WINNIPEG
SAFE CITY
INITIATIVE

SAFE CITIES AND SAFE PUBLIC SPACES
UN WOMEN GLOBAL FLAGSHIP PROGRAMME

STRATEGIC PLAN

December 2025

Prepared by

Canadian Centre for **Safer Communities**

Centre canadien pour des **communautés plus sûres**

Disclaimer

While care has been taken in the preparation of this document to ensure its contents are accurate, complete, and up to date, the Winnipeg Safe City Initiative recognizes certain limitations with the data. The information presented in this report is based on a review of existing data and consultations with various community groups. One major challenge with qualitative data (focus groups, open-ended survey questions, etc.) is the subjectivity of responses. Participants share their perspectives and opinions based on their own experiences and knowledge. As a result, the statements made by an individual may not reflect the perspectives of others. It is therefore important to recognize that the findings from this research must be considered in their own context and not deemed as unequivocally representing the reality of community safety challenges in the City of Winnipeg. At the same time, they offer valuable insight for future planning as a thematic analysis.

This is a living document. New evidence, actions, and recommendations related to community safety emerge regularly. This report reflects the data collected at the time of the strategic plan development.

Trigger Warning: This document includes discussion about sensitive topics related to crime, safety, and victimization that could be triggering to some people.

If you have any questions about the WSCI Strategic Plan, please contact Tracey Proctor at coordinatorWCFS@winnipeg.ca

Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that the city of Winnipeg resides on ancestral lands, Treaty 1 territory, the traditional territory of the Anishinaabeg, Cree, Oji-Cree, Dakota, and Dene Peoples, and on the National Homeland of the Red River Métis.

Why is this here?

A land acknowledgement statement represents an act of reconciliation, honouring the land and Indigenous heritage and history that dates back thousands of years. To recognize the land is an expression of gratitude and appreciation to those whose territory we reside on, and a way of honouring the Indigenous Peoples who have lived here for thousands of years. It is important that we understand the history that has brought us to reside on this land, and to seek to understand our place within that history.

Acknowledgements

Developing the Winnipeg Safe City Initiative's (WSCI) Strategic Plan was a collective and collaborative effort. Sincere gratitude is offered to the community members who shared their perspectives, experiences, and concerns. Your participation was instrumental in identifying local priorities and ensuring that community safety efforts are rooted in the experiences and context of the residents within the City of Winnipeg. The WSCI Strategic Plan was made stronger because of your voices.

Sincere appreciation is also extended to the following organizations, agencies, and groups that supported the Winnipeg Safe City Initiative's Strategic Plan development process:

- Alliance Boxing Club
- African Communities of Manitoba Incorporated
- Candace House
- City of Winnipeg
- Club House Winnipeg
- Connect Employment
- Desiring Productions
- Elmwood Community Resource Center
- Government of Manitoba
- The Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization of Manitoba Incorporated
- Inclusion Winnipeg
- Independent Living Resource Centre
- Ka Ni Kanichihk
- Marymound Incorporated
- Mentoring Artists for Women's Art
- New Directions
- Nine Circles Community Health Centre
- Resource Assistance for Youth
- Share Program
- Social Planning Council of Winnipeg
- St. James Assiniboia 55+ Centre
- Substance Use Peer Advisory Counsel
- University of Manitoba
- Willow Place
- Winnipeg Based Sex Worker Collective
- Winnipeg Trails
- Women in Urbanism
- Women's Health Clinic
- West Central Women's Resource Centre

Section 1: Background Information

The Winnipeg Safe City Initiative

History

Winnipeg, Manitoba was selected as the first city in Canada to join the UN Global Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces Initiative to reduce sexual violence against women and girls. The mandate of each global partner city is to reduce and prevent violence against women, girls, and gender/sexually diverse (GSD) people in public spaces including (but not limited to) community centres, libraries, busses, bus stops, streets, and parks.

In 2016, The Winnipeg Safe City Initiative (WSCI) Steering Committee undertook a comprehensive research project that culminated in the Winnipeg Safe City Scoping Study. Utilizing quantitative and qualitative data, this scoping study reviewed the prevalence and experiences of sexual violence against women, girls, and GSD people in public spaces in Winnipeg.

Vision and Mission

The WSCI envisions Winnipeg, Manitoba as a city in which women, girls, and gender/sexually diverse people have equal access and opportunity to enjoy public spaces without the fear and/or experience of harassment and violence. By employing an intersectional lens and highlighting systemic barriers to accessing public spaces, the WSCI and its local partners aim to ensure Winnipeg consists of safe, inclusive, and barrier-free public spaces so women, girls, and GSD people can enjoy full and active participation in the city they call home.

The City of Winnipeg is developing a strategic plan to inspire, guide, and inform their work going forward. This work was guided by the WSCI sub-committee whose mission is to support the WSCI Strategic Plan development to reduce and prevent all forms of violence against women, girls, and GSD peoples in public spaces. The desired outcomes of this initiative are as follows:

- Reducing sexual harassment and other forms of sexual violence against women, girls, and GSD people in public spaces.
- Holding space for Urban Indigenous women, two-spirited, and gender-diverse voices and recognizing that these voices are required to lead to solutions.
- Helping women, girls, two-spirited, and GSD people feel safer and improving their freedom of movement/mobility and access to employment, social, and educational opportunities.
- Improving reporting rates for incidents of sexual violence that occur in public spaces.
- Increasing public understanding of the personal and social consequences of all forms of violence against women, girls, and GSD people.
- Empowering all women to hold space in their unique sacredness and honour each other's lived experiences.

The WSCI Strategic Plan

The WSCI Strategic Plan is designed to inspire, guide, and inform the work of the Winnipeg Safe City Initiative sub-committee, its members, and its partners.

Aiming for collective solutions, the Canadian Centre for Safer Communities (CCFSC) proposed a multi-level approach to developing this plan, including:

- Reviewing similar and/or related plans locally, nationally, and internationally.
- Collecting data and engaging key stakeholders and community members (with a focus on Indigenous women, 2SLGBTQIA+ women, and women marginalized by colonization, racialization, and ableism).
- Collaboratively identifying the committee's purpose, values, objectives, etc.
- Collaboratively identifying priorities, goals, and actions.

Through this process, the Winnipeg Safe City Initiative sub-committee and CCFSC have identified several priority areas and actions to support the desired outcomes of the committee to reduce sexual harassment and violence and improve safety for women, girls, and gender/sexually diverse people in Winnipeg.

The Canadian Centre for Safer Communities

The Canadian Centre for Safer Communities is a national, membership-based not for profit organization that brings together urban, rural, and Indigenous communities across Canada to foster community safety and well-being (CSWB) through training, research, and knowledge exchange. We represent over 100 communities across Canada, and our work is guided by a broad concept of community safety and well-being that expands beyond criminal legal responses and reduced reliance on enforcement.

Section 2: Guiding Principles

The WSCI Strategic Plan guiding principles will ensure all efforts to improve community safety in Winnipeg consider the perspectives, recommendations, and implications for all members of the community, including those who are marginalized and most vulnerable. These values provide the lenses that will guide this work and include:

- Recognize a continuum of violence, including sexual and gender-based violence, against women, girls, and gender/sexually diverse people ranging from gendered/racialized stereotypes to harassment, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, and homicide.

- Acknowledge the impact of white supremacy, racism, sexism, misogyny, and historical and ongoing colonization for Indigenous women, girls, and gender/sexually diverse peoples and their experiences of violence by prioritizing Indigenous-led reclamation, reconciliation, and resource allocation within interventions and outcomes.

- Ensure the inclusion of diverse and marginalized women, girls, and gender/sexually diverse peoples within the area, including those living with disabilities, from diverse ethnocultural communities, newcomers, unhoused, and/or those who have been or are being sexually exploited.

- Identify some of the underlying reasons for non-reporting by analyzing statistical data alongside the experiences and perspectives of affected women, girls, and gender/sexually diverse peoples.

Section 3: Executive Summary

This document is a compilation of all the data collected to support the development of the WSCI Strategic Plan, including quantitative data collected through existing sources (e.g., Statistics Canada, Winnipeg Police Service, etc.) and qualitative engagement with multiple community groups (e.g., newcomers, 2SLGBTQIA+, persons with lived experience, etc.). Based on the data, several priority areas and recommendations emerged:

Racism & Discrimination

Goals:

- Reduce hate crimes and discrimination against women and GSD people.
- Increase awareness of hate crimes and discrimination against women and GSD people.

Recommended Actions:

- Advocate for the complete decriminalization of sex work to support sex workers' rights.
- Provide bystander intervention training to disrupt acts of racism and discrimination in public.
- Provide public education to increase awareness of root causes and risk factors of violence and victimization.
- Implement anti-stigma and anti-hate campaigns to reduce discrimination against women, girls, GSD people, and other marginalized groups.
- Explore and increase awareness of options for third party reporting of hate crimes.
- Share data and information on the impacts of hate crimes with the public.

Fear of Police and Trauma Informed Training

Goal:

- Increase feelings of safety for women and GSD people interacting and/or working with the police.

Recommended Actions:

- Advocate for trauma-informed training for the Winnipeg Police Service.
- Advocate for improved training for Winnipeg Police Service members working with vulnerable populations (e.g., people using drugs, unhoused individuals, sex workers, etc.).

Cultivating Safe Spaces

Goal:

- Increase access to safe spaces for women and GSD people in Winnipeg.

Recommended Actions:

- Complete a review of existing spaces in Winnipeg to identify ways to A) improve safety and inclusivity in current locations, and B) identify gaps/opportunities for additional spaces.
- Explore implementing peer support programs for women and GSD people.
- Increase awareness of existing supports for women and GSD people including: 2SLGBTQIA+ resources, youth resources, and culturally safe and Indigenous resources.
- Increase awareness of existing harm reduction resources in Winnipeg.

Gender Based Violence and Safety Awareness

Goals:

- Increase awareness of gender-based violence in Winnipeg.
- Increase access to resources for women, girls, and GSD people reporting violence.

Recommended Actions:

- Implement educational campaigns about risks, signs, and gender-based violence (GBV) generally in multiple languages.
- Explore partnerships with school boards to implement early prevention education on GBV and healthy relationships.
- Increase access to free, multi-lingual legal aid to support people reporting violence.
- Explore partnerships with community organizations in Winnipeg to host "know your rights" workshops and share information on reporting violence including information on Child and Family Services and immigration involvement.
- Explore additional opportunities to share existing resources in Winnipeg.
- Identify and address current gaps in GBV supports in Winnipeg.

Unsafe and Unaffordable Housing

Goal:

- Increase access to housing for women, girls, and GSD people escaping violence.

Recommended Actions:

- Advocate for an expanded definition of GBV for people accessing emergency shelters or transitional housing when escaping violence to include any form of violence (not exclusively family or intimate partner violence).
- Advocate for increasing the maximum shelter stay to 60 days to provide individuals with more time to access housing and other necessary supports.
- Identify current housing gaps in Winnipeg and partner with the provincial government to address them.
- Identify steps to address landlord exploitation of tenants.

Lack of Safety in Public Transportation

Goals:

- Improve safety on public transit for women, girls, and GSD people.

- Increase safe transportation options for women, girls, and GSD people.

Recommended Actions:

- Implement emergency call buttons on buses and bus shelters.
- Review current public transportation safety measures and identify additional improvements that can be made (e.g., lighting, cameras, other CPTED considerations).
- Implement additional safety measures on public transportation vehicles (e.g., buses), such as security at night, seat dividers, cameras, etc.
- Expand bus routes in Winnipeg.
- Implement a safe and affordable transportation option for Indigenous people to access reserves and other Indigenous communities.
- Explore safe ride programs for women and GSD people.
- Review transportation options in other communities and identify approaches that could be implemented in Winnipeg.

Reporting Experiences of Violence (Including Gender-Based Violence)

Goal:

- Advocate for a more person-centered approach to reporting violence where victims have autonomy in the process.

Recommended Actions:

- Increase awareness of third-party/non-police reporting options for victims of violence in Winnipeg.
- Review existing reporting mechanisms and identify ways to improve and maintain the safety of victims utilizing these mechanisms.
- Advocate for community based mental health resources for women, girls, and GSD people reporting violence.

Additional Recommendations

- Continue to explore opportunities for engagement with Indigenous women and GSD people regarding gender-based violence and other safety concerns in Winnipeg.
- Align all efforts to address crime and safety with the TRC Calls to Action and MMIWG Calls to Justice – ensure Indigenous voices are included in all steps.
- Explore the implementation of safety applications for reporting incidents and/or calling the police while using public transit (e.g., SafeTTC App).
- Complete a Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) review of public spaces in Winnipeg and identify additional ways to improve safety.
- Implement violence prevention programming within schools to address root causes and risk factors, promote positive relationships, and educate young people on warning signs and support for victims.
- Establish a multi-sectoral table with representation from the City of Winnipeg, Winnipeg Police Service, and community organizations, to identify ways to

collaborate, reduce duplication, and effectively prevent and respond to violence against women, girls, and GSD people in public spaces.

