that this was the first time a Chief of Police has attended an MKO assembly.

I was deeply honoured that the WPS was invited and I remain firmly committed to fostering dialogue, strengthening collaboration and advancing reconciliation.



2. Community Outreach

In the fourth quarter, Winnipeg Police members participated in or attended hundreds of meetings, crime prevention and education initiatives, and community-based events.

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Number of engagements with community groups, including Indigenous, newcomer, diverse, and racialized communities	214	274	1,555	2,220
Number of collaborative crime prevention and education initiatives	296	129	217	263
Number of community-based events attended by WPS members	196	205	178	169
Number of WPS Victim Services engagements with victims of crime	1,664	1,764	1,808	1,550
Number of public/social media engagements	565	542	574	510

** In Q3, the Community Relations Division adopted a new tracking mechanism that enabled fuller and more accurate reporting of community engagement activities.

Chief Bowers Events

I participated in numerous community and business events; many are highlighted below:

- December 1 – Manitoba Metis Federation – Lighting Up the Homeland (photos)



- December 2 – Attended Downtown Community Safety Partnership board meeting
- December 5 – Hosted WPS Holiday Open House



- December 9 – Winnipeg Crime Stoppers Dinner

- December 22 – Spent time with the Bear Clan and WPS Recruit Class 173, who gathered food, hygiene products, first aid supplies and donated clothing for community members.





- January 12 – Met with Grand Chief Wilson from the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (AMC) and established a research partnership



- January 18 to January 21 – Attended Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police (CACP) conference in Vancouver
- January 21 – Participated in WPS Leading with Empathy, Accountability and Dedication training

- January 24 – Attended funeral for past WPS member

- February 7 to February 12 – Attended Major Cities Chiefs Association (MCCA) conference in Los Angeles

  Shared time with LAPD Chief of Police Jim McDonnell



- February 18 – Participated in WPS Leading with Empathy, Accountability and Dedication training
- February 18 – Participated in a WPS Behavioural Health Unit workshop
- February 26 – I was pleased to attend the Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre Gala Dinner along with many members of the WPS





- February 28 – Guns ‘N Hoses charity hockey event (supporting Project 11, The Never Alone Foundation and Special Olympics)
- February 28 – Black History Month closing ceremony and awards banquet

Community Partnerships

Across the Service, members are involved in community boards, committees and agencies; they participate in community events and celebrations; and they work to foster positive relationships and partnerships with Indigenous, newcomer, diverse, racialized and other communities.

Division 51 Community Relations members take part in several community events. These are just some of the events (by category) that the Crime Prevention, Diversity, Indigenous Partnership Section (IPS), Cadets, Victim Services, Volunteer Services, School Resource, and School Education teams participated in during the past quarter:

- November 27 – Police Liaison Team assisted at Thunderbird House
- November 27 – Churchill High School Career Fair
- November 28 – Christmas outreach for Indigenous Veterans
- November 28 – Christmas Cheer Board - Christmas Hamper Deliveries
- November 28 – Police Liaison Team assisted with Critical Mass Central Park event
- November 29 – Camp Manitou Holiday Party
- November 29 – WPS Christmas Clothing Drive
- November 30 – 4th Annual Domestic Violence Walk with Bear Clan
- December 1 – Retail Theft Initiative (Polo Park Mall, St. Vital Mall)
- December 1 – Lighting Up the Heart of the Homeland (Manitoba Metis Federation)
- December 4 – Pros vs Joes Divisional Rock Paper Scissors Tournament
- December 5 - Shopping with Cops St. Vital Mall
- December 7 – West End Resource Centre Annual Community Christmas Party
- December 9 – Age & Opportunity - Be a Santa to a Senior Campaign Event
- December 9 – Light Up Avenue Community Celebration
- December 13 – Began assisting Cross Lake Evacuees
- December 22 to January 2 – School Resource Officer Christmas Deployments

- January 1 – The Forks New Year Celebration
- January 3 – Community New Year Celebration
- January 10 – We are Winter Community Event at Assiniboine Park
- January 19 – Mascot Hockey Game and annual winter carnival
- January 19 – Pancake Breakfast @ Buchanan School
- January 21 – Pipe Ceremony and Round Dance @ Brooklands School
- January 23 – School play @ Edmond Partridge School
- January 29 – School assembly @ Hampstead School
- January 29 – Atomic Boys / Girls basketball tournament @ Ness Middle School
- January 29 – National Day of Remembrance & Action against Islamophobia
- January 30 – Singing Red Bear Office Grand Opening
- January 31 – Greendell Park Winter Carnival
- February 1 to February 28 – I Love to Read Month
- February 2 – 17th Annual All Seniors Care Games
- February 13 – Coffee with a Cop at Safeway 1441 Henderson
- February 13 – WPS Employee Safety Lunch and Learn
- February 13 to February 22 – Festival du Voyageur
- February 14 – Women's Memorial March of Manitoba
- February 17 – Garden City Collegiate Student/Teacher Concert
- February 20 – South Asian Extortion Summit

