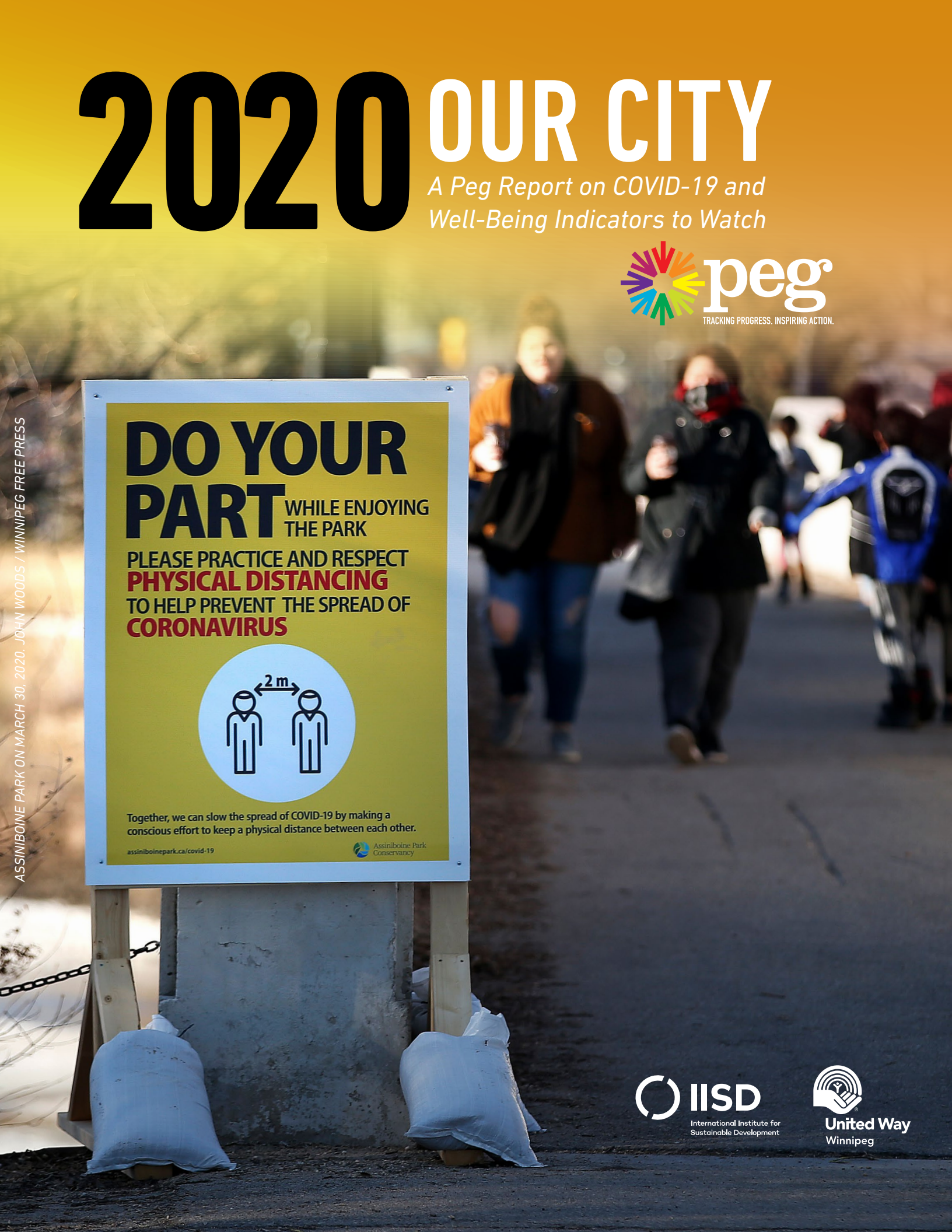
2020 OUR CITY

A Peg Report on COVID-19 and Well-Being Indicators to Watch

peg
TRACKING PROGRESS. INSPIRING ACTION.



ASSINIBOINE PARK ON MARCH 30, 2020. JOHN WOODS / WINNIPEG FREE PRESS

IISD
International Institute for Sustainable Development

United Way
Winnipeg

PEG AND OUR CITY

You are reading Peg's sixth report back to Winnipeggers. Each year or two, we develop a report that tracks key indicators of our city's well-being. Peg reports give Winnipeggers an opportunity to examine interconnected elements of life in our city and how they relate to local priorities and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

In this year of unprecedented change, we shifted our report to look at emerging trends on how COVID-19 is affecting our city. While we are already seeing immediate impacts of COVID-19, shown in this report with recent point-in-time statistics, many effects will be felt in our community for years to come. In this report, we focus on 14 Peg indicators we think will eventually reflect those longer term impacts. Collectively, these indicators provide a baseline measure of Winnipeg's well-being when we entered the pandemic. We hope by highlighting potential long-term impacts, we will inspire people to act to lessen the severity of these effects.

Our reports only give a snapshot of the information available on the Peg website (**mypeg.ca**). You can turn to the website for more background information, to download the data for your own use, or to explore the other 55+ indicators in Peg's eight theme areas: Built Environment, Basic Needs, Economy, Education and Learning, Health, Natural Environment, Social Vitality and Governance, and Demographics. The website also includes previous years' reports, relevant news stories, and commentary on emerging trends.

Together, these indicators pull data from dozens of reliable sources to measure the well-being of our community year over year. Whether you're a policy maker, elected official, nonprofit staff member, business owner, or member of the public, we invite you to use Peg as your starting place to learn the facts and help create a better city.

This report is partially funded through a generous grant by The Winnipeg Foundation.

For maps, graphs, sources, media coverage, commentary and previous reports, visit mypeg.ca.

Mayor Brian Bowman
City of Winnipeg

FACING THE CHALLENGE AHEAD

As a longtime partner and supporter of Peg, the City of Winnipeg shares a fundamental conviction with United Way Winnipeg and the International Institute for Sustainable Development: we believe it's essential to measure the well-being of our city in ways that count.

This Peg report focuses on the worldwide crisis affecting us all: COVID-19. Many Winnipeggers and their families are struggling with the impacts to physical and mental health, job and income losses, and ensuring their kids stay safe and engaged at school. Throughout this crisis, the City of Winnipeg has been working hard to help keep residents safe, and maintain services residents depend upon—while assisting those struggling with the pandemic's financial impact by extending property and business tax deadlines.