- Improve violence reporting mechanisms based on feedback from those using them.
- Include women, girls, and GSD people in discussions and decision-making tables.

Section 4: Data Collection

To inform the development of the WSCI Strategic Plan and understand the current state of community safety in Winnipeg, CCFSC completed a two-phased data collection process in partnership with the community. This included a review of existing data as well as engagement with multiple groups to understand local strengths, challenges, and opportunities to improve the safety of women, girls, and GSD people in Winnipeg. While research consistently identifies several general risk factors that impact community safety, it is important to consider each community within its unique circumstances and context. As a result, collecting local data is a vital step to ensure the WSCI Strategic Plan reflects the needs of the city of Winnipeg and its community members.

Data Sources

Existing Data

To understand the current community safety landscape in Winnipeg, CCFSC conducted a review of existing data and reports related to safety in Winnipeg. These included various documents from the City of Winnipeg, data from Statistics Canada and the Winnipeg Police Services (WPS), as well as the Winnipeg Street Census, National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, and the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives Manitoba Office.

The existing data sources were reviewed and summarized by CCFSC (see Section 5). The information from these documents was then included in a thematic analysis (alongside the community engagement data – discussed below) to identify the priority areas and recommendations for the WSCI Strategic Plan (see Section 6).

Community Engagement

Community engagement sessions were conducted with 11 groups to provide an opportunity for more in-depth discussions related to local safety challenges in Winnipeg. Qualitative data from these conversations helps provide a richer understanding and answers the *how* and the *why* questions related to community safety. The groups engaged through this process included service providers as well as those who tend to face higher levels of risk and marginalization (e.g., youth, 2SLGBTQIA+, people with lived/living experience, etc.).

All engagements were organized alongside local partners and took one of three formats:

1. Online engagement sessions facilitated by CCFSC.
2. In-person engagement sessions facilitated by CCFSC or community partners.
3. Open-ended surveys distributed by CCFSC or community partners.

For consistency, each session involved facilitators asking participants about five general themes related to community safety:

1. Positive aspects about Winnipeg (local strengths).

2. Community safety concerns about Winnipeg (local challenges).
3. Opportunities to improve community safety or address challenges in Winnipeg.
4. Barriers to reporting experiences of violence.
5. Recommendations to improve reporting experiences of violence.

The information collected from the community engagement sessions was compiled and analyzed by CCFSC. The key findings are presented Section 5 and were used, alongside the findings from the existing data review, to inform the priority areas and recommendations outlined in Section 6 of this document.

Data Collection Considerations

Given the diversity of Winnipeg, representatives from over 20 groups/organizations were invited to participate in community engagement sessions as part of the data collection process for this project. To further maximize participation from hard-to-reach populations, virtual and in-person community engagements were conducted by community partners and CCFSC. These efforts were utilized to ensure all participants felt safe, heard, and comfortable during and after the engagement sessions.

While community engagement participants were categorized into different groups for data collection purposes, it is worth noting that many of the people who participated in this process have multiple intersecting social identities and lived experiences that shape their perspectives and experiences living in Winnipeg. As such, this work is guided by a lens of intersectionality, which recognizes that intersections with race, gender, sexual identity, and lived experiences create unique experiences and perspectives of safety and violence for women, girls, and gender/sexually diverse people.

Limitations of the Data

As with any method of data collection, the use of existing data and qualitative data come with limitations. While the WSCI Strategic Plan focuses on women, girls, and gender/sexually diverse people, statistics gathered through existing reports may not be gender specific. Nonetheless, these reports highlight key challenges experienced by women, men, and gender/sexually diverse people in Winnipeg. Regarding community engagements, the data collected cannot be considered representative of the experiences of all members of the engaged groups.

Identifying WSCI Strategic Plan Priorities

Following the data collection, CCFSC reviewed the findings and identified key themes that emerged. This led to the identification of seven priority areas, along with related recommendations and action items for consideration based on suggestions from participants, as well as CCFSC's knowledge of evidence-based approaches to prevent and reduce violence in public spaces.

Section 5: Key Findings

Existing Data

Winnipeg is a growing city with a population of approximately 854,100, a 71,000 increase since 2021 (City of Winnipeg, 2025). It is home to a large population of newcomers and Indigenous people. Winnipeg has many of the same issues that are endemic across Manitoba and Canada as a whole: a housing crisis, systemic mental health and addictions crises and, crime.

A review of qualitative and quantitative data on social issues and challenges experienced by women, girls, and gender/sexually diverse people in Winnipeg was undertaken to provide a snapshot of existing work done in Winnipeg. The documents reviewed include:

- Winnipeg Poverty Reduction Strategy, 2021-2031
- Manitoba's COVID Recovery Must be Feminist, 2022
- Manitoba Framework for Addressing Gender Based Violence, 2020
- Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Calls for Justice
- Our Winnipeg 2045 Development Plan
- Mean Streets? Social Locations, Gender Dynamics, and Patterns of Violent Crime in Winnipeg, 1998
- StatsCan Safe Cities Profile Winnipeg, 2018
- Winnipeg Police Service Annual Report, 2021
- Winnipeg Safe City Report, 2016
- Winnipeg Safe City: Addressing Sexual Violence Against Women and Girls in Public Spaces, 2016
- Winnipeg Street Census, 2025
- Stronger Together – Summary Report, n.d.
- Indigenous People's Experiences of Homelessness: A Mixed Methods Study in Winnipeg, 2024
- Winnipeg Police Service 2024 Statistical Report
- 2024 Winnipeg Police Service Citizen Survey

Below is an overview of the key themes that emerged from the reviewed documents.

Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG)

Integral to many of the existing plans undertaken by the City of Winnipeg and to the future work of the WSCI committee are the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) Calls for Justice. Findings from the report highlight the patterns of systemic racism, colonialism, and genocide as the causes of the disappearance, murders, and violence perpetuated against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQIA+ people. The report indicates that there is currently no accessible and reliable mechanism for Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQIA+ people to seek resources for violations of

human and Indigenous rights. Further, efforts by Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTIA+ people to be self-determining face significant barriers.

The calls to justice highlight the need for a decolonial approach to the implementation of the Calls for Justice that bring together the perspectives and participation of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQIA+ people with lived experience, including families and communities of those missing, murdered, and survivors of violence. Many of the findings described in this document highlight the increased rates of violence experience by Indigenous women and speak to the need to implement the Calls to Justice into the strategic planning for the Winnipeg Safe City Initiative and beyond.

Impact of COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated burdens experienced by women across the province. In their report "*Manitoba's COVID Recovery Must be Feminist*", the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA) found that women's unemployment rate in Manitoba increased from 4.4% in February 2021 to 7.1% in February 2022. This is higher than the rate of unemployment for men in February 2022 which was 5.1%. Additionally, less women are working part time (36,500 in 2022 compared to 41,600 in 2021). Further, women of colour, Indigenous women, and women with disabilities are overrepresented in the sectors that experienced the most job loss. Alongside the issue of employment is the rising levels of poverty. The report indicates that almost 2/3 of children from single parent homes are living in poverty and the majority (78%) of these single parent homes are led by single mothers. The rate of poverty among single parent households in Manitoba is the highest across all the provinces and territories and 17% greater than the national average.

Based on these statistics, the CCPA made the following recommendations:

- Increase affordable childcare, home care, and long-term care.
- Increase funding for quality education with sufficient wages and benefits for workers.
- Increase minimum wage to living wage as well as provide sick leaves, improved employment insurance, employment standards, and unions.
- Reverse cuts for women-dominant public sector positions.
- Increase support for single parents, including financial support for childcare and rent assistance.
- Offer incentives for women to enter trades and support women-dominated social enterprises.
- Increase support for community-based organizations, including support for those fleeing from domestic violence.

These recommendations highlight a need for increased employment, education, and social support for women who have increasingly been impacted by the COVID-19 Pandemic. Some of these issues are addressed as goals in the Winnipeg Poverty Reduction Strategy for 2021-2031, including more equitable access to community services, housing, food, and public transit.

Crime and Victimization

The Safe Cities Profile Winnipeg (2018) reported that 82% of residents are satisfied with safety, which is below average in Manitoba and Canada (86% and 88%, respectively). Additionally, less than half (47%) of Winnipeg residents felt safe when walking alone after dark, again lower than the provincial and national averages (53% and 52%, respectively). In particular, women who live in Winnipeg were significantly less likely than men to report feeling safe when walking alone after dark (32% compared to 58%). More recently, the Winnipeg Police Service (WPS) 2024 statistical report shared the following regarding victimization and crime:

- There was a 1.9% increase in domestic events from 2023 to 2024.
- Violent and non-violent domestic criminal events increased from 2023 to 2024.
- There was a slight decrease in incidents of sexual assault offences, except for cases of sexual assault with a weapon which increased 75% from 2023 to 2024.
- There was a slight decrease in hate crimes from 2023 to 2024, but overall, they are trending upwards, especially against the Jewish community.
- Mental health and addiction related calls to WPS are trending upwards.

The 2024 Winnipeg Police Survey Citizen Survey which assess community member's perception of policing and crime in Winnipeg highlight the following findings:

- Perceptions of police are the lowest rating to date with 54% of respondents rating the quality of the Winnipeg Police Services as excellent or good.
- Property crime in neighbourhoods and downtown safety continue to be concerns for respondents.
- 72% of respondents believe crime has increased in Winnipeg in the past year and 54% of respondents believe Winnipeg has more crime than other Canadian cities.
- 44% of women indicated feeling safe walking alone in their neighbourhood at night compared to 74% of men. Similarly, 5% of women felt safe walking alone in downtown at night compared to 14% of men.

Thus, while there has been a decrease in crime overall, violent crime and certain property crimes remain an issue. Further, the perception of safety for residents in Winnipeg, especially among women, is relatively low.

Sexual Violence

The Winnipeg Safe Cities Report (2016) found that 5.8% of Winnipeg residents were victims of a self-reported physical or sexual assault, slightly higher than the provincial and national percentages (5.2% and 4.4%, respectively). Similarly, 25% of Winnipeg residents experienced unwanted sexual behaviour in public, which was higher than the averages across Manitoba (22%) and Canada's provinces (23%). Women were significantly more likely than men to experience unwanted sexual behaviour in public (34% compared to 18%). Notably, about 10% of these experiences took place on public transit. Two-thirds of women reported experiencing sexual harassment in public spaces once a month while one-third reported experiencing sexual harassment at least once a week. Women from

diverse backgrounds and communities in Winnipeg shared that they actively avoid certain areas of the city because of their experiences with sexual harassment and other forms of sexual violence.

Findings from the Winnipeg Safe City Report provide additional context to the experiences of sexual violence among women. The report indicates that women with disabilities are three times more likely to experience sexual violence compared to women without a disability. Additionally, Indigenous women are 2.5 times more likely than non-Indigenous women to experience sexual assault.

While these reports alone are concerning, it should also be noted that many incidents of sexual harassment and violence also often go unreported. As such, these rates likely underrepresent the actual numbers of violence that occur. There are multiple reasons victims do not report physical or sexual violence, including:

- Experiences being normalized and commonplace.
- Difficulty identifying harassers in public spaces.
- Not wanting the police involved.
- Concerns about being sent back to one's home country if they are in Canada without permanent status.
- Difficulties seeking justice and dissatisfaction with court outcomes.
- Cultural barriers related to reporting.
- Reporting as a re-traumatizing experience.

Overall, the report shows increased rates of sexual violence experienced by Indigenous women, racialized women, and women experiencing disabilities. Focus groups with women also highlight the underreporting of these experiences due to normalization of violence and harassment, distrust towards police and the justice system, and difficulties in sharing these experiences. The Winnipeg Safe City report calls for increased prevention programs, increasing support services (e.g., 24-hour drop-in centres, safe houses), better safety around public transit, and crime prevention programs such as block parent.

Domestic Abuse and Intimate Partner Violence

The Safe Cities Profile (2018) found that most (87%) victims of police-reported intimate partner violence in Winnipeg were female. This is slightly higher than the percentage in Manitoba (82%) and Canada (79%). Same-sex partners accounted for 3.3% of police-reported intimate partner violence in Winnipeg between 2009 and 2018, which is slightly higher than in Manitoba (2.8%) but on par with the national average (3.4%). More recently, the WPS shared there was a 1.9% increase in domestic events from 2023 to 2024. Further, both violent and non-violent domestic criminal events increased from 2023 to 2024.

Homelessness

The Winnipeg Street Census Report (2025) indicates that 2,469 people in Winnipeg are experiencing homelessness. The most common causes for homelessness include:

- Insufficient income for housing
- Eviction
- Substance use issues
- Conflict with partner or family
- Discrimination

Many individuals transition from Child and Family Services (CFS) into homelessness due to a lack of housing support. A larger portion of youth, Indigenous people, and women experiencing homelessness have spent time in CFS compared with others. Most unhoused individuals in Winnipeg report being homeless for over 12 months. While many report accessing some income support, such as Employment and Income Assistance (EIA) or disability benefits, many may not be accessing additional supports they are eligible for. The report calls for systemic changes to improve supports and increase affordable housing supply for unhoused people in Winnipeg.

