



**United Way**  
Winnipeg

United Way Winnipeg  
**Strategic Plan 2025-2030**



## LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

United Way Winnipeg is located on Treaty 1 territory, a historic gathering place of the Anishinaabeg, Inninewak, Anishinewak, Nêhiyawak, Dakota Oyate, and Denesuline, and the birthplace and homeland of the Red River Métis. We acknowledge our Inuit relatives in the north, and the ancestral lands they call home.

The Huddle initiative's work spans Winnipeg, Selkirk, and Brandon, extending into Treaty 2 territory, and is growing partnership in Northern Manitoba. 211 Manitoba's work extends across Manitoba—the territories of Treaties 1-5.

The water we use is sourced from Shoal Lake, which is stewarded by the people of Shoal Lake 40, Iskatewizaagegan, and Animakee Wa Zhing. The hydroelectricity we use is generated by waterways in the north on Treaty 5 lands and by the Winnipeg River in Treaty 3 territory.

This acknowledgement is a starting point for honouring the land and water that give us life, embracing our responsibility to the communities we serve, dismantling the ongoing impacts of colonization, contributing to truth seeking, and engaging in reconciliation.

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# 1. Message from the Chair, Board of Trustees

## A VISION FOR A STRONGER, MORE INCLUSIVE WINNIPEG

Winnipeg is a city built on the strength of its people—a community where generosity, resilience, and shared responsibility create a foundation of care and opportunity. As we step into the next five years, United Way Winnipeg remains committed to a bold vision: **a city where every person has the chance to thrive.**

The challenges before us are significant. Rising costs are stretching families thin, more people are experiencing homelessness, and urgent issues like addiction, youth mental health struggles, and food insecurity continue to impact thousands of Winnipeggers. But we know that when we come together, we can drive meaningful, lasting change.

Our 2025-2030 Strategic Plan builds on decades of experience and deep community partnerships. It is a roadmap to a future where every Winnipegger—no matter their background or circumstance—can access the support they need, when they need it. Together, we are working towards a city that is stronger, healthier, and more inclusive for all.

## FACING CHALLENGES WITH PURPOSE

Winnipeg is at a critical moment. Today, more than 1,300 people in our city are experiencing homelessness—including young people and families. Hunger is an everyday reality for 1 in 5 children. The demand for mental health supports has never been greater, with long wait times leaving too many without the help they need. And systemic barriers continue to limit opportunities for Indigenous peoples, newcomers, and those living in poverty.

Yet, amidst these challenges, **there is hope.** Every day, in neighbourhoods across our city, people are stepping up—through acts of kindness, through volunteerism, and through financial contributions that sustain a vital network of over 125 local agencies, programs, and initiatives.

## BUILDING THE FUTURE TOGETHER

Real change happens when we act together. The progress we envision for Winnipeg is only possible with the collective strength of our entire community—businesses, labour groups, government, frontline agencies, and thousands of everyday Winnipeggers who believe in a brighter tomorrow.

Through our 2025-2030 plan, we are not just responding to immediate needs—we are laying the groundwork for long-term, systemic change. We are investing in solutions that don't just treat symptoms but address root causes.

And **we need you** to be part of this journey. Whether you're a long-time donor, a first-time volunteer, or someone looking for ways to make a difference, your involvement matters. Because when we work united, we build a Winnipeg where no one is left behind.

This is our commitment. This is our rallying cry. Together, we will shape the future of our city—one where every Winnipegger has the chance to live with dignity, security, and hope.

**Donna Miller**  
Chair, Board of Trustees  
United Way Winnipeg

## 2. Why work united?

For 60 years, United Way Winnipeg has been at the heart of our city, bringing people together to make life better for everyone. Built on the foundations of the Community Chest movement and through a partnership between the Winnipeg Labour Council and the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce, we were created by Winnipeggers, for Winnipeggers—driven by the belief that when we come together, we can tackle our biggest challenges and create lasting change.

We are more than just a charity; we are a movement. A unifier that brings together individuals, businesses, labour groups, and government to ensure the most pressing social issues are met with coordinated, impactful solutions. Our unique model—the **community fund**—ensures every dollar donated goes where needed most, supporting a strong, stable network of over 125 local agencies, programs, and initiatives. This approach allows us to invest strategically, offering help today and co-creating solutions for tomorrow.

As Winnipeg's community investment organization, United Way Winnipeg is led in partnership with volunteers and driven by the community. We are accountable not only to donors but to every person who calls our city home. Our work is guided by a simple but powerful vision: **a thriving community where everyone can reach their potential.**

Our mission is clear: **to improve lives and build community by engaging individuals and mobilizing collective action.** And we are guided by values that reflect the spirit of Winnipeg itself:

- We believe in an inclusive and equitable community where every person is valued.
- We believe we can make the biggest difference by working together.
- We care about people and see their strengths.
- We are accountable to each other and the community.
- We are volunteer led and work in partnerships.
- We are committed to excellence and passionate about building a better city for everyone.