Looking ahead, high-quality data will be critical to making the best possible decisions for Winnipeg's recovery—both now and in the long term. That's why we ensured that *OurWinnipeg 2045*, the City of Winnipeg's 25-year plan, is aligned with key indicators from Peg and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Because we need to measure the impacts of our actions to be sure we're seeing results.

Our city, like cities around the world, has a huge challenge ahead: how do we build back from this pandemic without losing sight of our sustainable development goals? Peg's indicator system will be a crucial tool to assist us in our recovery efforts in the months and years ahead. As a reliable and credible source of information on key indicators, it will help us monitor our progress and community needs, helping identify where we need to act to address inequities in our city.

I want to thank everyone who's working so hard to help Winnipeg pull through the COVID-19 pandemic. Armed with the right information and our irrepressible community spirit, I am confident we will weather this storm, and emerge a more resilient, prosperous, and equitable city for all.

Sincerely yours,
Mayor Brian Bowman

Connie Walker

Connie Walker
President & CEO
United Way Winnipeg

Jane McDonald

Jane McDonald
Executive Vice President
International Institute for Sustainable Development

A YEAR LIKE NO OTHER

2020 is a year like no other for Winnipeg. We've overcome challenges before, but never in our lifetimes such a towering threat to our health, our livelihoods, and our ability to gather as a community.

Our 2020 Peg report explores the pandemic's impacts. For the Peg team, this crisis confirms our mantra: it's not enough to care about Winnipeg; we must measure to know how we're doing. Winnipeggers clearly agree. There's a palpable demand for daily data on caseload, school exposures, and economic fallout. We are scrutinizing data together like never before.

You'll find Peg's usual long-term indicators in this report, giving a baseline of community well-being when the pandemic hit. Food Bank Use and Charitable Giving were both showing progress, while indicators of economic inequality suggest that some people entered this crisis facing more hardship than others. You will also find data and information on the shorter-term health, social, and economic indicators you have become familiar with seeing in media coverage of the pandemic. By including these point-in-time data with our long-term baseline assessment of Winnipeg, we hope to give you a sense of how our community is holding up against this crisis.

Good data is the basis of evidence-based policy to power our sustainable, equitable recovery. Earlier this year, the City of Winnipeg chose to build on its considerable open data work by weaving Peg indicators into its update of *OurWinnipeg 2045*. The revised development master plan will soon feature regular data updates to let citizens know what is on track and what needs adjusting as we grow toward one million residents.

This matters. It matters when governments adopt transparent data policies and tools. This practice gives us vital insights into our social and economic progress and it builds trust between governments, businesses, community groups, and citizens. At a time when we must stay apart, Peg reminds us how interconnected our community is.

We hope you find Peg a trusted support as we work to emerge from this pandemic together.

PEG INDICATORS TO WATCH OVER TIME

The following table shows the 14 indicators we have selected to represent a baseline picture of how Winnipeg was doing when we entered the pandemic. The table outlines where we are at on these indicators compared to five years ago.*

Throughout the report you'll find descriptions of each indicator along with an explanation of why they are "indicators to watch."

LEGEND

- Improving
- Worsening
- No Change

PEG THEME	INDICATOR	SDG	PRE-COVID-19 TREND**
Basic Needs	Food Bank Use		Improving
	Homelessness		N/A
Health	Mood and Anxiety Disorders		No Change
	Substance Use and Addiction		No Change
Economy	Unemployment Rate		Improving
	Retail Sales		Improving
Built Environment	Collision Fatalities		Worsening
	Building Permit Values		Improving
Education and Learning	Child Care Spaces		Improving
	Readiness to Learn		No Change
Natural Environment	Residential Waste Going to Landfill		Improving
	Commuting Patterns		N/A
Social Vitality and Governance	Charitable Donations		Improving
	Participation in the Arts		Worsening

**Where data five years prior was not available, the closest year available was used.*

*** All trends were calculated as percent changes. A percent change of five percent was used to determine trends. Where an indicator had a percent change of less than five percent, the trend is set to No Change. The choice of five percent change is subjective. Where trend data is not available, the trend is set to N/A (Not Available).*

PEG AS A BASELINE FOR WINNIPEGGERS' WELL-BEING THROUGH THE PANDEMIC

COVID-19 is first and foremost a health crisis that endangers our physical safety and well-being. However, Winnipeggers know the pandemic has profoundly changed many aspects of our lives that Peg has tracked since it started a decade ago. Measures to curb the virus led to closures of our favourite local businesses. Many people changed the way they move around the city. We have seen unemployment numbers swell and begin to recover, although both of these changes are not necessarily equal for all of us. We anticipate changes in people's health outcomes beyond COVID-19 as our health care system pivots resources to the new threat, and the ways we socialize have changed dramatically.