More recently, End Homelessness Winnipeg (2024) released a report exploring the unique experiences of unhoused Indigenous peoples. The report highlights that:

- Indigenous peoples make up 80% of the homeless population surveyed.
- A larger portion of Indigenous peoples experiencing homelessness had prior involvement with CFS.
- Indigenous peoples were more likely to report unfair treatment from shelter staff and being refused service due to a lack of identification.

Additionally, in a report highlighting the challenges in providing housing support through Coordinated Access and End Homelessness Winnipeg, the authors highlighted the current strain on the housing support system in supporting people out of homelessness. The report states that the lack of affordable housing, unclear communication between sectors, and under-resourced sectors as some key challenges to support clients in housing (Hansen, n.d.).

Conclusion

Key findings from the reports reviewed include the following:

- Women and GSD people are experiencing higher rates of unemployment and poverty because of the pandemic.
- Indigenous women, girls, and GSD people experience higher rates of violence and experience systematic barriers preventing support or justice for their experiences.
- While there is mixed data regarding decreases in some incidents of crime, there are increases in domestic violence, certain property crimes, and hate crimes.
- Sexual violence and harassment tend to be underreported as women experience multiple barriers related to reporting.
- There is a need for increased housing affordability, income support, and transitional housing for those accessing CFS.

Community Engagement

In total, 10 engagements were conducted with over 90 participants. A survey format was used to collect information in instances where virtual or in-person engagements were unable to be scheduled. The community consultations were conducted among the following groups:

- Elmwood Community Resource Centre
- The Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization of Manitoba Incorporated
- Nine Circles Community Health Centre
- Resource Assistance for Youth
- St. James Assiniboia 55+ Centre
- Substance Use Peer Advisory Counsel
- University of Manitoba 2SLGBTQIA+ Council
- Winnipeg Based Sex Worker Collective
- Winnipeg Encampment
- Winnipeg Service Providers

Table 1 below is a matrix that highlights the main priorities identified by each group.

Table 1: Themes Across Community Engagements

Group Engaged	Racism & Discrimination	Distrust in Police & Justice System	Cultivating Safe Spaces	Unsafe & Unaffordable Housing	GBV & Safety Awareness	Public Transportation	Fear of Dismissal & Disbelief	Social Consequences of Reporting	Alternative Reporting Systems & Trauma-Informed Training
2SLGBTQIA+	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x
Immigrants & Newcomers	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x
Seniors	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	
Sex Workers	x	x	x		x			x	x
Persons with Lived Experience – Substance Use	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x
Persons with Lived Experience – Homelessness	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x
Youth	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x
Service Providers	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Indigenous	x	x		x	x	x		x	

2SLGBTQIA+ People

University of Manitoba

CCFSC facilitated a virtual focus group with the University of Manitoba 2SLGBTQIA+ Council on February 14th, 2025, with 9 participants. The following summary outlines their feedback shared from the focus group.

Topic	Response Themes
Local Strengths Where do you feel safe in Winnipeg and what makes those places feel safe?	Theme: Queer Visible Spaces ➢ Queer Friendly Neighbourhoods: Wolseley, West Broadway, Osborne Village. ➢ 2SLGBTQIA+ spaces and events such as Rainbow Resource Centre, Pride Festival, Club 200, Klinic. ➢ Seeing queer visibility in local businesses and social spaces. Theme: Public, Community Spaces ➢ Community Hubs: The Forks, University of Manitoba. ➢ Feelings of safety among friends, daytime, among other people in the 2SLGBTQIA+ community. ➢ General sense of acceptance from the Winnipeg community.
Local Challenges What are the key challenges related to your safety? Where do you feel unsafe in Winnipeg?	Theme: Rising Hate and Dehumanization ➢ Online hate has increased by political discourse. ○ Queer identities are increasingly targeted in public debates and social media. ➢ Perception that hate crimes and violence are rising. ➢ 2SLGBTQIA+ people feel increasingly unsafe in public spaces due to threats and dehumanizing narratives. Theme: Systemic Discrimination and Lack of Institutional Support ➢ Police responses are inadequate - reports of harassment or threats (especially against trans people) are often ignored or dismissed. ➢ Schools can be unsafe, particularly for queer youth: ○ Discriminatory school policies (e.g., removal of Pride flags, mandatory religious practices). ➢ Bullying and exclusion by peers or staff. ➢ Media and public institutions often show apathy toward queer struggles. Theme: Youth Vulnerability ➢ High rates of youth houselessness among 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals.

	➢ Mental health issues are prevalent: social stigma, fear of rejection, harassment, and exclusion contribute to high levels of stress, anxiety, self-harm, and suicidal ideation.
	➢ Daily stress of identity management: constantly gauging whether spaces or people are safe (e.g., schools, jobs, friendships).
	  ○ Risk of rejection or violence for simply being out or visible.
	
	Theme: Social and Cultural Exclusion
	➢ Lack of allyship from heterosexual and cisgender people.
	➢ Queer issues are not treated as broader societal issues.
	➢ Trans exclusion in sports and other community programs reinforces marginalization.
	➢ Fear of being excluded is a persistent and exhausting mental burden.
	
	Theme: Locations/Time
	➢ North End and Downtown, particularly at night.
	➢ "Straight" or Mainstream Bars: Intoxicated individuals often make offensive or threatening comments toward openly gay or trans people.
	➢ Feels unwelcoming and unsafe for visibly queer individuals.
	➢ Rural Manitoba (e.g., Steinbach, Winkler, Morden): Known for lower tolerance toward queer and trans identities, reports of harassment and physical assaults.
	➢ Political Spaces: Conservative political environments often feel unsafe due to overt or covert homophobia and transphobia.
	  ○ Lack of trust in leadership to protect or affirm 2SLGBTQIA+ rights.
	➢ Online/Social Media: High levels of hate speech, homophobia, and transphobia.
	  ○ Youth are especially affected—targeted for harassment, which worsens mental health and increases fear of self-expression.
	➢ Unpopulated or Empty Areas (especially Downtown at night): Lack of people or witnesses contributes to a feeling of vulnerability.
	  ○ Downtown is “dead” at night, increasing perceived risk.

Challenges to Reporting Violence	Theme: Deep Distrust in Police and the Justice System ➢ Many 2SLGBTQIA+ people - especially trans, Two-Spirit, BIPOC, and sex workers feel unsafe interacting with police.

What factors do you think affect whether a woman or GSD person reports an experience of violence?	➢ Reports of:
	  ○ Misgendering and deadnaming by law enforcement.
	  ○ Victim-blaming, especially for trans people, sex workers, and racialized individuals.
	➢ Even when third-party reporting is available, fear persists that police will become involved.
	
	Theme: Fear of Being Outed or Retargeted
	➢ Strong concerns that reporting could lead to:
	  ○ Involuntary outing.
	  ○ Being ostracized, harassed, or re-targeted, especially in small towns, conservative spaces, or online.
	➢ Many avoid reporting to protect their safety, privacy/identity.
	
	Theme: Reporting Process Is Re-Traumatizing
	➢ Survivors are burdened with:
	  ○ Having to "prove" the crime happened.
	  ○ Facing suspicion, doubt, or apathy from the justice system.
	➢ The process can intensify trauma rather than support healing.
	
	Theme: Social and Professional Backlash
	➢ People fear consequences if they speak up:
	  ○ Losing jobs, housing, or social support.
	  ○ Being dismissed or blamed by their own communities or institutions.
	➢ Particularly acute in conservative, rural, or religious spaces.
	
	Theme: Internalized Harm and Minimization
	➢ Feeling that they are overreacting.
	➢ Feeling violence is a "part of life" for queer and trans people.
	➢ Self-blame and normalizing lead to underreporting and silence.
	
	Theme: Lack of Inclusive Crisis Services
	➢ Very few 2SLGBTQIA+-affirming supports in healthcare, shelters, schools.
	➢ Without safe services, people feel unsafe disclosing violence.
	
	Theme: Compounded Marginalization
	➢ People with intersecting identities - racialized, trans, disabled, sex-working, unhoused - experience greater fear and barriers.
	➢ More marginalized - reporting is riskier and less accessible.

Recommendations for Increasing Safety What are some ideas to increase your safety in Winnipeg?	Theme: Strengthen Institutional Protections ➢ Enforce anti-hate policies in schools and workplaces. ➢ Address homophobia, transphobia, and discrimination. ➢ Promote active allyship through accountability systems. ➢ Track and prosecute hate crimes more seriously. ➢ Justice system and media must stop minimizing violence against queer people. ➢ Develop third-party reporting mechanisms for hate crimes. ➢ Enable safer disclosure without direct police involvement. Theme: Reform Emergency and Policing Systems ➢ Mandatory cultural competency training for police, paramedics, and crisis responders – focused on understanding 2SLGBTQIA+ and Indigenous identities. ➢ Assign specialized, trained officers to respond to 2SLGBTQIA+ incidents. Theme: Expand Safe Housing and Physical Spaces ➢ Fund queer-specific spaces (e.g., community centres, wellness hubs). ➢ Create after-hours spaces and shelters for queer youth and unhoused 2SLGBTQIA+ people. ➢ Open a dedicated lesbian bar to offer safer nightlife options. Theme: Normalize Inclusion Through Education ➢ Mandatory, affirming 2SLGBTQIA+ curriculum in schools. ➢ Includes diverse identities, histories, and lived experiences. ➢ Block homo/transphobic content in school and library networks. ➢ Provide public bystander training to help people intervene safely when witnessing harassment. Theme: Expand Mental Health and Peer Supports ➢ Increase access to free or low-cost counselling by queer-affirming, culturally competent providers. ➢ Offer peer-led safety planning workshops, especially for trans people, racialized queer people, and youth. Theme: Center Indigenous and Intersectional Safety ➢ Expand culturally safe spaces and services for Indigenous 2SLGBTQIA+ people. ➢ Prioritize approaches that are anti-racist, trauma-informed, and community-led.

Recommendations for Reporting Violence What could be done to better support women and GSD people in reporting experiences of violence?	Theme: Make Reporting Trauma-Informed and Identity-Affirming ➢ Ensure police liaisons and victim services are trained in trauma-informed care and queer and gender-diverse competency. ➢ Respectful communication is essential e.g., use correct names and pronouns. ➢ Avoid blame, disbelief, or invalidation. Theme: Expand and Diversify Reporting Pathways ➢ Offer multiple accessible ways to report, e.g., through shelters, healthcare providers, and community centres, without needing to go directly to police. ➢ Increase third-party reporting options and peer advocate involvement, especially for those who fear systems or lack trust. Theme: Prioritize Survivor Autonomy and Control ➢ Allow people to report incidents without triggering an immediate formal investigation - reduces fear, pressure, and re-traumatization. ➢ Survivors should have input and choices throughout the process. Theme: Provide Wraparound Trauma Support ➢ Ensure trauma-informed support is available before, during, and after reporting, including mental health support, advocacy, safety planning, and follow-up care. Theme: Increase Public Awareness and Education ➢ Educate the public on: ○ What counts as violence and harassment. ○ How to recognize abuse and where to report safely. ➢ Combat myths and stigma that silence survivors. Theme: Create Transparent Accountability Systems ➢ Survivors should be able to review how their report was handled. ➢ Establish clear mechanisms for feedback and oversight. ➢ Ensure that reviews are taken seriously and lead to improvement.

Nine Circles Community Health Centre

A member of the WSCI Sub-Committee facilitated an additional in-person focus group with Nine Circles Community Health Centre on September 8, 2025, with 16 participants. The following summary outlines the feedback shared from the focus group.

Topic	Response Themes
Local Strengths Where do you feel safe in Winnipeg and what makes those places feel safe?	Theme: Queer Visible Spaces ➢ Places where rainbow stickers are displayed. ➢ All-gender washrooms. ➢ Club 200 (small downtown gay bar). Theme: Public, Community Spaces ➢ West Central Women's Resource Centre – people can be met where they are at and have needs addressed. ➢ Nine Circles – service providers are alert to what is going on in the community and can provide a safe space for patrons. ➢ Ka Ni Kanichihk. ➢ Buses during the daytime.
Local Challenges What are the key challenges related to your safety? Where do you feel unsafe in Winnipeg?	Theme: Downtown ➢ Downtown at night, side streets can feel unsafe. ➢ Waiting for the bus downtown feels unsafe as there are few people around, busier bus stops feel safer. ➢ EIA office due to the number of security guards, poor lighting, and plexiglass creating an unwelcoming environment. Theme: Travelling on the Bus ➢ New bus routes are causing longer wait times and longer walks between stops, feeling of unsafety as people have to navigate more unfamiliar spaces. ➢ New routes are difficult to understand for people already experiencing challenges with transportation e.g., seniors. ➢ Security officers on the bus creating fear on the bus. Theme: Taking a Taxi ➢ Feeling a lack of safety on the taxi. ➢ Many were unaware of the mandatory training program for drivers or the formal process of making a complaint. ➢ Need more awareness of the complaint process. Theme: Political Climate ➢ Current political climate is perpetrating GBV. ➢ Need to make schools safer for 2SLGBTQIA+ youth - lack of funding and resources is increasing safety concerns.