## OUR COMMUNITY IMPACT FRAMEWORK

As a member of the United Way movement, we are part of a global network of independent, locally run organizations committed to meeting immediate community needs and addressing the complex issues at the root of those needs.

Aligned with United Ways across North America, our community impact framework guides our investments based on three pillars:

1. **All That Kids Can Be** – Every child deserves the chance to succeed. We invest in early learning, mentorship, and youth mental health programs to ensure all kids have the support they need to grow, learn, and thrive.
2. **From Poverty to Possibility** – No one should have to choose between food and rent. We invest in financial empowerment, job training, and access to basic needs so that every Winnipegger can build a stable, secure future.
3. **Healthy People, Strong Communities** – Well-being goes beyond physical health. We support mental health services, addiction recovery programs, and community-building initiatives to ensure every person in our city has the opportunity to live a full and meaningful life.

# What informs this plan

## 3. What informs this plan

### OUR ENVIRONMENT

Our strategic plan for the next five years must set a clear direction while also being responsive to the evolving needs of our community. Outlined below are the key drivers that have informed our plan and will continue to influence our work in the coming years.

**Community needs are deep and complex.** The COVID-19 pandemic intensified community issues that were already challenging. As we continue to recover, agency partners are struggling to do more with less and have told us it is increasingly difficult to focus on their missions as their teams go above and beyond to address significant challenges facing the social service sector. These include staff burnout, the impacts of addiction, mental health challenges, and a toxic drug supply.

**Philanthropy is shifting and changing.** While Manitoba remains the most generous province in Canada, the number of donors continues to decline. The ways people want to make an impact and give back to their communities are also changing. Effects of the pandemic, the hybrid work environment, inflation, and other trends all play a role in how the future of philanthropy will continue to evolve.

### **Economic uncertainty is the new normal.**

We are living in a time of rapid change and significant uncertainty. The changing political landscape, increased economic disparity, and the rise of environmental and other emergency events mean we must be nimble in our approaches and able to prioritize and respond to our community's needs as they evolve.

**A strong civil society is more important than ever.** The nonprofit sector is at risk at a time of unprecedented need. Both internally and externally, United Way Winnipeg's commitment to embody organizational excellence has never been more important, including high standards of integrity and ethics, a positive workplace culture, donor and stakeholder focus, operational excellence and efficiency, employee growth and development, and commitment to innovation.

## **WHAT WE HEARD**

Over the past year, we held over 20 engagement sessions with agency partners, workplace partners, donors, staff, volunteers, and many others. These conversations were a powerful reminder that United Way Winnipeg benefits from an incredibly dedicated group of individuals who care deeply about our work and the health of our city. Some key themes emerging from these conversations include:

- Community needs are increasingly complex, requiring a heightened need for prioritization and strategic responses.
- UWW's sustained funding model is unique and one of our greatest strengths as an organization.
- We must continue to strengthen our relationships with Indigenous peoples and communities, as we strive to be allies in pursuing truth and reconciliation.
- We have expanded the ways we respond to critical issues and make a difference in the community. We continue to learn how to maximize our impact.
- We must centre our commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility in all that we do.
- We must prioritize planning and adapting for continued changes in the fundraising landscape, including maximizing the potential of our different fundraising channels.
- The workplace campaign continues to be one of our greatest strengths, and there is potential to expand and strengthen our connections to workplaces.
- Expanding how we tell the story of our impact is more important than ever.
- We value the extraordinary depth of knowledge and commitment of our volunteers.
- Digital transformation must remain a priority if we are to be competitive.

## 4. Our plan

Based on the themes emerging from our engagement, our plan for the next five years brings together three strategic priorities along with a commitment to three ways of working, or lenses, through which we approach everything we do at United Way Winnipeg.

These two pieces work in tandem; neither can operate alone, and they are equally essential to fulfilling our mission.

Over the next five years, we will:

**Respond with intention**, evolving to best meet emerging needs in our community and the social service sector;

**Expand our relevance**, building loyal and engaged relationships that reflect Winnipeg's diverse communities and preferred ways of giving; and

**Be a model organization**, deepening the ways we support staff, volunteers, and organizational effectiveness.

We will do this work with a fundamental commitment to working through the lenses of:

**Relationships & Partnerships;**

**Indigenous Collaboration;** and

**Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Accessibility.**



# Our plan

## HOW WE WORK

60 years ago, United Way Winnipeg was founded on the idea that we can do more when we work together. Staying true to that intention requires working in a way that is built on collaborative relationships with all stakeholders and the evolving needs of our community, guided by a strong commitment to reconciliation and Indigenous collaboration, and driven to address inequities proactively. The lenses below are not just about ideas but about action. Working in this way requires intention, accountability, and measurement. The following are the three foundational lenses through which we approach our work:

## Relationships & Partnerships

*Staying true to the spirit of partnership on which United Way Winnipeg was built 60 years ago, we recognize that relationships are foundational to who we are and how we work. Everything we do is informed and guided by collaboration, with the belief that we can do more when we are united.*

This lens requires:

- bringing Winnipeggers together, because we know that's the best way to make a difference
- honouring our valued volunteer/staff partnership, ensuring our work remains led by the community
- convening partners to work towards solutions to our most pressing social issues
- strengthening our partnership with Winnipeg's Labour community
- nurturing our relationships with key stakeholders, including agency partners, community, donors, government, and workplace partners
- and more.

## Indigenous Collaboration

*Embracing our responsibility to the Indigenous communities we serve, dismantling the ongoing impacts of colonization, contributing to truth seeking, and engaging in reconciliation.*

This lens requires:

- deepening our understanding of and integrating the Truth & Reconciliation Calls to Action, and the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people Calls for Justice
- listening and learning from Indigenous collaboration spanning the diversity of communities and nations in Winnipeg
- understanding how the impacts of colonization affect our ways of working, and developing ways to dismantle those impacts
- recognizing and celebrating the gifts and strengths of Indigenous peoples and communities
- an intentionality that includes clear plans, goals, and accountability
- and more.

## Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, & Accessibility

*Internally and externally incorporating diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility into the fabric of our organization—ensuring our people, the work we do, and how we do it reflect the diversity of our communities, amplify the voices of underrepresented people, and co-design equitable solutions.*

This lens requires:

- greater diversity across our entire organization, including volunteer and staff roles
- strong relationships with underrepresented communities, providing opportunities to listen and learn
- an organizational culture that has inclusion and belonging at its core, ensuring the perspectives, strengths, ideas, creativity, and energy of our entire volunteer and staff teams are embraced
- an intentionality that includes clear plans, goals, and accountability
- and more.

# Our plan

## OUR STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

Our work has always been guided by our triple bottom line: to have the greatest impact possible in the community, to raise the most money possible, and be a great place to work and volunteer.

To advance our mission, the following strategic directions will guide us over the next five years:

	IMPACT	GENEROSITY	ACCOUNTABILITY
<b>Strategic Direction</b>	<p><b>Respond with intention.</b></p> <p>Evolve to best meet emerging needs in our community and the social service sector.</p>	<p><b>Expand our relevance.</b></p> <p>Build loyal and engaged relationships that reflect Winnipeg’s diverse communities and preferred ways of giving.</p>	<p><b>Be a model organization.</b></p> <p>Embody excellence and deepen the ways we support staff, volunteers, and organizational effectiveness.</p>
<b>Imagined Future</b> <i>In five years, what will have changed?</i>	<p>▶ <i>We maximize our impact by thoughtfully responding to our community’s most pressing issues through a wide range of approaches.</i></p>	<p>▶ <i>Every Winnipegger sees a place for themselves as a potential United Way Winnipeg donor.</i></p>	<p>▶ <i>We are ready with the organizational culture, skills, and technology to adapt to future challenges and trends.</i></p>
<b>Priorities</b> <i>To achieve these strategies, we will...</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Collaboratively develop innovative solutions to systemic issues.</li> <li>2. Ensure our investment in the community best aligns with identified needs.</li> <li>3. Support and advocate for a healthier social service sector.</li> <li>4. Effectively gather and communicate impact data to guide decisions and inspire donors.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify and optimize philanthropic opportunities.</li> <li>2. Become the partner of choice for workplaces looking to make a difference in the community.</li> <li>3. Build bridges to underrepresented groups, including diverse communities and younger generations.</li> <li>4. Inspire donors through tailored messaging that resonates with their values and priorities.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Be an employer whose inclusive environment provides staff with opportunities to grow, develop, and maximize impact.</li> <li>2. Maximize the strength of our volunteer engagement by leveraging the staff-volunteer partnership model.</li> <li>3. Embody governance structures and processes that are inclusive and reflective of the communities we serve.</li> <li>4. Advance digital transformation.</li> </ol>

# Moving the plan forward

## 5. Moving the plan forward

This strategic plan provides a blueprint for United Way Winnipeg's next five years. As such, it serves as a foundation for other plans: operational, departmental, budget, allocations, communications, fundraising, IT, measurement, and others. Our next step is to create these connected plans.

The measurement plan is our tool for ensuring we stay on track and are making progress. This plan will identify indicators that hold us accountable for embedding the three lenses as priorities across the organization and moving forward on the strategic directions. It will name the metrics through which we will report back to the Board of Trustees and the broader community.

HERE  FOR WINNIPEG



**United Way**  
Winnipeg

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