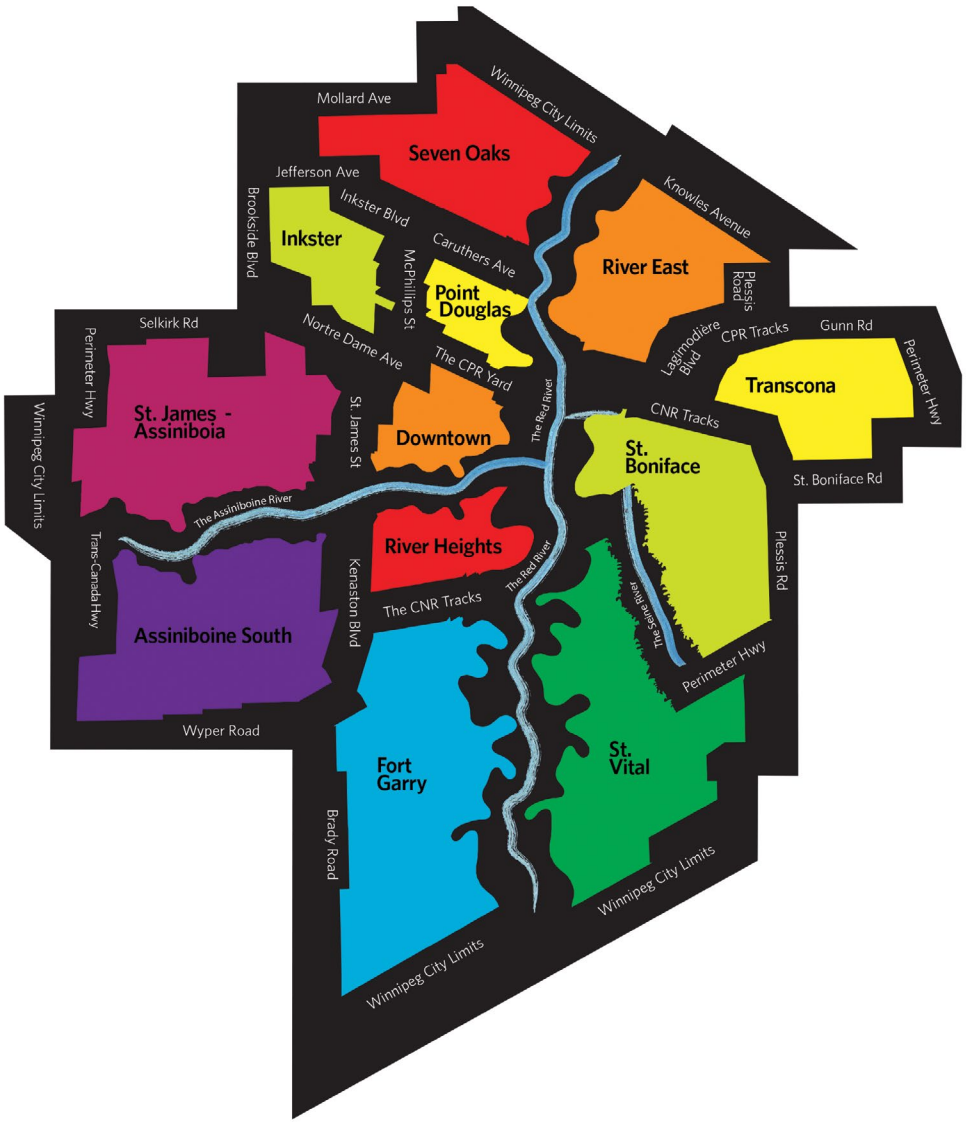
Community-level data included in Peg has a strong role to play in providing an eagle's-eye view of how the pandemic has hit our city. Peg highlights key trends with our comprehensive set of indicators and encourages dialogue that recognizes the pandemic has complex, interwoven consequences. In the long term, Peg can help our community understand how we are recovering and see the connections between policy choices and our everyday lives. Because Peg's indicators are aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, Peg can also help us understand how we're doing compared to communities around the world.

This report focuses on 14 indicators we have chosen to benchmark where we were before the pandemic hit. Pre-2020, we knew Winnipeg was improving on various educational and environmental outcomes, but struggling with issues of inequality. This report pairs our steadfast Peg indicators with up-to-date data on the pandemic and stories from community organizations that have been forced to adapt. Their stories highlight how they are managing to deliver services throughout drastically changing times.

Our community needs good data to guide us through the pandemic. It's essential to making better choices, whether you're a member of the public supporting local businesses or a decision maker crafting economic stimulus packages. We hope the 2020 Peg report connects you more strongly than ever to our community. We will best navigate this crisis if we do so together.

12 WINNIPEG COMMUNITY AREAS

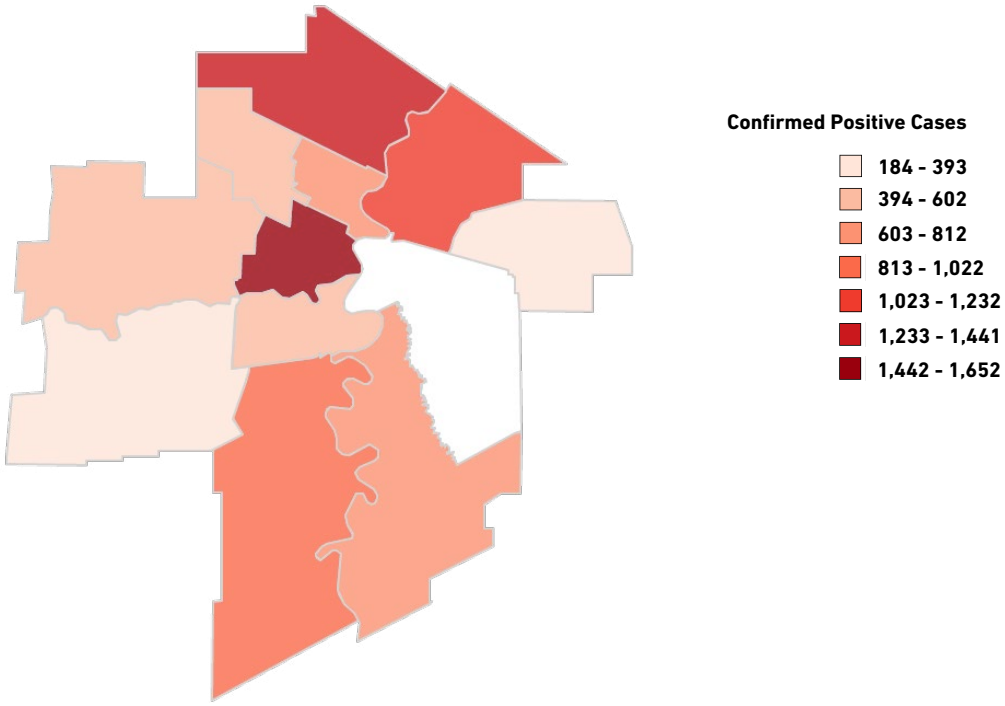
Where possible, the data in this report, as well as in Peg, are organized around Winnipeg's 12 community areas and the 25 neighbourhood clusters within them. These boundaries are used by the City of Winnipeg, the Province of Manitoba, and the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority.



COVID-19 AND OUR CITY

While Winnipeg largely avoided the first wave of the pandemic, the fall of 2020 brought a significant increase in COVID-19 cases to our community. Our caseload changes every day; however, here is a snapshot of the geographical spread of positive COVID-19 cases according to the neighbourhood where the infected person lives as of November 26, 2020.

Positive COVID-19 Cases in Winnipeg Regional Health Authority as of November 26, 2020



Source: Government of Manitoba. (2020). Manitoba COVID-19 Dashboard.