	Additional Locations: ➢ West Broadway. ➢ Places that oppose gay rights. ➢ Anywhere at night. ➢ Health Science Centre – negative experiences with security and high level of burn out among staff. ➢ Grocery stores with security and police officers. ➢ Millenium Library – increased security measures felt invasive and unwelcoming. ➢ High number of crimes have led to stores implementing buzzers to gain entry, security guards, cameras, and plastic barriers – creates an overall unwelcoming and negative atmosphere.
Recommendations for Increasing Safety What are some ideas to increase your safety in Winnipeg?	Theme: Safety While Travelling ➢ Better street lighting. ➢ Increasing Safe Walk services. ➢ Bus and bike lane infrastructure improvements. Theme: Harm Reduction & Other Supports ➢ Increasing harm reduction initiatives. ➢ Feeling that government has a narrow view of harm reduction. ➢ Increasing street outreach groups. Theme: Public Education ➢ Education-based campaign on keeping women safe, similar work being done by MKO, Native Clan, and SCO. ➢ More public education on social issues such as homelessness. ➢ Implementing education around safety and social issues to young people in schools.

Immigrants & Newcomers

Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization of Manitoba

A survey with engagement questions was distributed to newcomer and immigrant women and garnered 11 responses. The following chart summarizes their feedback:

Topic	Response Themes
Local Strengths Where do you feel safe in Winnipeg and what makes those places feel safe?	Theme: Community Organizations ➢ IRCOM (Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization of Manitoba). ➢ English classes. Theme: Faith Spaces ➢ Churches. ➢ Mosques. Theme: Personal and Familiar Environments ➢ Home and with family and friends. ➢ Neighbourhoods: Transcona, West Broadway, Garden City ➢ Familiarity, community, and cultural connection are central to feeling safe. ➢ Culturally reflective staff and services build trust. ➢ Social proximity - being with known people or in immigrant-rich areas - promotes comfort and reduces risk.
Local Challenges What are the key challenges related to your safety? Where do you feel unsafe in Winnipeg?	Theme: Fear of Violence and Harassment ➢ Sexual violence is a major concern, especially in unfamiliar or public spaces. ➢ Verbal harassment in public is common and distressing, especially when language barriers prevent understanding or response. Theme: Language Barriers ➢ Limited English reduces access to: ○ Safety-related services (e.g., shelters, police, healthcare). ○ Clear understanding of rights and protections. ➢ Increases isolation and vulnerability in public and institutional settings. Theme: Economic Insecurity ➢ Difficulty finding jobs that pay a living wage. ➢ Financial strain contributes to unsafe housing and dependency on others - may increase risk of exploitation.

	Theme: Barriers Navigating Public Systems ➢ Complex systems (e.g., healthcare, housing, legal) are hard to navigate without guidance or language support. ➢ Lack of accessible information fosters isolation and disempowerment. Theme: Inadequate, Unsafe, or Unaffordable Housing ➢ Struggle to find stable, affordable, and clean housing. ➢ Poor housing conditions can increase exposure to unsafe neighbourhoods or exploitative landlords. Theme: Gender Dynamics in Service Settings ➢ Women feel safer and more comfortable receiving services from other women, particularly health and social services. ➢ Gender of service providers influences comfort in disclosing violence or personal issues. Theme: Law Enforcement and Fear of Deportation ➢ Interacting with police is frightening due to fear of immigration consequences, even for permanent residents or refugees. ➢ Heightened anxiety from media coverage, especially U.S. news, about deportations and anti-immigrant sentiment. ➢ A general lack of trust in systemic protection. Themes: Locations/Time ➢ Downtown and North End due to higher crime rates, visible substance use, lack of visible support or security. ➢ Nighttime and dark places (e.g., alleys, poorly lit streets). ➢ Riding the bus at night.
Challenges to Reporting Violence What factors do you think affect whether a woman or GSD person reports an experience of violence?	Theme: Fear of Police and Authority ➢ Many women are afraid to call police especially if they have past trauma with law enforcement, fear being misunderstood or not believed, and have immigration-related concerns. Theme: Shame and Stigma ➢ Feelings of shame or self-blame (e.g., cultural/social stigma) prevents many women from disclosing violence. Theme: Relationship with the Abuser ➢ May be less likely to report violence from a spouse/partner. ➢ Emotional, financial, and legal dependence, loyalty, and/or fear of retaliation may impact reporting.

	Theme: Fear of Child and Family Services (CFS) Involvement ➢ Concern that reporting violence could lead to child apprehension – especially for racialized, newcomer, or low-income mothers – can outweigh desire for personal safety. Theme: Language Barriers and System Navigation ➢ Limited English makes it difficult to access or understand services. ➢ Women may not know how or where to report safely. ➢ Interpreter access is often limited or unreliable. Theme: Fear of Exposure or Public Knowledge ➢ Concerns that reporting will lead to loss of privacy, gossip, or backlash, especially in tight-knit cultural/ethnic communities. Theme: Gender of the Responders ➢ Some women do not feel comfortable reporting to men – this is especially relevant in relation to police, healthcare, or social services. Theme: Caregiving Responsibilities ➢ Having young children to care for may prevent women from taking time to report. ➢ Fear of losing stability or custody may discourage action.
Recommendations for Increasing Safety What are some ideas to increase your safety in Winnipeg?	Theme: Representation and Cultural Safety ➢ Hire multilingual and culturally diverse staff across healthcare, social services, police, and emergency response to improve communication, trust, and comfort in seeking help. ➢ Post clear signage in multiple languages to help newcomers navigate public spaces, services, and transit more confidently. Theme: Housing and Shelter Access ➢ Increase safe, affordable housing options. ➢ Provide women- and children-only shelters to enhance physical and emotional safety. Theme: Legal and Rights-Based Support ➢ Expand access to free legal aid. ➢ Ensure information about legal rights is available and accessible in multiple languages. ➢ Educate immigrants about workers' rights to reduce vulnerability in employment.

	Theme: Public Infrastructure Improvements ➢ Improve street lighting, especially in poorly lit areas. ➢ Increase visible security presence in public spaces to deter harassment or violence. Theme: Childcare Support ➢ Provide free childcare, allowing women to access services, employment, or legal processes and reducing isolation and dependency.
Recommendations for Reporting Violence What could be done to better support women and GSD people in reporting experiences of violence?	Theme: Language Accessibility ➢ Provide services in individuals' preferred languages. ➢ Ensure professional translation and interpretation is readily available across sectors (e.g., police, healthcare, legal, social services). Theme: Trust Building with Institutions ➢ Foster long-term trust between immigrant communities, police officers, and community organization staff. ➢ Relationship-building helps reduce fear, encourage reporting, and improve outcomes. Theme: Safe and Low-Barrier Reporting ➢ Offer anonymous reporting options - helps individuals disclose violence or abuse without fear of exposure or retaliation. Theme: Culturally Specific Services ➢ Fund and support culturally specific organizations as these services are more likely to be trusted and effective for immigrant women and families. ➢ Ensure programs are designed by and for the communities they serve.

Elmwood Community Resource Centre

A member of the WSCI Sub-Committee facilitated an additional in-person focus group with the Elmwood Community Resource Centre (ECRC) on August 29, 2025, with 20 participants (youth and adults). The following summary outlines their feedback.

Topic	Response Themes
Local Strengths Where do you feel safe in Winnipeg and what makes those places feel safe?	Theme: Community Spaces ➢ Church. ➢ Elmwood Community Centre. ➢ Being with people who speak the same language. Theme: Public Spaces ➢ School spaces (e.g., University of Manitoba, Adult Education Centre, local high schools). ➢ Parks (e.g., Armstrong Park, Kildonan Park). ➢ Buses during the daytime. ➢ Most malls and stores.
Local Challenges What are the key challenges related to your safety? Where do you feel unsafe in Winnipeg?	Theme: Downtown ➢ Participants noted witnessing crime in the area. ➢ Concerns of waiting for the bus downtown, particularly at bus stops with less foot traffic. ➢ Participants noted generally avoiding the downtown area. ➢ When arriving in Winnipeg, they had to go to a downtown government building - a “scary introduction” to the city. Theme: Commuting Around Winnipeg ➢ Feeling unsafe when travelling on the bus or waiting for the bus, e.g., Regent Ave. bus stops. ➢ New bus routes - longer wait times and walks between stops. ➢ Participants also noted feeling unsafe while parking and walking to their car e.g., concerns of panhandling. ➢ Extreme weather can also pose an issue for women responsible for grocery shopping, errands, daycare pickups. Theme: Alcohol and Drug Use ➢ Concerns of public alcohol use in parks around children ➢ Erratic behaviour by strangers associated with potential drug use or mental health issues. ➢ Drug use and vaping in school Theme: Homelessness ➢ Many noted feeling unsafe in areas with unhoused people. ➢ Rise in homelessness leading to feeling unsafe downtown.

	Theme: Living in Canada ➢ Difficulties enrolling in ESL classes create barriers to learning English and adjusting to the community. ➢ Cultural identity crisis and familial breakdown due to moving to a new country. Theme: Ongoing Discrimination ➢ Being under scrutiny for clothing choices, getting unwanted attention from men.
Recommendations for Increasing Safety What are some ideas to increase your safety in Winnipeg?	Theme: Safe Spaces in Winnipeg ➢ Identify safe places for women who are new to the city. ➢ Offer orientation programs for women on how to stay safe and other resources for newcomers. ➢ Security officers on buses. Theme: Mental Health, Addiction, and Housing ➢ Improve housing supports and provide housing for people who are homeless. ➢ Increase mental health supports for those who need them. ➢ Provide addiction supports.

Seniors

On May 27th, 2025, CCFSC facilitated a focus group with 16 senior women at the St. James Assiniboia 55+ Centre. The following summary outlines the feedback from the focus group.

Topic	Response Themes
Local Strengths Where do you feel safe in Winnipeg and what makes those places feel safe?	Theme: Community and Recreational Spaces ➢ Active living centres (e.g., Good Neighbours, St. James Assiniboia). ➢ Group exercise classes. ➢ Knitting/craft groups. ➢ Places of worship. Theme: Neighbourhoods ➢ River Heights, St. James, Transcona, Charleswood. Theme: Personal and Familiar Environments ➢ Knowing neighbours. ➢ Familiar people and predictable routines. ➢ Visible police or security presence. ➢ Knowing where to go for help (nearby homes, security desks). Theme: Physical Environment ➢ Well-lit areas. ➢ Well-maintained sidewalks. ➢ Presence of benches, ramps, and railings. ➢ Clear signage for wayfinding.
Local Challenges What are the key challenges related to your safety? Where do you feel unsafe in Winnipeg?	Theme: Physical Safety and Mobility ➢ Difficulty navigating large intersections with quick crossings. ➢ Mobility challenges, especially in winter (icy sidewalks, roads). ➢ Limited accessible transportation; long, complex bus trips. ➢ Lack of emergency call buttons/poles in public areas. Theme: Crime and Threats ➢ Concerns about random acts of violence by strangers. ➢ Online and telephone scams targeting seniors. ➢ Break-ins and robberies. ➢ Not enough visible or available police presence. Theme: Social Vulnerabilities ➢ Loneliness and social isolation - can increase vulnerability. ➢ Food insecurity, especially for those on fixed incomes. ➢ Elder abuse, including in care homes and by family members.

	Theme: Discrimination and Systemic Issues ➢ Ageism and feeling disregarded in public and institutional spaces. ➢ A sense of being forgotten or unsupported in urban planning and safety infrastructure. Theme: Locations/Time ➢ Specific Locations: Downtown, Exchange District, North End and West End. ➢ Back alleys and lanes. ➢ Parking lots. ➢ Public transit, particularly buses. ➢ Being out at night. ➢ Being around people who are under the influence.
Challenges to Reporting Violence What factors do you think affect whether a woman or GSD person reports an experience of violence?	Theme: Fear of Dismissal or Not Being Believed ➢ Concern that younger people will ignore, interrupt, or belittle them. ➢ Fear of having experiences minimized or not taken seriously. Theme: Relationship with the Abuser ➢ Difficult to report if the abuser is a spouse, child, or caregiver. ➢ Fear of retaliation, including loss of housing or essential care. Theme: Shame and Stigma ➢ Feelings of shame, especially with domestic or sexual violence. ➢ Social conditioning to keep family matters private. ➢ Fear of being stigmatized, especially after reporting sexual assault. Theme: Isolation and Vulnerability ➢ Physical or social isolation limits access to help. ➢ Fear of institutionalization and loss of independence if abuse is reported. Theme: Cognitive and Health Challenges ➢ Memory issues, dementia, or other impairments make reporting harder. ➢ Fear of not being believed or being blamed due to health-related limitations.

