

SUBMISSION – MOLLY MCCRAKEN

Item 6 of the Report of the Executive Policy Committee dated May 19, 2026 (Amendment to the Purchasing Policy)

From: Molly McCracken

Sent: Tuesday, May 26, 2026 3:21 PM

Subject: City Council Delegation, May 27 #6 Purchasing Policy

Dear Mayor and Council,

I will be appearing in a delegation tomorrow regarding item #6, Amendment to the Purchasing Policy. Below, please find my presentation.

Winnipeg can (and should) Buy Local and not American.

Presentation to Mayor and City Councillor, May 27, 2025

By Molly McCracken, Manitoba Director, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives

Good morning Mayor and Council,

My name is Molly McCracken, and I am the Manitoba Director at the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, Canada's leading progressive research institute with expertise in trade policy.

For years, local favourite Salisbury House has been the chosen vendor for Winnipeg-owned golf courses. But this month, the City went against local tastes and chose Aramark, an American-owned multinational corporation, for the job at Kildonan and Windsor Park.

When municipalities buy local, they create jobs, provide economic stability and improve responsiveness to the public. [A study in BC](#) found that for every \$100 spent with a local business, \$63 is recirculated back to the BC economy vs \$14 for a multinational corp - why? Local business owners live locally, buy from local suppliers and support local communities.

In this uncertain global climate, "buying local" is a necessity. Not only can Winnipeg buy locally, but the City would be at a disadvantage if it did not.

Mayor Gillingham was [quoted in the media](#), "If there's any city, any jurisdiction around Canada, (that) has a way to introduce a buy local initiative that we can learn from, then let's learn from them as well."

There are plenty of examples of this being done right now in Canadian municipalities.

While there are limits in Canadian trade deals to buying local, they are not determinative.

The City of Winnipeg has public procurement obligations in three key trade deals: the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) with the European Union, the internal Canadian Free Trade Agreement (CFTA) and the smaller New West Partnership Trade Agreement (NWPTA).

These agreements prohibit Winnipeg from discriminating against European or out-of-province firms when making covered purchases of goods, services, or construction projects. But there are ways for Winnipeg to buy locally and not from US corporations.

For example, Winnipeg can favour suppliers with other intrinsic characteristics. For example, the City could give preference to unionized workplaces, co-operatives, and certified sustainable or fair-trade goods and services, and not to American companies or their subsidiaries.

Indeed, the City's [Sustainable Procurement](#) plan is commendable for its thoughtful engagement with ecological, economic and social barriers. It is especially effective in communicating the value and potential for Indigenous and social enterprise set-asides.

If the City can have sustainable procurement, it can favour local suppliers or at least bar American vendors. Other Canadian jurisdictions are showing how simple such a policy can be.

For example, Brampton, Ontario, introduced a Made in Canada policy last year that [bars American suppliers](#) and their subsidiaries from its purchasing, [except in specific circumstances](#).

The municipality of North Vancouver is [similarly](#) building on its current Buy Local policy to consider ways to exclude U.S. suppliers.

Canadian provinces are also introducing Buy Local policies despite having more cumbersome procurement obligations in trade agreements.

Even the federal government, whose public spending is more restricted in trade deals than that of any other jurisdiction, has adopted a [Buy Canadian Policy](#). This policy favours Canadian suppliers, content and materials within major strategic purchases.

The federal government also has an Interim Reciprocal Procurement Policy that eliminates suppliers from countries without commensurate access.

In brief, Winnipeg would be in good company to buy locally. Ideally, this policy would bar American suppliers, advantage local and Canadian suppliers, and require community benefits for major strategic purchases.

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Molly McCracken (she/they)

Director

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