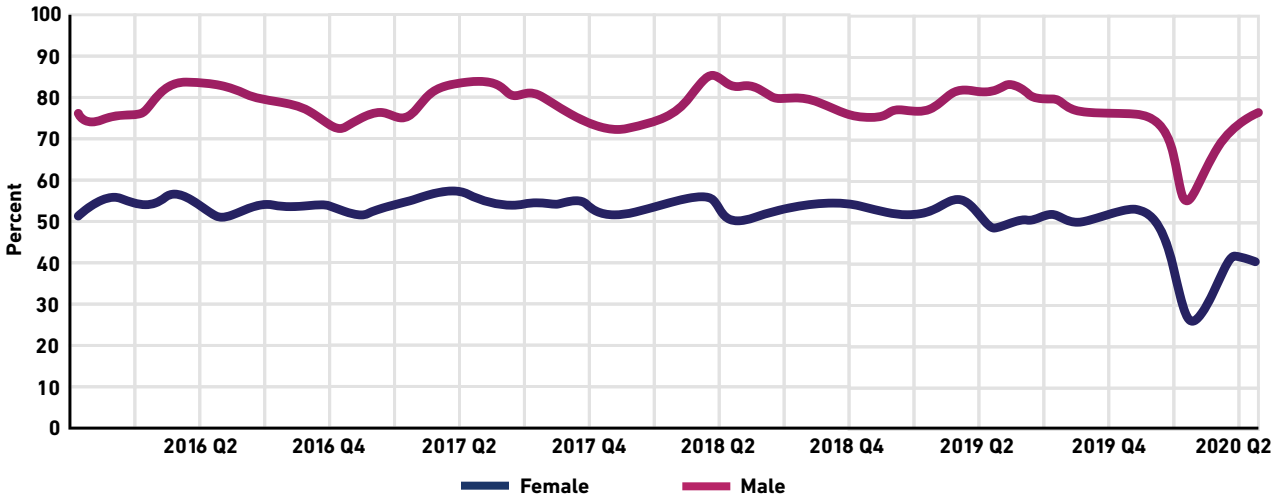
The map shows the distribution of positive COVID-19 cases is not equal across neighbourhoods, with a higher caseload in Downtown Winnipeg. Further, Statistics Canada reports that across Canada, communities with the most visible minorities have the highest mortality rates.[1]

Measures to halt the spread of COVID-19 have a widespread impact on our community. People's employment was an early and dramatic casualty of the pandemic. Unemployment in Winnipeg matches the unprecedented developments across Canada, reaching a record high of 11.7 percent in June, with young adults, women, and people in low-wage jobs experiencing higher rates of job loss. Data from the Government of Canada shows over a quarter of a million Manitobans applied for the Canadian Emergency Response Benefit (CERB), and that over 45 percent of applicants were under the age of 34.

[1] *Subedi, R., Greenberg, L. & Turcotte, M. (2020). COVID-19 mortality rates in Canada's ethno-cultural neighbourhoods.*

While some jobs have recovered, as measured by employment rates, many people's futures remain uncertain—especially as we enter into second or third waves of the pandemic.[2] The graph below shows differing job recovery rates for females and males.

Manitoba Employment Rate by Sex, 2016-2020



Source: Statistics Canada. (2020). Labour force characteristics by sex and detailed age group, monthly, unadjusted for seasonality.

Overall, Manitoba Public Health and Statistics Canada continue to release public health data on COVID-19 case loads and their economic impacts wherever possible. But the medium- to long-term effects will be complex, affecting our lives in ways we can't yet accurately predict.

In the following sections, we have selected two indicators for each of Peg's main Theme Areas (excluding Demographics) that we believe help paint the picture of what to watch for with Winnipeg's well-being moving forward, and where COVID-19 may widen existing inequalities.

[2] It is important to note these employment statistics do not fully capture many Manitobans' reality, including those not able to look for work due to caring for children at home, or those with slim job possibilities. Child care remains a major issue for parents who are expected to return to work before schools fully open.

BASIC NEEDS

Basic needs are the absolute minimum resources necessary for long-term physical well-being. The basic needs for individuals, family, and community commonly include security, shelter, and food, as well as access to basic services. Peg tracks the ways people access basic needs in our city.

COVID-19 and Our Basic Needs

After the pandemic hit, concerns about people not meeting their housing and food security needs led to targeted federal government recovery efforts. For example, federal and provincial governments funded emergency support and affordable housing initiatives, including homeless-serving organizations. From April 1, 2020, until September 30, 2020, the Government of Manitoba froze rent increases and put a moratorium on most evictions. However, community organizations still identify a great need to address the lack of housing and the increased social isolation experienced by people who are homeless, as the need to stay physically distanced has forced many drop-in shelters to close or to reduce their hours. Additionally, Peg's key data source to measure homelessness, the Winnipeg Street Census, was postponed in 2020 due to the pandemic.

Recovery efforts also target food security. Statistics Canada estimates that food insecurity across the country grew from 10.5 percent of the population in 2017-18 to 14.6 percent during the pandemic.[3] Demand for food banks in Winnipeg and across the country spiked, with Winnipeg Harvest experiencing an estimated 30 percent increase at the onset of the pandemic, paired with lower donations.[4] The federal government announced $100 million to food security initiatives across Canada in April, and doubled that amount with an additional $100 million in October 2020. These funds were distributed to organizations supporting food security locally.

The federal government additionally provided funds to address the needs of Canada's homeless population. In our city, End Homelessness Winnipeg stewarded these dollars and led the COVID-19 response for the city's homeless-serving sector. Partners such as United Way Winnipeg, the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority, emergency shelters, and others identified urgent needs for support for those experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

[3] *Statistics Canada. (2020). Food insecurity during the COVID-19 pandemic, May 2020.*