Recommendations for Increasing Safety What are some ideas to increase your safety in Winnipeg?	Theme: Safer Public Spaces ➢ Improved lighting. ➢ More benches and safe, accessible rest areas. ➢ More sidewalk maintenance, especially in winter (ice removal). ➢ Accessible public washrooms. ➢ Emergency call poles/buttons, including on buses. Theme: Enhanced Services and Supports ➢ Free transportation for seniors (e.g., appointments, groceries). ➢ More affordable housing options. ➢ Expanded aging-in-place supports e.g., home maintenance, homecare and meal delivery. ➢ Regular welfare checks. ➢ Personal safety devices (e.g., alarm buttons). Theme: Social and Intergenerational Connection ➢ Intergenerational programs to foster engagement and reduce isolation. Theme: Protection and Intervention ➢ Increased security and police presence. ➢ Self-defense classes for women. ➢ Mental health outreach for isolated seniors. ➢ Training for frontline workers (health/social services) to recognize and respond to elder abuse.
Recommendations for Reporting Violence What could be done to better support women and GSD people in reporting experiences of violence?	Theme: Awareness and Education ➢ Public awareness campaigns: elder abuse, online scams, how and where to report violence. Theme: Community-Based Reporting Support ➢ Train frontline workers as advocates and trusted supports, including home care staff, Meals on Wheels volunteers, Pharmacists, Faith leaders (e.g., priests). Theme: Protecting Autonomy ➢ Create reporting processes that do not lead to loss of independence. ➢ Avoid automatic institutionalization. ➢ Respect seniors' rights and self-determination when they come forward.

Sex Workers

On March 6th, 2025, CCFSC facilitated a virtual focus group with 8 members of a Winnipeg-based sex worker collective. The following summary outlines their feedback.

Topic	Response Themes

Local Strengths
Where do you feel safe in Winnipeg and what makes those places feel safe?
	Theme: Safe Spaces
	➢ Peer-led spaces and outreach services run by and for sex workers.
	➢ Velma's House – a safe, supportive space for women experiencing or escaping violence.
	➢ Indoor environments with familiar, trusted people.
	➢ What makes the spaces safe:
	  ○ Non-judgmental, respectful environments.
	  ○ Sense of community and mutual understanding.
	  ○ Availability of harm reduction supplies.
	  ○ Feeling supported and not under surveillance.
	➢ Barriers to Feeling Safe in Public Spaces:
	  ○ Fear of being recognized or outed.
	  ○ Constant feeling of surveillance or scrutiny.
	  ○ Often feel unsafe and isolated without peer presence.

Local Challenges What are the key challenges related to your safety? Where do you feel unsafe in Winnipeg?	Theme: Criminalization and Legal Barriers ➢ Criminalization forces sex workers to hide, leading to isolation and increased danger. ➢ Third-party laws prevent sex workers from using safer indoor venues, landlords can be prosecuted, and clubs and other venues are over-policed. ➢ Increased police presence leads to displacement and heightened risk. Theme: Violence and Unsafe Working Conditions ➢ Police violence and mistreatment, especially against trans and Indigenous women. ➢ Threat of "bad dates" (assault, robbery from clients). ➢ Lack of safe, legal places to work pushes people into cars, alleys, and unsafe hotels. Theme: Stigma and Discrimination ➢ Social stigma and public shaming. ➢ Harassment on the streets and in the media ➢ Treated disrespectfully by service providers, landlords, police. ➢ Fear of being judged or criminalized keeps many from accessing services (e.g., healthcare, legal aid).

	Theme: Intersectional and Structural Vulnerabilities ➢ Layered identities (Indigenous, trans, Two-Spirit, queer) increase exposure to violence and discrimination. ➢ Many engaging in "Survival sex" due to homelessness or housing instability, unemployment, mental health challenges, and substance use. Theme: Urban Development Pressures ➢ Gentrification and "clean-up" efforts displace sex workers and vulnerable communities. ➢ Specific neighbourhoods (e.g., Downtown, West Broadway, West End) are increasingly unsafe due to displacement and over-policing. Theme: Locations/Time ➢ Public areas that are known for having street-based sex work, e.g., Main Street, Ellice Avenue, Selkirk Avenue, and Higgins frequently attract harassment and violence from people passing by. ➢ Poorly maintained: bad lighting, visible garbage, lack of care. ➢ Areas with heavy police presence: o Leads to harassment, arrests (e.g., for loitering) o Increased surveillance and criminalization heighten risk, especially for marginalized sex workers. ➢ Hidden or Isolated Work Locations: o Back lanes and industrial parks - chosen for privacy but increase vulnerability due to isolation. o Cars and hotels are confined, unpredictable, and hard to escape from. o No witnesses or nearby help. o Hotels may collaborate with police, creating added fear of exposure. ➢ Service Settings: accessing health or social services can feel unsafe due to invasive questioning, judgmental or disrespectful treatment by staff.
Challenges to Reporting Violence What factors do you think affect whether a woman or GSD person reports an experience of violence?	Theme: Lack of Trust and Safety in Systems ➢ Uncertainty around who to trust — some shelters reject sex workers. ➢ Police are seen as threatening, not protective. o Viewed as judgmental, criminalizing, or violent. ➢ Service providers may be judgmental, invasive, or not trauma informed.

	Theme: Risk of Retaliation and Loss ➢ Retaliation from clients/managers, loss of income/housing, violence, child apprehension - especially for sex workers and those using substances. Theme: Identity-Based Discrimination ➢ Queer and trans sex workers fear misgendering, dead-naming, or rejection. ➢ Indigenous sex workers and those who use substances face heightened shame, blame, and discrimination. ➢ Underage sex workers fear being sent back to unsafe homes. Theme: Perceived Futility and Systemic Barriers ➢ No trust in justice system - "nothing will happen" if they report. ➢ High emotional and practical cost of reporting. ➢ Lack of anonymity. ➢ Need phone/computer access (not always safe or available). ➢ Often not trauma informed.
Recommendations for Increasing Safety What are some ideas to increase your safety in Winnipeg?	Theme: Legal and Structural Reform ➢ Decriminalize sex work. ➢ Support campaigns to repeal Canada's sex work laws. ➢ Legalize and protect indoor, collective workspaces. ➢ Allow client screening, negotiation, and workplace safety standards. Theme: Safe and Supportive Work Environments ➢ Develop co-op spaces for sex workers to work together safely. ➢ Create drop-in centers specifically for sex workers (e.g., *Our Place Safe Space*). ➢ Ensure access to safe, stable housing. Theme: Trauma-Informed and Peer-Led Services ➢ Establish accessible, trauma-informed services tailored to sex workers' needs. ➢ Train providers to offer non-judgmental, respectful support Theme: Mobile and Harm Reduction Outreach ➢ Fund and support peer-led mobile outreach teams. ➢ Distribute harm reduction supplies: condoms, naloxone, flashlights, etc. ➢ Build relationships and increase safety without requiring formal system contact.

Recommendations for Reporting Violence What could be done to better support women and GSD people in reporting experiences of violence?	Theme: Alternative and Accessible Reporting Channels ➢ Develop non-police reporting options through trusted, community-based organizations. ➢ Ensure anonymous reporting, available in multiple languages. ➢ Create systems to report bad dates (violent or dangerous clients). Theme: Peer-Led Advocacy and Outreach ➢ Invest in peer workers for outreach and to act as advocates during the reporting process. ➢ In locations like hotels, streets, and shelters Theme: Training and Sensitization for Service Providers ➢ Train staff in sex work sensitivity and trauma-informed care. ➢ Include education on racism, colonialism, trans/homophobia, and legal rights of sex workers. ➢ Ensure providers understand that sex workers can report even under criminalized conditions. Theme: Legal and Educational Supports ➢ Provide legal aid and ongoing advocacy for those navigating the reporting process. ➢ Offer "Know Your Rights" workshops for sex workers. ➢ Promote a reporting culture where sex workers are treated with respect and dignity from start to finish.

Persons with Lived & Living Experience

Substance Use Peer Advisory Counsel

On May 7th, 2025, CCFSC facilitated a focus group with 6 women and 2 queer identifying members of a substance use peer advisory council. The following summary outlines their feedback shared from the focus group.

Topic	Response Themes
Local Strengths Where do you feel safe in Winnipeg and what makes those places feel safe?	Theme: Trusted Social Connections ➢ With friends, children, and peer-led outreach teams. ➢ Among people who offer understanding and non-judgment. ➢ Low-barrier, respectful services: ○ Access to basic needs (shelter, food, hygiene) without requirements for sobriety or forced treatment or disclosure of personal information. ○ Services that prioritize privacy, confidentiality, and personal agency.
Local Challenges What are the key challenges related to your safety? Where do you feel unsafe in Winnipeg?	Theme: Sexual Violence and Exploitation ➢ Substance dependence increases vulnerability. ➢ Risk of being coerced into sex for drugs. ➢ Increased risk of sexual assault while intoxicated. Theme: Housing Instability ➢ Lack of affordable, stable housing. ➢ May stay in unsafe relationships to avoid homelessness. Theme: Mental Health and Trauma ➢ Ongoing mental health challenges. ➢ Unaddressed trauma that compounds vulnerability and limits access to support. Theme: Location/Time ➢ Public and isolated spaces: streets and alleyways - often lack visibility, lighting, or bystander presence. ➢ Encampments - safety depends on who else is present; can feel unpredictable. ➢ Using substances alone: benches, cars, and other public/semi-public places; increases vulnerability to assault or attack, especially for women.
Challenges to Reporting Violence What factors do you think affect whether a woman or GSD person	Theme: Fear of Systemic Consequences ➢ Fear of child apprehension or risk of being reported to CFS. ➢ Pressure or control from partners may prevent reporting.

reports an experience of violence?	Theme: Stigma and Discrimination ➢ Reporting often met with judgment for “lifestyle choices”. ➢ Stigma from service providers and authorities. ➢ Gender/sexually diverse individuals face added layers of marginalization. Theme: Dismissal and Blame ➢ Police and service providers may be dismissive or blaming, especially toward drug users. ➢ Assumptions that violence was expected or deserved. ➢ Being high leads to disbelief or discrediting of experiences. Theme: Emotional and Psychological Barriers ➢ Trauma of reporting is often compounded by being ignored or blamed. ➢ Anticipated mistreatment deters people from seeking help.
Recommendations for Increasing Safety What are some ideas to increase your safety in Winnipeg?	Theme: Peer-Led Harm Reduction ➢ Support and expand peer-led outreach (e.g., MHRN). ➢ Distribute safe use kits, naloxone, cookers, filters, water. ➢ Provide anonymous supply access (e.g., lockers). Theme: Safe and Inclusive Spaces ➢ Establish a safe consumption site (currently in progress). ➢ Create more women-centred and women-only spaces, including shelters, safe rooms, and peer support groups. Theme: Culturally Safe and Non-Judgmental Services ➢ Develop culturally specific and safe services for diverse communities. ➢ Ensure service providers validate people's choices, offer options, and avoid ultimatums or judgment. Theme: Wrap-Around Support Models ➢ Design spaces that integrate healthcare, housing, legal, and social supports. ➢ Provide holistic, coordinated care in safe, low-barrier environments
Recommendations for Reporting Violence What could be done to better support women	Theme: Safe, Anonymous Reporting Options ➢ Allow anonymous reporting without requiring ID or names. ➢ Ensure no information is shared with police or Child and Family Services (CFS) without consent.

and GSD people in reporting experiences of violence?	Theme: Accessible and Non-Police Reporting Paths ➢ Increase awareness of non-police reporting options. ➢ Integrate reporting support into harm reduction and drop-in services. Theme: Reduce Stigma and Blame ➢ Shift responses to be non-judgmental and trauma informed. ➢ Address blame, shame, and systemic discrimination. Theme: Wrap-Around Support ➢ Offer comprehensive support services alongside reporting, e.g., legal aid, housing, mental health support, etc.

Winnipeg Encampment

On May 8th, 2025, CCFSC facilitated a focus group with 6 women in a Winnipeg encampment. The following summary outlines their feedback shared from the focus group.

Topic	Response Themes
Local Strengths Where do you feel safe in Winnipeg and what makes those places feel safe?	Theme: Community-Rooted and Culturally Safe Spaces ➢ Velma's House – Indigenous women-led, culturally appropriate services. ➢ North End Women's Centre – community-based, supportive environment. ➢ Being with community provides trust and belonging. ➢ Culturally safe spaces - reduce judgment and discrimination. Theme: Access to Basic Needs ➢ Safety in places offering food, hygiene supplies, clothing – meet physical needs and support dignity and well-being.
Local Challenges What are the key challenges related to your safety? Where do you feel unsafe in Winnipeg?	Theme: Violence and Exploitation ➢ Sexual assault and stalking are frequent threats. ➢ Coerced into sex in exchange for survival needs (food, shelter). Theme: Theft and Insecurity ➢ Loss or theft of personal belongings. ➢ Constant lack of safe, secure places to store items. Theme: Criminalization and Policing ➢ Encampments dismantled by police lead to displacement and instability. ➢ Being criminalized simply for being unhoused.