In acknowledgement of Black History Month, Community Relations members attended numerous events and released a social media video:

- January 31 – The Fabric of Our Being Exhibit at Manitoba Museum
- February 1 – Black History Month Opening Ceremonies at Christian Fellowship Church
- February 6 – First Friday Black History Month Edition at Manitoba Museum
- February 12 – A Journey with Manitoba Black Settlers at Manitoba Museum
- February 13 – Black Student Youth Event at Canada Life Centre

- February 16 – Black History Month History Lesson & Family Day at Jamaican Cultural Centre
- February 21 – Racial Trauma & Healing for the Black Community at Manitoba Museum
- February 26 – Job Fair and Gala at University of Winnipeg
- February 27 – BIPOC Legacy Awards Gala Night at Norwood Hotel
- February 28 – Black History Month Closing Ceremonies at Norwood Hotel



** Black History Month social media video

3. Special Events

The Special Events Unit and the Community Relations Division, as well as the Community Support Units (CSU) in the various uniform divisions, continue to adjust to the ever-increasing number of public assemblies, rallies and protests being held in our city. Our members spend a considerable amount of time during their day working with organizers in an attempt to ensure these events occur in a peaceful, lawful, and safe manner.

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Number of events monitored by the SEU	84	154	148	83
Number of event engagements by the PLT	26	8	11	5
Number of special events attended by police resources	36	78	58	24
Number of hours of assigned police resources for special events	3,374	5,522	3,070	3,846

D. PUBLIC SAFETY

1. Gang and Gun Suppression Strategy

The WPS is committed to suppressing and disrupting gang activity. Through the use of skilled teams and specialized tools, the Gang and Gun Suppression Strategy aims to address crimes involving firearms, the trafficking of illicit drugs, and gang-related violence. The strategy emphasizes enforcement, prevention, intervention, education and partnership.

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Number of disruptions to gang operations	11	10	21	8
Number of gang members and associates arrested	9	25	3	3
Number of compliance checks	76	83	120	98
Number of community engagements and social program referrals	401/201	457/221	306/296	460/248
Number of dispatched events involving firearms	454	644	642	492
Number of dispatched events involving firearm discharges	34	11	15	25
Number of guns seized, including improvised, ghost, and 3-D printed	223	197	166	165
Number of crime guns processed through the FIAS	97	142	166	166
Number of leads through use of the Canadian Integrated Ballistics Identification Network (CIBIN)	4	7	7	9

This disruption of illicit drugs, gang activity and firearm supply is crucial to the safety of our communities.

Some notable investigations include:

1. A collaborative investigation between the Durham Regional Police Service and the WPS Guns and Gangs Unit. This investigation revealed that express courier services were being utilized in order to send shipments of illicit drugs from the GTA to Winnipeg. WPS Guns and Gangs Unit investigators intercepted and seized packages on November 13th and November 20th as a result. These packages contained a combined total of approximately 2,600 hydromorphone pills worth an estimated street value of $18,900. Investigators identified an Ontario resident and ‘44’ gang member stationed in Winnipeg who was responsible for facilitating these shipments.

In December 2025, in coordination with the Durham Regional Police and other assisting agencies across Ontario, the WPS Guns and Gangs Unit executed search warrants on a suite in the 1-99 block of Edmonton Street and an associated vehicle, where two men were located and arrested.

During the search warrant, investigators located the following:

- 150 grams Cocaine (estimated street value of $10,000)
- 3,000 Hydromorphone pills (estimated street value of $21,000)
- iPhone x 2
- 296 grams cutting agent (estimated street value of $500)
- $900 Canadian currency
- Fake identification used to facilitate the shipment of illicit drugs
- Scale and packaging materials

2. The Guns and Gangs Unit entered an investigation of an individual who was trafficking illicit drugs in the William Whyte neighbourhood and had an outstanding warrant out for his arrest.

   In November 2025, the Guns and Gangs Unit located the suspect male, outside of an apartment complex in the 100 block of Powers Street. After a short foot pursuit, the male was arrested.