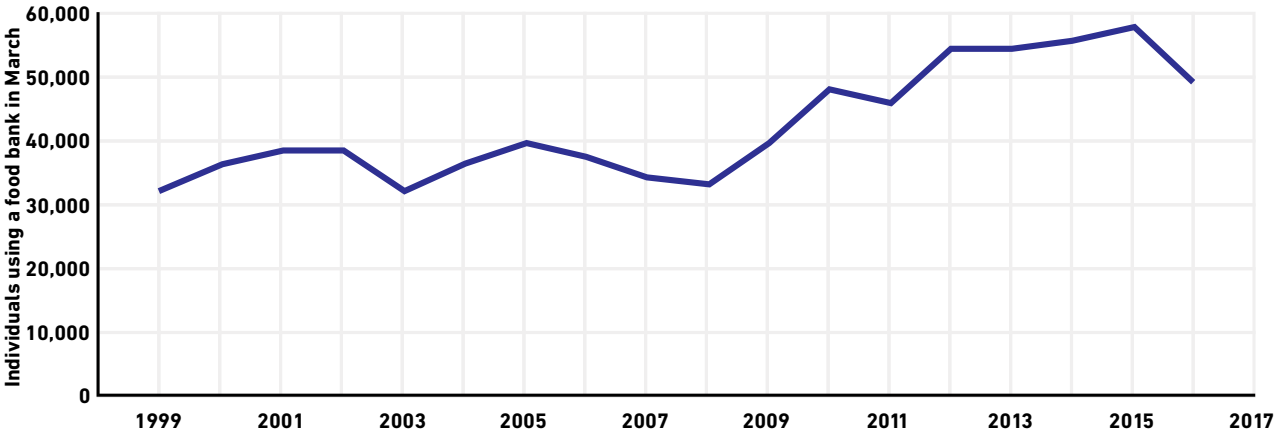
[4] *CrowSpreadingWings, R. (2020). Demand for food is up, donations are down: Winnipeg Harvest.*

FOOD BANK USE

Food Bank Use data measures the number of Winnipeggers using a food bank in March of each year. Food banks are an important source of food among individuals who don't have the means to secure food on their own. Food banks, however, provide temporary relief from hunger and are not long-term solutions to food security. According to Food Banks Canada, poverty is the leading factor to food bank use, and visits to food banks is driven by individuals being forced to choose between shelter, clothing, and feeding their family.

The number of people using a food bank has increased in Winnipeg over the last five years of available data. In 2011, 45,499 people were using a food bank, while 49,015 people were using a food bank in 2016. This represents a 7.7 percent increase in the number of people using a food bank over this five-year period.

Food Bank Use in Winnipeg, 1999-2016



Source: Winnipeg Harvest. [5]

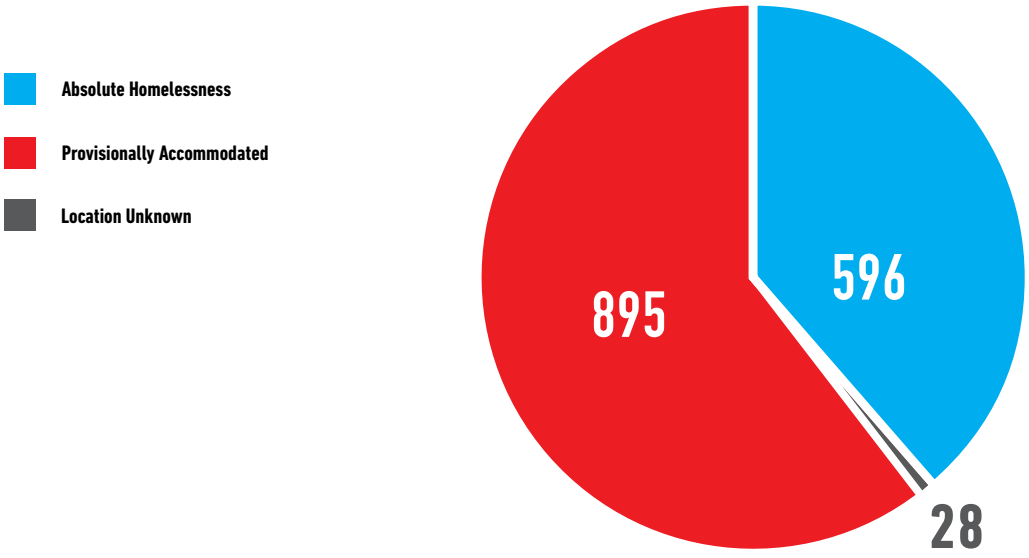
[5] *On November 25, 2020, Winnipeg Harvest announced a merger with the Manitoba Association of Foodbanks to become Harvest Manitoba.*

HOMELESSNESS

Homelessness is measured as the number of people who identified as experiencing homelessness as part of the Winnipeg Street Census Survey, conducted in 2015 and 2018. "Absolute homelessness" refers to individuals who were unsheltered or in an emergency shelter, while "provisionally accommodated" refers to individuals in temporary places, transitional housing, institutional settings, or at a hotel/motel. Homelessness affects a broad spectrum of people, including some of the city's most vulnerable populations: youth, women and children, and seniors.

During the first Winnipeg Street Census, 921 individuals were surveyed as provisionally accommodated and 479 persons were experiencing absolute homelessness. In the 2018 Winnipeg Street Census, 895 individuals were surveyed as provisionally accommodated and 596 persons were experiencing absolute homelessness.[6]

Surveyed Population Experiencing Homelessness in Winnipeg, 2018 (1,519 individuals)



Source: Winnipeg Street Census.

[6] The first Winnipeg Street Census was conducted in 2015. However, 2015 data is not comparable to 2018 data because the surveying methodology changed between years.

"HOW HAS COVID-19 AFFECTED YOUR ORGANIZATION?"

The Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization of Manitoba (IRCOM) provides newly arrived refugee and immigrant families safe, affordable transitional housing and wrap-around supports.

Dorota Blumczyńska, Executive Director, IRCOM

"In some ways, the pandemic is affecting newcomer families like all families in Canada. Parents are concerned about their kids; there have been job losses. But in many ways, their struggle is compounded by additional barriers.

One of the biggest impacts is that refugee resettlement has ground to a halt. Globally, less than one percent of the world's refugees are ever safely resettled. There's not a single family at IRCOM who hasn't left loved ones behind. Many hold onto the knowledge that if they succeed in Canada—if they gain employment, if they gain citizenship—maybe they can sponsor family members from home. Families often deny themselves the most basic necessities to get closer to this goal.

When the pandemic hit, not only did many people's income security immediately fall apart, but the borders closed and any dream of being reunited was lost. So much hope just immediately dissipated. I spoke to many who felt such tremendous grief, asking: "When will the borders open? When will I see the people that I love?"

Canada still has a goal of welcoming 300,000 people per year to continue the growth of our country. If we make decisions with our collective well-being in mind, we will see that we can optimize the gifts given to us by those who arrive at our door. We will see that there is a place in our community for each other."

Having fun at IRCOM's After School Program. Photo submitted by the Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization of Manitoba.

"HOW HAS COVID-19 AFFECTED YOUR ORGANIZATION?"

Main Street Project (MSP) serves the needs of Winnipeg's most vulnerable residents, including those experiencing homelessness.