	Theme: Unsafe Living Conditions ➢ Sleeping rough and alone in unsafe locations like parks and bus shelters. ➢ Lack of privacy, exposure to weather, vulnerability to harm. Theme: Systemic Racism and Discrimination ➢ Unhoused Indigenous people face heightened racism and dehumanization. ➢ Disproportionate targeting and mistreatment in public and institutional spaces. Theme: Location/Time ➢ Over-Policed Areas: high police presence creates fear, especially due to the risk of harassment or displacement ○ Policing is experienced as threatening rather than protective. ➢ Isolation While Sleeping Rough: sleeping alone on the streets increases vulnerability to violence and theft. ➢ Lack of safety, privacy, and protection. ➢ Encampments can feel unsafe, particularly when predatory men are present. ➢ Safety depends on group dynamics and who shares the space.
Challenges to Reporting Violence What factors do you think affect whether a woman or GSD person reports an experience of violence?	Theme: Fear of Dismissal and Blame ➢ Not being believed or taken seriously. ➢ Violence being blamed on their houselessness, as if it is to be expected. ➢ Shame, trauma, and desensitization to repeated violence. Theme: Criminalization and Systemic Distrust ➢ Fear that police will get involved, even in third-party reporting. ➢ Risk of being criminalized for being unhoused or living on the margins. ➢ General distrust of the justice system and its intentions. Theme: Lack of Safe, Survivor-Centered Options ➢ Few or no restorative justice alternatives. ➢ Lack of systems that support healing for victims and accountability within communities. Theme: Survival and Health Challenges ➢ Survival comes first - securing food, warmth, and shelter takes priority over reporting.

	➢ Mental health struggles make the process of reporting overwhelming and traumatic. ➢ Dependence on the abuser (for shelter, food, etc.) may prevent action.
Recommendations for Increasing Safety What are some ideas to increase your safety in Winnipeg?	Theme: Safe and Accessible Housing ➢ Expand access to safe, affordable housing. ➢ Include both transitional and permanent housing options. Theme: Low-Barrier, Inclusive Shelters ➢ Create shelters without restrictive rules, such as no ID or sobriety requirements. ➢ Extended hours and increased capacity. ➢ Allowing personal belongings and pets. Theme: Expanded Harm Reduction and Support Services ➢ Increase harm reduction services across the city. ➢ Provide gender-specific crisis spaces. ➢ Develop more culturally safe, Indigenous-led programs. Theme: Public Infrastructure and Accessibility ➢ Ensure access to public washrooms and showers. ➢ Offer free public transportation and Wi-Fi on buses to improve mobility and connectivity.
Recommendations for Reporting Violence What could be done to better support women and GSD people in reporting experiences of violence?	Theme: Safer, Inclusive Reporting Environments ➢ Create women-centred and gender-affirming spaces for reporting. ➢ Embed reporting options into low-barrier services (e.g., drop-ins, meal programs, harm reduction). Theme: Protection from Systemic Harm ➢ Ensure victims are not criminalized, especially those who are unhoused or use substances. ➢ Protect against child apprehension as a consequence of reporting. Theme: Legal and Ongoing Support ➢ Provide free legal advocacy. ➢ Ensure follow-up care and safe housing for survivors during recovery.

Youth

A survey with engagement questions was distributed to female-identifying and queer youth (ages 13-19) in Winnipeg and received 13 responses. The following summary outlines their feedback shared from the focus group.

Topic	Response Themes
Local Strengths Where do you feel safe in Winnipeg and what makes those places feel safe?	Theme: Safe Places ➢ Neighborhoods like Wolseley and River Heights. ➢ With friends and family. ➢ Resource Assistance for Youth (RaY). ➢ Spaces free from harassment, surrounded by trusted people. ➢ Spaces that offer essential resources such as mental health supports, food, information, services.
Local Challenges What are the key challenges related to your safety? Where do you feel unsafe in Winnipeg?	Theme: Gender-Based and Sexual Violence ➢ Street harassment (catcalling, stalking, sexual comments). ➢ Sexual assault, often by people within their social circles. ➢ Domestic violence within family or intimate relationships. ➢ Online harassment, including bullying and revenge porn. Theme: Mobility and Public Space Safety ➢ Limited safe transportation options. ➢ Buses often feel unsafe. ➢ Walking, especially at night, is risky. ➢ Hard to navigate the city without a car. Theme: Identity-Based Discrimination ➢ Transphobia and related threats or exclusion. Theme: Mental Health Challenges ➢ High levels of self-harm and suicidal ideation. ➢ Emotional impacts of violence, harassment, and isolation. Theme: Location/Time ➢ Institutional environments like schools: ○ Appearance and identity are policed or shamed ○ Belittled by staff and bullied by peers. ➢ Public and isolated areas (parks, back lanes, alleys at night). ➢ Deserted areas after dark, regardless of location. ➢ North End identified as an area of concern. ➢ Substance use in public spaces, areas with many intoxicated or high individuals feel unsafe.

Challenges to Reporting Violence What factors do you think affect whether a woman or GSD person reports an experience of violence?	Theme: Fear of Disbelief and Social Consequences ➢ Fear of not being believed by parents, especially mothers. ➢ Worry about disappointing family or causing familial conflict. ➢ Social exclusion, rumors; peers taking the perpetrator's side. ➢ Fear of retaliation, such as revenge porn. Theme: Institutional Distrust and Systemic Barriers ➢ Fear of police - asked invasive questions, not taken seriously. ➢ General distrust of authority and institutions. ➢ Indigenous youth face added barriers due to a justice system not built for Indigenous Peoples. Theme: Lack of Safe, Inclusive Resources ➢ Not knowing where or how to report safely. ➢ Lack of 2SLGBTQIA+-specific services. ➢ Lack of knowledge about trusted supports or safe spaces. Theme: Internal and Emotional Barriers ➢ Denial about the experience of violence. ➢ Fear of being removed from family care or life-altering consequences after reporting.
Recommendations for Increasing Safety What are some ideas to increase your safety in Winnipeg?	Theme: Inclusive and Accessible Youth Services ➢ More services for queer youth, tailored to their specific needs. ➢ 24/7 youth spaces available across the city, not just in the city centre. ➢ 24-hour crisis support hubs for immediate help and safety. ➢ Better support in schools, ensuring they are affirming and responsive to student needs. Theme: Safer Public Spaces and Transit ➢ Improved street lighting, especially on sidewalks and in back lanes. ➢ Free Wi-Fi on buses to support safety and connectivity. ➢ Address street harassment, especially targeting underage girls by adult men. Theme: Education and Awareness ➢ Provide education about available services and how to access them. ➢ Offer digital and online safety education, particularly around privacy and exploitation.

Recommendations for Reporting Violence What could be done to better support women and GSD people in reporting experiences of violence?	Theme: Accessible and Youth-Centered Reporting Options ➢ Enable reporting through youth spaces and organizations. ➢ Provide safe school-based reporting that doesn't automatically trigger investigations or parental disclosure. Theme: Empowerment Through Peer and Rights-Based Support ➢ Involve peer mentors who can listen and guide without judgment. ➢ Educate youth about their rights to help them recognize and report violence. Theme: Victim-Led and Voluntary Processes ➢ Ensure police involvement is optional, not mandatory. ➢ Respect the autonomy of the victim - let them choose how to proceed and what supports to access.

Service Providers

On March 31, 2023, CCFSC hosted a virtual focus group with service providers in Winnipeg. The following summary outlines their feedback shared from the focus group.

Topic	Response Themes
Local Strengths Where do you feel safe in Winnipeg and what makes those places feel safe?	Theme: Nature and Outdoor Spaces ➢ Assiniboine Park, St. Vital Park, other parks, creeks, and trails. Theme: Public and Recreation Spaces ➢ University of Winnipeg. ➢ Public pools, recreation centres. ➢ Osborne Village, Wolseley, Exchange District. ➢ The Forks, Old Market Square. Theme: Difficulty Finding Safe Spaces ➢ Struggling to find safe spaces especially due to rising violence. ➢ Those with marginalized social identities (BIPOC, 2SLGBTQIA+ people, sex workers) feel that they need to hypervigilant to keep themselves safe.
Local Challenges What are the key challenges related to your safety? Where do you feel unsafe in Winnipeg?	Theme: Transportation ➢ Feeling unsafe waiting for buses or in cabs. ➢ Buses are not reliable. ➢ Parking underground creates feelings of unsafety. ➢ Lack of transportation support can create barriers to programming/accessing resources. Theme: Police ➢ Uniformed officers with weapons create unease. ➢ Sex workers feel unsafe around them, have been harassed. ➢ Can create feelings of tension among newcomers fleeing war. ➢ Historically negative relationship with Indigenous community and racialized groups. ➢ Routinely show up at WE24 looking for people and waking people up. Theme: Substance Use ➢ Feeling unsafe around people using or public intoxication. ➢ Fear around violence related to drugs. Theme: Homelessness ➢ Large unhoused population - not enough resources for them. ➢ Lack of public amenities (public washrooms, payphones).

	Theme: Language Barriers ➢ Language barriers for immigrants/newcomers can make it difficult for them to learn about resources or safe spaces. Theme: Youth ➢ Children/youth followed while outside (e.g., biking, shopping). ➢ Young Indigenous girls stared at/propositioned on bus. Theme: Racism, Sexism, Transphobia, and Homophobia ➢ Increasing discrimination, worsened by US politics. ➢ Intersectionality of social identities can increase risk of being a target of crime. Theme: Crime and Safety for Women ➢ Perception of increased crime for older women. ➢ Mobility impairment can increase the risk of victimization. ➢ Girls sexually harassed at school and experience victim blaming from school staff. Theme: Location/Time ➢ Downtown more recently. ➢ Portage Place, North End. ➢ Unlit paths, dark alleys, run-down buildings. ➢ Being outside at night.
Challenges to Reporting Violence What factors do you think affect whether a woman or GSD person reports an experience of violence?	Theme: Fear of Disbelief and Social Consequences ➢ Fear of not being believed by authorities, friends, family, partners, etc. ➢ Not being able report when the perpetrator is a close family member or friend. Theme: Fear of Retaliation ➢ Fear of being punished for reporting Theme: Lack of Trust and Safety in Systems ➢ Feeling unsafe around police can deter reporting. ➢ Lack of trust in the process, felt police were not interested in helping them. ➢ Lack of clarity on if anything will be done. Theme: Normalized Harassment/Violence ➢ Some behaviours are perceived as “expected” or normalized (e.g., being at a club) so they go unreported.

	Theme: Lack of Supports Available ➢ No shelter space for trans, GSD, or two spirit people if they need to leave an abusive home. ➢ Cannot access "safe spaces" like shelters because of police presence in these areas.
Recommendations for Increasing Safety What are some ideas to increase your safety in Winnipeg?	Theme: Increase Funding for Social Services ➢ Defund the police and redistribute funds to social services. ➢ Implementing safe transportation, free childcare, and increasing access to basic needs. ➢ Investing in community and social services as a primary violence prevention by addressing root causes and building community capacity. ➢ Using community groups like Bear Clan or Mama Bear Clan. Theme: Homelessness ➢ Increase affordable housing. ➢ Transitional housing and support for people aging out of CFS, fleeing violence, released from prison, etc. Theme: Mental Health & Addiction ➢ Increase harm reduction services, e.g., safe consumption site. ➢ Counselling services. ➢ Mobile crisis units. ➢ Wraparound services. Theme: Improve Public Transit ➢ Encourage more people to use public transit (e.g., creating park and ride lots). ➢ Make public transit more reliable, efficient, and safer without police involvement. Theme: Creating Inclusive Spaces ➢ Create inclusive spaces for youth, trans people, racialized people, etc. ➢ Children in the inner city need access to more recreation programs. ➢ Free and safe spaces for women and girls. Theme: Community Safety Programs ➢ Neighbourhood Watch. ➢ Bystander training and self-defence classes for women, girls, and GSD people.

	Theme: Maintaining Public Spaces ➢ Efficient garbage pick-up and more garbage disposals throughout the city. ➢ Moving large scale events throughout the city so that people are more acquainted in different parts of the city. ➢ Efficient sidewalk cleaning that responds to the needs of pedestrians, wheelchair users, seniors, etc.

Recommendations for Reporting Violence
What could be done to better support women and GSD people in reporting experiences of violence?
	Theme: Trauma Informed Training
	➢ Better training for those receiving reports of violence.
	➢ Remove fear of being charged.
	
	Theme: Community Outreach on GBV and Resources
	➢ Increasing education on GBV targeted towards men and the public.
	➢ Encourage more Winnipeg leaders to advocate for GBV resources and bring awareness on the issue.
	➢ Immigrant/newcomer communities may not be aware of the kinds of resources available to them.
	➢ Offering resources in multiple languages.
	➢ Offering education including:
	  ○ Bystander intervention strategies.
	  ○ "Know your rights" when engaging with police.
	  ○ Bylaws regarding panhandling.
	