   Upon searching the male, the following items were located and seized by police:

   - Loaded sawed-off .22 calibre rifle
   - Small amount of .22 calibre ammunition
   - Approximately 1 gram of methamphetamine (Estimated Street Value = $50)

3. In November 2025, members of the Guns & Gangs Unit executed a search warrant at an apartment suite in the 200 block of Adsum Drive as part of a drug trafficking investigation. Approximately $32,000 worth of drugs was seized. Two people were taken into custody, and the following items were seized as evidence:

   - Approximately 374 grams of cocaine (estimated street value of $30,000)
   - Approximately 8 grams of fentanyl (estimated street value of $2,400)
   - $11,142 in Canadian currency
   - Cellular phone, drug packaging materials, identity documents
   - Approximately $62,500 worth of jewellery

E. COLLABORATION

1. I was pleased to join provincial policing partners across Manitoba along with Mayor Gillingham, Justice Minster Wiebe and Canada's Fentanyl Czar Brosseau in the newly announced Manitoba Organized Crime and Drug Trafficking Task Force.

   The Task Force will ensure strengthened collaboration, intelligence-sharing and joint enforcement aimed at disrupting organized crime and targeting the trafficking of illicit drugs across Manitoba.



The WPS remains committed to working alongside our partners to enhance public safety for all Manitobans.



2. Holiday Checkstop Program

During the 2025 Holiday Checkstop Program, the Winnipeg Police Service checked 2,785 vehicles and identified 102 drivers operating under the influence of alcohol or cannabis.

Enforcement action included 15 criminal impaired driving charges, 77 Immediate Roadside Prohibitions, 9 drug-impaired drivers (positive for cannabis) and 146 traffic tickets issued.

Drivers ranged in age from 22 to 53 years with the highest recorded BAC at 280 mg%, more than three times the legal limit. One impaired driver was involved in a multi-vehicle collision; fortunately, no injuries were reported.

These 102 impaired driving incidents highlight the ongoing risk impaired driving poses to public safety and reinforce the need for continued year-round enforcement and public education.

The program was delivered with the valued support of Manitoba Liquor and Lotteries, enhancing enforcement visibility throughout the holiday season.

F. MEDIA MANAGEMENT

1. Website Engagement

Engagement with the WPS website remains steady. It is one of the best ways for the public to access information about the Service. From November 27th to February 20th, 2026, some of the analytics for our public facing website are:

- **Online record checks** page was visited **43,107** times.
- **News releases** page was visited **41,553** times.
- **This news release** page was visited **36,697** times.
- The **police homepage** was visited **33,657** times.
- The **report a crime** page was visited **32,492** times.
- **Crime Stoppers wanted page** visited **32,452** times.
- The **Manitoba's most wanted** page was visited **18,232** times.
- The **recruitment** page was visited **17,846** times.
- The **Reporting Emergencies and Non-Emergencies** was visited **6,436** times.
- Our **Hiring Process** page was visited **6,185** times.
- The **Calls for Service Map** page was visited **4,483** times.

2. Media Engagement

The Winnipeg Police Service Public Information Office (PIO) receives dozens of requests every week from media members looking for interviews and information about incidents of note and crime trends being experienced in our city.

In addition, the PIO distributes proactive messaging about crime prevention, safety tips and trends that the public should be made aware of.

Public/Social Media Engagement	Nov 27-Feb 20
Media Releases	118
eWatch	9
YouTube	3
Facebook	204
Instagram	42

Our most viewed video on YouTube between November 27th and February 20th, 2026, was a video highlighting the Bannerman Call for Service, overviewing all the parts of the event response by the Service.

Most viewed videos:

On Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/share/v/1FJ3tsBMHK/ (Homicide Unit Make Arrest in Agnes St Fire Online Presser)

- The video reached 47K people.
- It generated 346 likes and reactions Interactions.
- It was shared 48 times

On Instagram:
https://www.instagram.com/reel/DR2R1HqlfU9/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=NTc4MTIwNjQ2YQ== (Reminder: Don't leave keys in your car)

- The video reached 30K people.
- It was interacted with (liked, shared or saved) 2,063 times.

F. UPCOMING EVENTS

- March 28 – Polar Plunge for Special Olympics at Princess Auto Stadium
- March 29 – Cooper Nemeth Hockey Memorial Game
- April – Sexual Assault Awareness Month
- May 1 to 7 – Mental Health Week

Gene Bowers, Chief of Police