Cindy Titus, Communications & Fund Development Coordinator, Main Street Project

"Main Street Project has been greatly impacted. Our emergency shelter went from sleeping 75 people per night on mats to sleeping 200 people per night on physically distanced cots. We opened Winnipeg's only space for the homeless community to self-isolate or recover from COVID-19, and we temporarily changed our food bank from in-store shopping to hampers.

MSP also had to suspend its in-kind donations program and most of its volunteer-run programming to keep staff, volunteers, and community members safe. We're now doing more direct mail fundraising, grant writing, and reaching out to individual donors.

Thankfully, we've been able to go back to some of our regular programming and fundraising efforts. But there are many concerns about job security, housing security, and food security. We are keeping a very close eye on how these issues are going to impact people in Winnipeg."

Resource Assistance for Youth (RaY) is a nonprofit street-level agency working with street-entrenched, marginalized, and homeless youth.

Kelly Holmes, Executive Director, Resource Assistance for Youth

"For youth experiencing homelessness, the pandemic exacerbated existing barriers and created new ones—from social distancing and handwashing requirements to the avoidance of the shelter system, resulting in an explosion of encampments.

Throughout the pandemic, youth continue to be exited from correction centres, hospitals, and the child welfare system into homelessness. We've seen a dramatic increase in food insecurity, placing strain on food banks. Lack of drop-in accessibility has changed the landscape, resulting in decreased safety and communication for young people on the streets.

In response, our street team increased their hours and partnered with our nurse practitioner to provide roaming health services to those in camps. Staff are distributing food hampers, clothing, and masks. High unemployment will leave youth without reliable skills, housing, or food security. We also mobilized to house over 43 youth in the first two months of the pandemic alone!

Young people on the streets experiencing mental health challenges will see these increased by the stress of enduring a pandemic. As the challenges worsen, RaY's services will be more needed than ever."

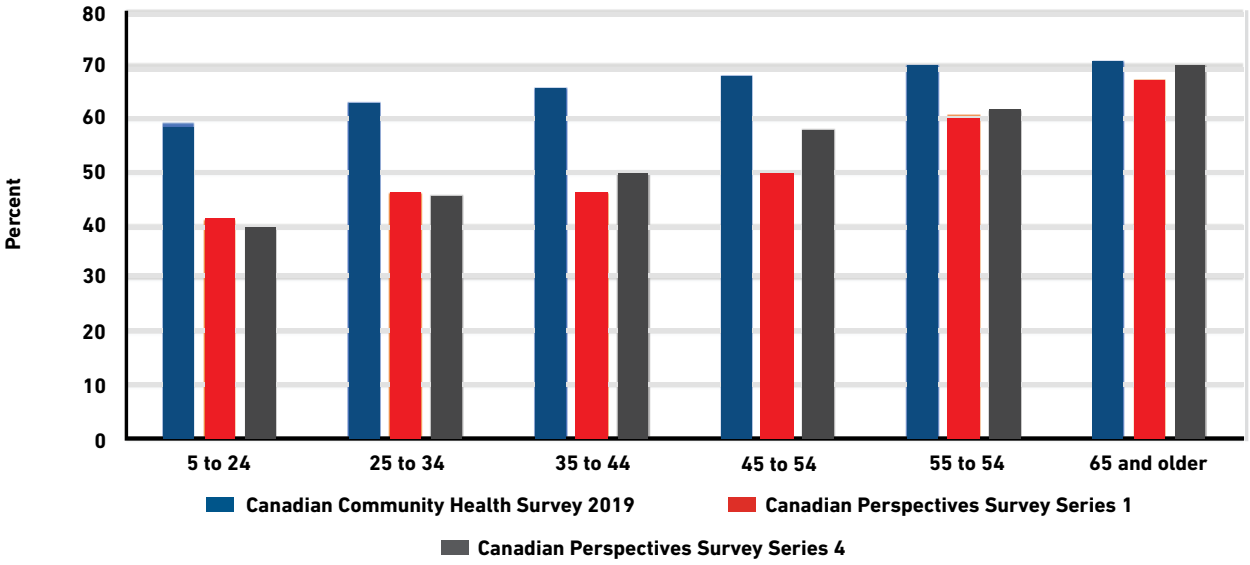
HEALTH

Health is a state of physical, mental, and social well-being. Peg's health indicators summarize information about Winnipeg's health status. Peg tracks holistic indicators of health, recognizing that these data represent outcomes of complex, intersecting factors.

COVID-19 and Our Health

New data shows that the pandemic appears to be harming our mental health and leading to increased substance use, with specific groups reporting different outcomes. Statistics Canada found that youth experienced the greatest decline in mental health in 2020, as indicated below. Visible-minority groups are more likely to report poor mental health than White respondents.

Proportion of Canadians Reporting Excellent or Very Good Mental Health Pre- and Post-COVID-19 by Age Group, Canada, 2019, March, and July 2020



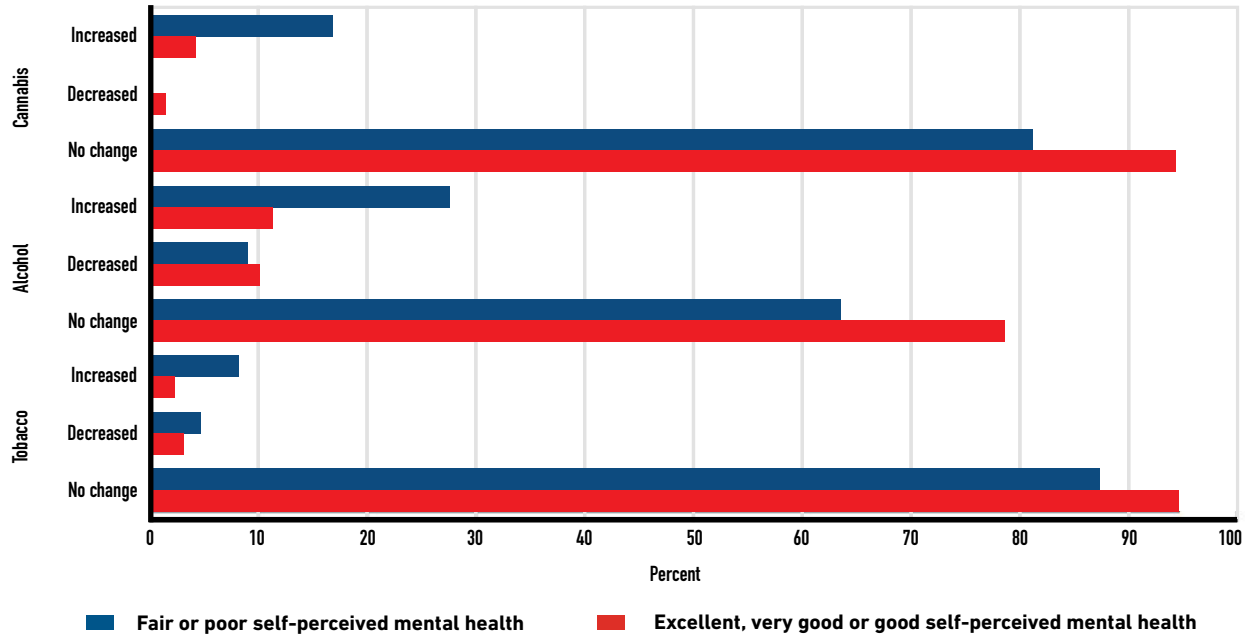
Source: Statistics Canada. (2020). Impacts on Mental Health. Note: not seasonally adjusted.