	Theme: Alternative Ways to Report
	➢ Create multiple pathways to report violence rather than relying on the police.
	➢ Connecting to someone from the community for reporting instead of police.

Indigenous People

While preparing to organize engagement sessions with Indigenous women and GSD people, a member of the WSCI Sub-Committee consulted with an Indigenous Relations Division representative at the City of Winnipeg. CCFSC was informed that there were already several ongoing initiatives within the city involving data collection from Indigenous women. To avoid contributing to consultation fatigue, it was recommended to instead utilize recent publications focusing on safety concerns for Indigenous women and GSD peoples in Winnipeg.

Below is a summary of the reports that were compiled focusing on Indigenous women and GSD people in relation to safety, violence, homelessness, substance use, etc. While these reports provide insight on the experiences of Indigenous women, girls, and GSD people in Winnipeg, it is recommended that the WSCI continue to explore opportunities to engage with Indigenous women and GSD people in the future (see Priorities for more details).

The following reports were reviewed:

- Connecting the Circle: A Gender Based Strategy to End Homelessness in Winnipeg, 2019
- Missing the Bus: Indigenous Women and Two-Spirit Plus People and Public Transit in Western Canada, 2022
- Indigenous Peoples' Experiences of Homelessness: A Mixed Study in Winnipeg, 2024
- Aboriginal Alert, 2024
- An Action Plan to Address Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, 2024

Connecting the Circle: A Gender Based Strategy to End Homelessness in Winnipeg (2019)

10 focus groups were conducted with 57 women, trans, Two-Spirit, and gender non-conforming people across Winnipeg. The following is a summary of the themes and recommendations from the report:

- Expand the mandate of the Family Violence Prevention Program to include all forms of GBV so that women and GSD people have access to gender specific supports and emergency shelter.
- Extend shelter stays from 30 days to 60 days to better ensure housing and wraparound services are secured.
- Ensure community-based mental health and healing services are available to victims of violence as well as programs aimed at perpetrators of violence to stop the cycle of violence.
- Provide gender specific addiction treatment options as data shows there is an increase in substance use among women in Winnipeg.
- Invest in better-quality mental health services that are inclusive of Indigenous and 2SLGBTQIA+ communities and meet the unique needs of women and GSD people.

Missing the Bus: Indigenous Women and Two-Spirit Plus People and Public Transit in Western Canada (2022)

This literature review explores the connections between uneven mobility and mobility justice among Indigenous women and GSD people. This follows a decline in inter-city bus travel within Western Canada. The themes and recommendations from the report include:

- Lack of adequate inter-city transit forces people to travel by other means, providing opportunities for those who might harm Indigenous women and GSD people.
- For Indigenous peoples, the lack of public transportation generates a disconnection from their ancestral lands, families, and community.
- Sexual harassment and violence on public transit is well-known but underreported.
- Racism and discrimination are prevalent on public transit.
- Disabled Indigenous people face increased barriers to services resulting in them having to travel outside the community to find adequate supports.
- Ikwe Safe Rides, a ride share program for Indigenous women and GSD peoples, is an example of a solution to these safety challenges. However, the program closed in 2022 as they did not have capacity to sustain the program.

Indigenous Peoples' Experiences of Homelessness: A Mixed Study in Winnipeg (2024)

Using data from the End Homelessness Winnipeg 2018 Street Health Survey report, this report looks at the homelessness experiences of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit people in Winnipeg. The following is a summary of themes and recommendations from the report:

- Experiencing and fleeing intimate partner violence, losing social housing due to family breakdown, and apprehension of children by Child and Family Services (CFS) are more common for Indigenous women experiencing homelessness.
- Indigenous people experience homelessness longer than non-Indigenous people due to systemic and structural barriers including poverty and insecure employment.
- Indigenous people also tend to experience more hidden homelessness (e.g., couch surfing, relying on friends/family).
- Indigenous people were more likely to report being mistreated and/or disrespected by shelter staff and landlords than people who were not Indigenous.
- Indigenous women experiencing homelessness show higher rates of mental health conditions, particularly post-traumatic stress disorder, and increased alcohol use.
- Recommendations include wraparound services for Indigenous people with high needs, adapting the Housing First model for Indigenous communities, and coordination with all levels of government to adequately resource Indigenous initiatives and organizations.

Aboriginal Alert (2024)

This document reviews the 2024 Winnipeg Aboriginal Alert data. Key findings include:

- Manitoba recorded the highest total number of alerts (337 alerts), and most individuals found deceased (15).
- Winnipeg had a significantly larger number of alerts (296 alerts) compared to all other urban centres.

An Action Plan to Address Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada (2024)

The Winnipeg Indigenous Executive Circle developed an action plan to address MMIWG2S+ and provided a list of calls to action for Winnipeg as well as Manitoba and Canada broadly. The following is a summary of key recommendations from the report:

- Center the voices of MMIWG2S+ families in any initiative or programming and ensure their participation is meaningful and compensated.
- Form a provincial cabinet committee on MMIWG2S+ comprised of ministers with portfolios relevant to the eradication of violence against Indigenous women and GSD people.
- Reallocate resources to Indigenous-led organizations.
- Invest in Indigenous-led housing and programming for mental health, physical health, and addictions.
- Facilitate the co-development of a strategy between the Winnipeg Police Service and the Winnipeg Indigenous Executive Circle to create a culturally safe model of policing.

Section 6: Priority Areas and Recommendations

Several themes emerged based on an analysis of the existing data reports and community engagements. Seven priority areas were identified. Based on the priorities and responses from community engagements, multiple goals were identified to measurably address the priority areas. Recommended actions were also identified from the community engagements and existing data. Below is a summary of each priority area and suggested goals and actions.

Note that these actions are recommendations from the data; however, the ability to implement actions will depend on the WSCI's funding, resources, and capacity. For more information, see Section 7: Implementation Considerations.

Racism & Discrimination

What We Heard

Most engagement participants noted experiences of discrimination due to race, sexuality, gender, or other social identities/lived experiences. Women in encampments described feeling targeted and mistreated in public spaces. 2SLGBTQIA+, especially trans women, as well as newcomers and immigrant women and GSD people have cited increased hate crimes and being the target of social media and political discourse. Sex workers also discussed feeling increasingly unsafe due to unsafe work conditions. They highlighted current legislation that often leads to working in hidden and unsafe locations. Many discussed the compounding marginalization as increasing their vulnerability to violence.

Goal: Reduce hate crimes and discrimination against women and gender/sexually diverse people.
Recommended Actions: ➢ Advocate for the complete decriminalization of sex work to support sex worker's rights. ➢ Provide bystander intervention training to disrupt acts of racism and discrimination in public. ➢ Provide public education to increase awareness of root causes and risk factors of violence and victimization. ➢ Implement anti-stigma and anti-hate campaigns to reduce discrimination against women, girls, gender/sexually diverse people, and other marginalized groups.
Goal: Increase awareness of hate crimes and discrimination against women and gender/sexually diverse people.
Recommended Actions: ➢ Explore and increase awareness of options for third party reporting of hate crimes. ➢ Share data and information on the impacts of hate crimes with the public.

Fear of the Police and Trauma-Informed Training

What We Heard

The majority of women and GSD people who participated in the community engagement process discussed their fear and distrust of police as a key challenge living in Winnipeg. Many cited the history of violence and bad relations between the police and Black, Indigenous, and people of colour, people who are unhoused, 2SLGBTQIA+ people, and sex workers. Newcomers and immigrant women and GSD people discussed their fears of interacting with police due to the risk of immigration consequences. Some spoke of past experiences with police, deeming their responses inadequate and having their reports of harassment or threats ignored or dismissed. Similarly, women and GSD people who are homeless or use substances fear criminalization if they report their experiences to police. For example, being under the influence while experiencing violence may lead the victim of the violence to be charged. Among trans women, there were also discussions about experiences of being misgendered and deadnamed by law enforcement.

In terms of recommendations, participants indicated a need for better trauma informed training for police, particularly when responding to violent incidents. Ensuring that police, paramedics and other crisis responders, as well as service providers working with vulnerable populations, have trauma-informed training helps reduce fears associated with speaking to police about experiences of violence. Similarly, many suggested cultural safety training so that police and crisis responders are better able to communicate with racialized communities. Appropriate training for those working with victims of violence can ensure they are treated with respect and dignity, appropriate language is used (including correct names and pronouns), and victims have autonomy in the reporting process.

Goal: Increase feelings of safety for women and gender/sexually diverse people interacting and/or working with the police.
Recommended Actions: ➢ Advocate for trauma-informed training for the Winnipeg Police Service. ➢ Advocate for improved training for Winnipeg Police Service members working with vulnerable populations (e.g., people using drugs, unhoused individuals, sex workers, etc.).

Cultivating Safe Spaces

What We Heard

When asked about places they like in Winnipeg, many women and GSD people highlighted "safe spaces" in the city such as queer friendly organizations or neighbourhoods, faith-based spaces, harm reduction outreach, and programs that offer culturally specific services. While there is no one way to cultivate a safe space, women and GSD people discussed creating more queer-specific spaces, culturally specific programming, outreach services for sex workers, youth programming, and harm reduction outreach. Having peer-led initiatives was also an important factor in creating safe spaces. Peers who speak the same language, share similar lived experiences, or are similar in age can offer unique support to women and GSD people and may reduce fears associated with reporting violence.

Goal: Increase access to safe spaces for women and gender/sexually diverse people in Winnipeg.

Recommended Actions:

- Complete a review of existing spaces in Winnipeg to identify ways to A) improve safety and inclusivity in current locations, and B) identify gaps/opportunities for additional spaces.
- Explore implementing peer support programs for women and GSD people.
- Increase awareness of existing supports for women and GSD people including: 2SLGBTQIA+ resources, youth resources, and culturally safe and Indigenous resources.
- Increase awareness of existing harm reduction resources in Winnipeg.

Gender-Based Violence & Safety Awareness

What We Heard

Gender-based violence (GBV) continues to be a prevailing concern for women and GSD people. People who face increased vulnerabilities, including those who use substances or are unhoused, discussed their increased risk of GBV. Women and GSD people who use substances discussed the risk of being coerced into sex for drugs and the increased risk of being assaulted while intoxicated. Similarly, engagement participants experiencing homelessness may be coerced into sex in exchange for survival needs.

In response to being asked about recommendations for increasing safety and improving reporting of violence, increased education and awareness is needed. Women and GSD people felt that there is a need for more public awareness of GBV as well as education specifically focused on men. People should also be more aware of how and where to report experiences of violence as some people may not be reporting their experiences due to a lack of knowledge. For people going through the process of reporting violence, there should be legal aid support as many expressed the difficulty in navigating the legal and justice system. Similarly, providing "Know Your Rights" workshops for women and GSD people can support them in understanding their rights when engaging with police, reporting violence, or navigating the justice system. These supports should be offered in multiple languages as immigrant and newcomer women and GSD people have expressed the difficulties in accessing services with limited English. Finally, encouraging Winnipeg leaders to advocate for GBV resources and support services can help bring greater awareness to this issue.

Goal: Increase awareness of gender-based violence in Winnipeg.

Recommended Actions:

- Implement educational campaigns about risks, signs, and GBV generally in multiple languages.
- Explore partnerships with school boards to implement early prevention education on GBV and healthy relationships.

Goal: Increase access to resources for women, girls, and gender/sexually diverse people reporting violence.

Recommended Actions:

- Increase access to free, multi-lingual legal aid to support people reporting violence.
- Explore partnerships with community organizations in Winnipeg to host "Know Your Rights" workshops to share information on reporting violence including information on CFS and immigration involvement.
- Explore additional opportunities to share existing resources in Winnipeg.
- Identify and address current gaps in GBV supports in Winnipeg.

Unsafe & Unaffordable Housing

What We Heard

Women and GSD people expressed safety concerns with housing and shelters as well as difficulties finding affordable housing. Many discussed issues with finding stable and affordable housing that is also safe and clean. Housing that may be more affordable can sometimes be in poor condition, in unsafe neighbourhoods, or with exploitative landlords. Lack of affordable housing options can also force women and GSD people experiencing intimate partner violence to remain financially dependent on their abuser. As such, there is a call for more affordable housing options.

Many women and GSD people also called for a better shelter system. They recommended increasing the number of women and children-only shelters to enhance physical and emotional safety in shelters. Extending the hours and capacity of shelters as well as allowing personal belongings or pets was also noted. Extending shelter stays from 30 days to 60 days gives people more time to access housing and support services. Finally, research around GBV in Winnipeg recommends expanding the mandate of the Family Violence Prevention Program to allow women and GSD people experiencing any kind of GBV to access emergency shelters and gender specific supports. Currently the mandate is limited to women and GSD people experiencing violence from a partner or family member.

Goal: Increase access to housing for women, girls, and gender/sexually diverse people escaping violence.
Recommended Actions: ➢ Advocate for an expanded definition of GBV for people accessing emergency shelters or transitional housing when escaping violence to include any form of violence (not exclusively domestic/family or intimate partner violence). ➢ Advocate for increasing the maximum shelter stay to 60 days to provide individuals with more time to access housing and other necessary supports. ➢ Identify current housing gaps in Winnipeg and partner with the provincial government to address them. ➢ Identify steps to address landlord exploitation of tenants.

Lack of Safety in Public Transportation

What We Heard

Many women and GSD people in Winnipeg discussed their concerns with travelling around Winnipeg. Many feel unsafe accessing public transportation, taxi cabs, and parking in Winnipeg. Women and GSD people stated that taking the bus and waiting for the bus, especially at night, can feel unsafe. Walking in between transit routes at night also creates safety concerns. Sexual harassment and violence on public transit is widely known but often goes unreported. Similarly, Black, Indigenous, and women and GSD people of colour have shared experiences of racism and discrimination on public transit. In response, engagement participants recommended emergency call buttons/poles in public areas.

In addition to fears of violence and harassment in public transit, many stated safety concerns related to transit routes. Some women and GSD people cited issues with limited transit routes leading to long bus commutes. Lack of adequate transit routes can lead people to find alternative ways of travelling that can increase risks of violence (e.g., walking, taxis, etc.). More recent engagements highlight concerns regarding new changes to Winnipeg's transit system which has led to general confusion and longer walks alone to reach bus stops. Lack of transit routes can also be a barrier in accessing support services. For Indigenous peoples, the lack of public transportation generates a disconnect from their ancestral lands, families, and community.

Goal: Improve safety on public transit for women, girls, and gender/sexually diverse people.

Recommended Actions:

- Implement emergency call buttons on buses and at bus shelters.
- Review current public transportation safety measures and identify additional improvements that can be made (e.g., lighting, cameras, other CPTED considerations).
- Implement additional safety measures on public transportation vehicles (e.g., buses), such as security at night, seat dividers, cameras, etc.
- Expand bus routes in Winnipeg.

Goal: Increase safe transportation options for women, girls, and gender/sexually diverse people.

Recommended Actions:

- Implement a safe and affordable transportation option for Indigenous people to access reserves and other Indigenous communities.
- Explore safe ride programs for women and GSD people.
- Review transportation options in other communities and identify approaches that could be implemented in Winnipeg.

Reporting Experiences of Violence (including GBV)

What We Heard

Social Consequences of Reporting

Many women and GSD people discussed the negative consequences of reporting experiences of violence. Reporting can lead to retaliation which could result in them losing their job, housing, or social support, as well as violence. Women and GSD people who experience intimate partner violence may not report their experiences because of their dependence on their abuser and/or not wanting to disrupt their family and impact their children. Similarly, those with children have cited concerns about Child and Family Service involvement due to reporting and the fear of their children being apprehended. For 2SLGBTQIA+ women and GSD people there are fears of being outed by reporting. Similarly, women and GSD people shared the fear of exposure or having their report of violence becoming public knowledge, particularly within tight-knit communities, which can lead to isolation and stigmatization of victims.

Fear of Dismissal and Disbelief

A major challenge with reporting violence for women and GSD people is the fear of having their experiences dismissed or not believed by police, family members, or other people they may reach out to for support. Women and GSD people share concerns about their experiences being minimized or not taken seriously, especially as violence against women and GSD people feels normalized in society. Those who use substances stated that police and service providers can be dismissive or blame them when reporting violence. Additionally, young girls and GSD people shared concerns about being dismissed or belittled when sharing their experiences.

Distrust in the Justice System

Similarly, the distrust and lack of safety around police is a primary reason women and GSD people hesitate to or do not report experiences of violence. Many are afraid to report violence out of fear that they will be dismissed by the police. There are also concerns that nothing will come out of reporting their experiences of violence to police. Engagement participants discussed how the process of sharing their experiences of violence is re-traumatizing and consequently, without a feeling of safety or reassurance that they will be supported, many are not willing to report to police.

Alternative Reporting Systems

Based on the concerns around safety and police, many participants advocated for alternative ways (i.e., Third Party) to report experiences of violence. Many suggested an anonymous reporting system would be ideal, while others indicated a need for trusted service providers or community members women, girls, and GSD people can report to.

Goal: Advocate for a more person-centered approach to reporting violence where the victims have autonomy in the process.

Recommended Actions:

- Increase awareness of third-party/non-police reporting options for victims of violence in Winnipeg.
    - Note: more information on third party organizations can be found here.
- Review existing reporting mechanisms and identify ways to improve and maintain the safety of victims utilizing these mechanisms.
- Advocate for community based mental health resources for women, girls, and GSD people reporting violence.

Additional Recommendations From CCFSC

In addition to the recommended actions identified through community engagements, CCFSC provided the following recommendations based on evidence and pervious work with communities across Canada. Further, they supplement the existing actions by ensuring that there is a balance across the prevention spectrum (i.e., upstream, midstream and downstream) and short-term and long-term efforts.

Additional Recommendations

- Continue to explore opportunities for engagement with Indigenous women and GSD people regarding GBV and other safety concerns in Winnipeg.
- Align all efforts to address crime and safety with the TRC Calls to Action and MMIWG Calls to Justice – ensure Indigenous voices are included in all steps.
- Explore the implementation of safety applications for reporting incidents and/or calling the police while using public transit (e.g., SafeTTC App).
- Complete a Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) review of public spaces in Winnipeg and identify additional ways to improve safety.
- Implement violence prevention programming within schools to address root causes and risk factors, promote positive relationships, and educate young people on warning signs and support for victims.
- Establish a multi-sectoral table with representation from the City of Winnipeg, Winnipeg Police Service, and community organizations, to identify ways to collaborate, reduce duplication, and effectively prevent and respond to violence against women, girls, and GSD people in public spaces.
- Improve violence reporting mechanisms based on feedback from those using them.
- Include women, girls, and GSD people in discussions and at decision-making tables.

Section 7: Implementation Considerations

This document includes multiple recommendations to improve the safety of women, girls, and gender/sexually diverse people in public spaces within Winnipeg, Manitoba. Informed by feedback from a broad range of reports and community engagement sessions, these actions can help inform decisions made by the City of Winnipeg as part of the Winnipeg Safe City Initiative.

While these actions will undoubtedly support the goals of the Winnipeg Safe City Initiative, it is important to note that they cannot be implemented without considerations related to responsibility and resourcing. Additionally, it is important to identify monitoring and evaluation considerations to ensure that any actions implemented can be tracked and their impacts identified.

Responsibility

Moving from a strategic plan to implementation can be a challenging process. With this in mind, there are some key elements that can support the successful implementation of the WSCI Strategic Plan. Specifically, effective governance (responsibility and oversight) of the implementation process is vital to the success of this project. Available literature on the topic emphasizes the establishment of dedicated coordination structures supported by core budgets, political leadership, and skilled staff to drive strategic efforts and ensure continuity (Waller, 2021; Eurosocial, 2015; Canadian Municipal Crime Prevention Network, 2017).

Elements commonly captured in a successful implementation plan include:

- Adequate and sustained funding for the actions and plan coordination.
- Clear timelines and measures of progress.
- Ongoing dedicated coordination support.
- The establishment of an implementation Steering/Advisory Committee.

Community safety is a complex system and no one organization or sector has all the solutions. For that reason, the establishment of an ongoing round table of key partners with a clear roadmap and the willingness and capacity to contribute resources (including in-kind) is vital for the successful implementation of the WSCI Strategic Plan. This role could be fulfilled by the Winnipeg Committee for Safety (or a similar group).

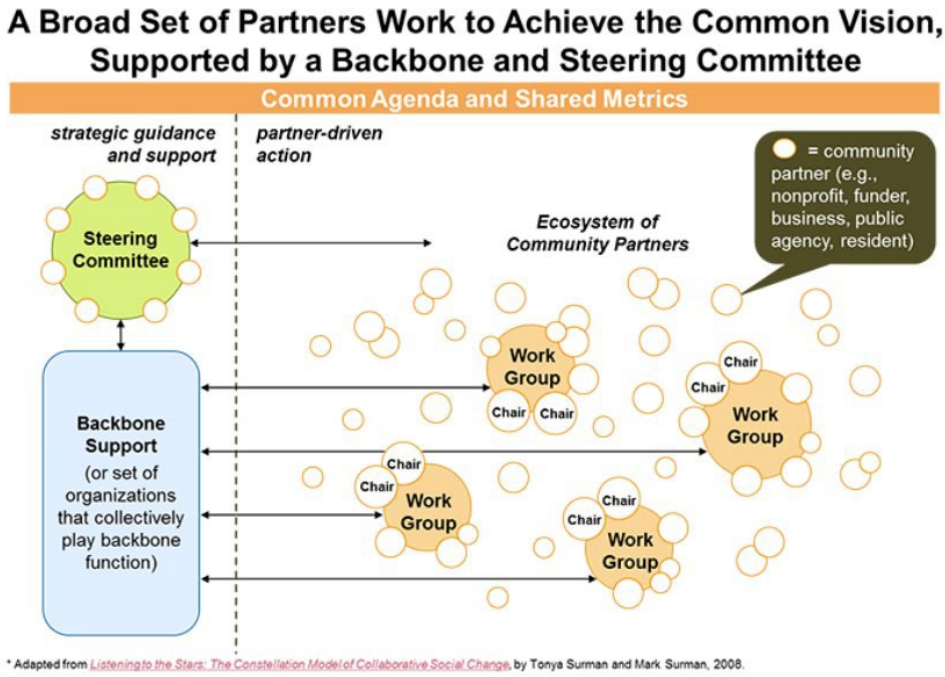
Community safety strategies lend themselves well to a collective impact approach. For something to be regarded as a collective impact effort it needs to meet several key criteria:

1. A shared vision and agenda
2. Shared measurements
3. Mutually reinforcing activities
4. Continuous communication
5. Backbone support

Governance Considerations

The constellation governance model is an effective approach to operationalize a collective impact framework. It maximizes limited resources and provides the greatest flexibility in these collaborative ventures. The constellation governance model has been adapted many times to meet diverse conditions that call for collaborative rather than single organization solutions.

The model brings together multiple groups or sectors to work toward an agreed upon shared outcome; its structure includes a Steering Committee to oversee implementation and maintain strategic alignment and Action Teams (or working groups) to lead specific priorities (i.e., the priority areas of the WSCI Strategic Plan). Action Teams are typically smaller, time-limited, and flexible, ensuring that implementation remains responsive to community needs and diverse expertise (Surman & Surman, 2008). It is a governance model that is ideally suited for partnerships, coalitions, networks, and even movements. As an approach for bringing together diverse service and community voices towards a common goal, it has great potential for animating the community while staying grounded in strategic agreements. The constellation governance model is illustrated below.



While ideally cities have dedicated funding and positions that are focused on community safety, this backbone function can also be a shared responsibility, where local organizations agree to rotate responsibility for providing backbone support. As such, it is recommended that the City of Winnipeg explore some version of this model when implementing the WSCI Strategic Plan action items.

Resourcing

In addition to community buy-in and collaborative efforts from community partners, a key aspect of strategic plan implementation is resourcing. This includes funding, as well as time, additional resources, and other in-kind support. While, ideally, the City of Winnipeg will dedicate resources to these implementation efforts, additional options should also be explored. This could include funding from the provincial/federal government, the United Nations, in-kind support from local organizations/entities, and other grant opportunities.

Additionally, it is worth noting that some of these action items may be currently being addressed through existing efforts in Winnipeg. As such, it is recommended that prior to implementing any new actions, the City of Winnipeg complete a review of existing efforts in the community to identify and align implementation efforts with those already occurring and avoid duplication. This will ensure additional funding is spent in a way that addresses gaps and makes the most sense for the community.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Given that the purpose of the WSCI Strategic Plan is to create positive, long-lasting change in the community, it is imperative to establish a reliable way to monitor and evaluate whether these changes are occurring, and where additional or different actions may be needed. Monitoring and evaluation are different; **monitoring** involves a combination of data collection and analysis, while **evaluation** involves assessing to what extent the community safety plan is, or is not, meeting its objectives.

CCFSC recommends that the WSCI Strategic Plan be monitored utilizing Developmental Evaluation (DE) - an approach that adapts to dynamic realities in complex environments like community safety. It requires the collection and analysis of real-time data in a way that leads to informed and ongoing decision-making as part of the implementation process. DE aims to answer questions such as, is the action achieving what it is supposed to?

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that are used to monitor and evaluate the achievement of the goals of the WSCI Strategic Plan should be specific, measurable, action-oriented, time-bound, inclusive, and equitable (SMARTIE).

Example KPIs that could be used to assess the impacts of the WSCI Strategic Plan include:

- Rates of hate crime in Winnipeg.
- Rates of violence against women, girls, and gender-diverse people in Winnipeg.
- Use of third-party reporting systems – both numerical and qualitative feedback.
- General survey questions about sense of belonging and social cohesion.
- Follow up engagement sessions with similar groups to identify if perceptions of safety and experiences of violence have changed.
- Housing insecurity in Winnipeg (specific to women, girls, and GSD peoples).
- CPTED implementation in Winnipeg.

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