National data shows the increasing number of people who report poor mental health are up to four times more likely to report increasing their use of substances since the pandemic, shown in the graph above. The Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction reflects these data in a study that found Canadians aged 18-34 are drinking 21percent more, and those aged 34-54 are drinking 25 percent more, since the onset of the pandemic.[8]

[7] *Statistics Canada. (2020). Impacts on Mental Health.*

[8] *Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction. (2020). Canadians Under 54 Drinking More While at Home Due to COVID-19 Pandemic.*

Canadians' Use of Tobacco, Alcohol and Cannabis According to Level of Perceived Mental Health, 2020



Notes: "Have your weekly habits changed for any of the following activities?" Consuming cannabis; consuming alcohol; using tobacco products.
Source: Canadian Perspectives Survey Series (CPSS), Wave 1 2020.

Additionally, the Winnipeg Fire and Paramedic Service (WFPS) has been reporting more calls over substance use and poisonings. CBC Manitoba reported a 227 percent increase in opioid-related calls to the WFPS in June 2020.[9] Recovery efforts from the federal and provincial governments are seeking to address emerging mental health problems with initiatives like the Government of Manitoba's Mental Health Virtual Therapy Program and the federal government's $7.5 million grant to Kids Help Phone.

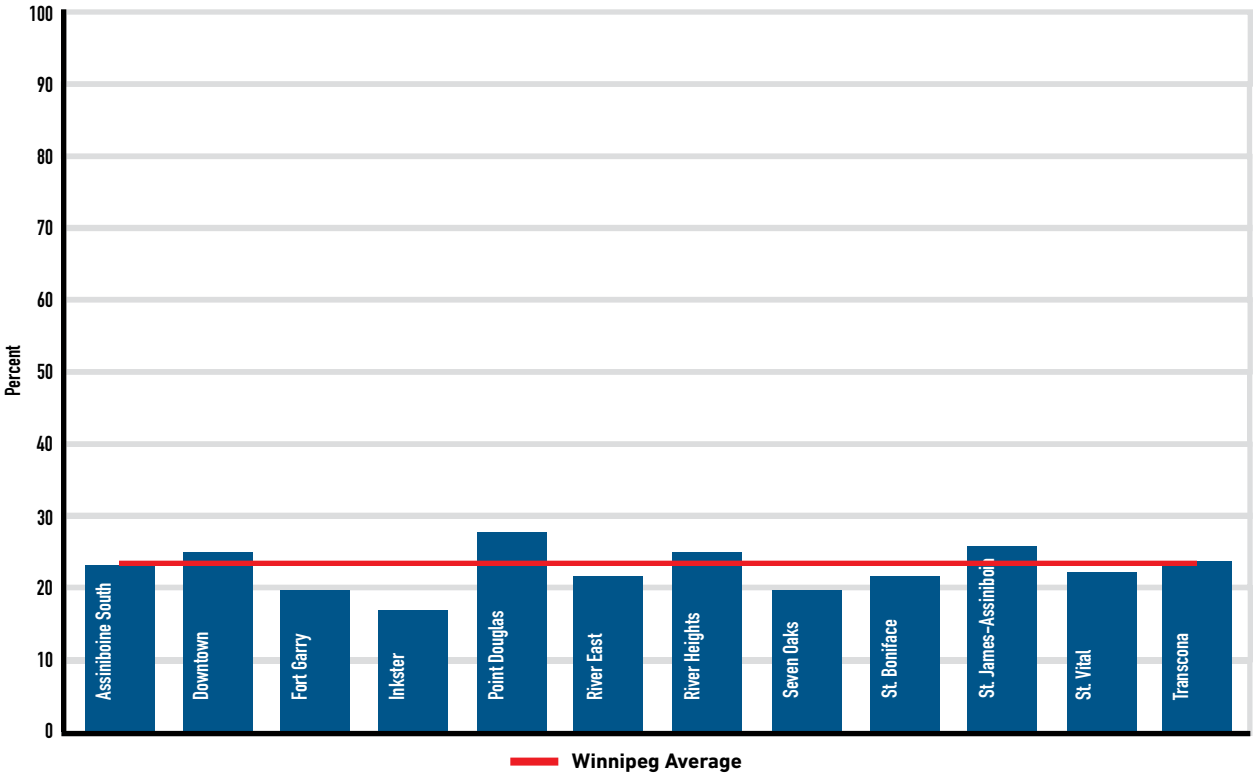
[9] *Coubrough, J. (2020). Signs of opioid overdoses surging in Winnipeg during pandemic.*

MOOD AND ANXIETY DISORDERS

Mood and Anxiety Disorders measures how many people (aged 10+) have been diagnosed with a mood and/or anxiety disorder in the last five years. This indicator helps us measure mental health, which the World Health Organization defines as "a state of well-being in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community."[10]

From 2007/08 to 2011/12, 24.4 percent of Winnipeggers had been diagnosed with mood or anxiety disorders, with Point Douglas (27.4 percent) and St. James (26.8 percent) having the highest percent among all communities. In the previous five-year period (2002/03 to 2007/08), 24.9 percent of all Winnipeggers had been diagnosed with a mood and/or anxiety disorder, demonstrating only a very slight improvement.

Mood and Anxiety Disorder Rates, 2007/08 - 2011/12



Source: Manitoba Centre for Health Policy

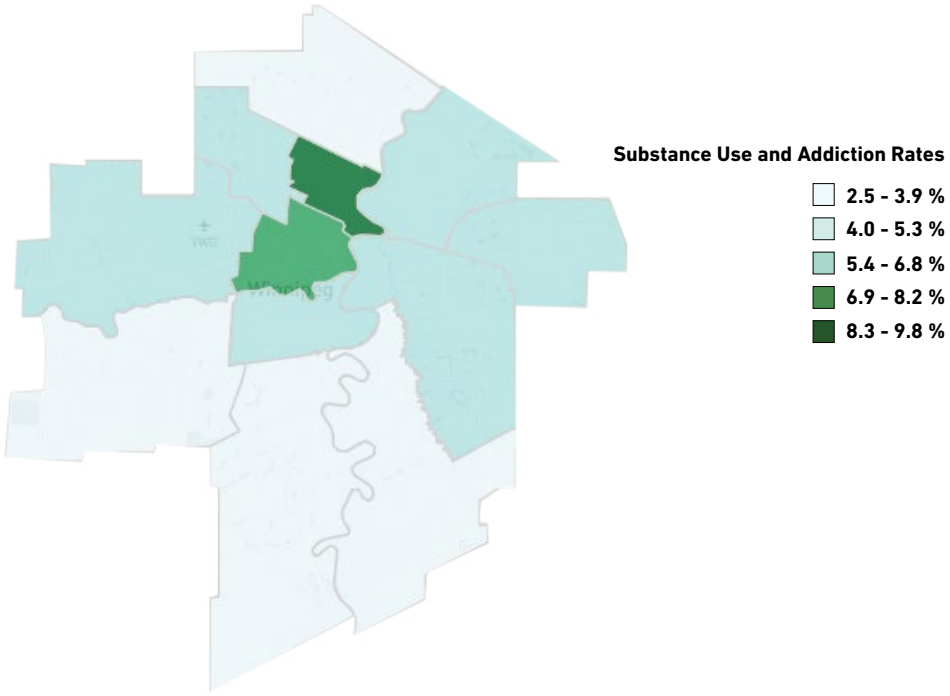
[10] *WHO. (2018). Mental health: strengthening our response.*

SUBSTANCE USE AND ADDICTION

Substance Use and Addiction measures the number of people (aged 10+) who have been diagnosed with a substance use disorder/substance abuse (drugs or alcohol). Substance use disorders/substance abuse has been defined as the excess use of and reliance on a drug, alcohol, or other chemical that leads to severe negative effects on the individual's health and well-being or to the welfare of others.

From 2007/08 to 2011/12, 4.9 percent of Winnipeggers had been diagnosed with substance use disorder/substance abuse, the same as the previous reporting period of 2002/03 to 2006/07. Between 2007/08 and 2011/12, the communities with the highest rate of diagnoses for substance use disorder/substance abuse (drugs or alcohol) were Point Douglas (9.8 percent) and Downtown (7.6 percent).

Substance Use and Addiction Rates by Winnipeg Neighbourhood, 2007/08 - 2011/12



Source: Manitoba Centre for Health Policy

"HOW HAS COVID-19 AFFECTED YOUR ORGANIZATION?"

Mood Disorders Association of Manitoba (MDAM) is a nonprofit organization that supports those affected by mood disorders, their friends, families, caregivers, and supporters.

Rita Chahal, Executive Director, Mood Disorders Association of Manitoba

"For over 37 years, Mood Disorders Association of Manitoba has brought people together to share lived experiences, coping skills, hope, and recovery from mental illness. Peer support has become the strong foundation for the organization. We often consider the work we do to be about "bringing people together."

In these very challenging times, we have run many of our programs successfully under the existing health regulations, including our United Way-funded M(usic) A(rt) D(ance) Summer Youth Camp for teens ages 12-17.

We also pivoted to offering MDAM's programs virtually. Many of our peer support groups are now online and are free for all Manitobans, no registration required. We hold a Family and Friends group, a Women's group, a Youth group, and many others. We also offer free, one-on-one peer support via video chat, called the Unloading Zone. For those who aren't comfortable online, we started the Friendly Caller Program. It puts one of our wonderful phone line volunteers in touch with anyone who needs a little help or connection through these tough times.

Creating and inspiring each other at MDAM's M(usic)A(rt) D(ance) Summer Youth Camp. Photo submitted by the Mood Disorders Association of Manitoba.

MDAM hopes all of our neighbours and community members stay safe and stay well. Checking in, showing up, and showing you care is now more important than ever. Now more than ever, we need each other."

"HOW HAS COVID-19 AFFECTED YOUR ORGANIZATION?"

Jewish Child and Family Service (JCFS) works to strengthen lives in keeping with Jewish values. They provide a variety of services, including child welfare, supporting seniors, counselling, mental health, and addictions support.

Al Benarroch, Executive Director, and Cheryl Hirsh Katz, Manager of Adult Services, Jewish Child and Family Service

"In terms of our child welfare services, it's tough enough to safely place children in permanent homes. With the pandemic, the emergency shelter system is slammed and staff are working around the clock to find a place for some kids, especially those with special needs.

We're seeing the strain on people who use drugs, including huge increases in opioid use and accidental overdoses. Addiction is closely tied to mental health; our clients' anxiety is extremely high and their emotional reserves are limited. This increases their vulnerability to addiction.

We are doing more phone calling and virtual meetings, but some people really miss that face-to-face interaction. Human beings need social contact—it's an inherent part of who we are. When the pandemic hit and people's connections dried up, it became very dangerous for people already in a fragile state.

At JCFS, we have focused heavily on staff well-being. If our staff aren't coping, they won't have any reserves to be good helpers. For example, our staff self-care committee led a virtual Paint "Nite" with staff, and at Passover we met virtually and invited everyone to share a special holiday memory. Things like this keep people energized and help them better help their own clients, as well.

One of the positives of the pandemic is that it has made us realize how flexible we actually are. Our borders are no longer the city limits. Now we're in conversations with partners across Canada about sharing online programs, so that someone in Winnipeg can get into a virtual program based in Toronto if they need. Smaller organizations can also now direct their clients to online workshops out of bigger cities. We will never be completely virtual, but these are valuable lessons in adaptability and it's the epitome of being client-centred."

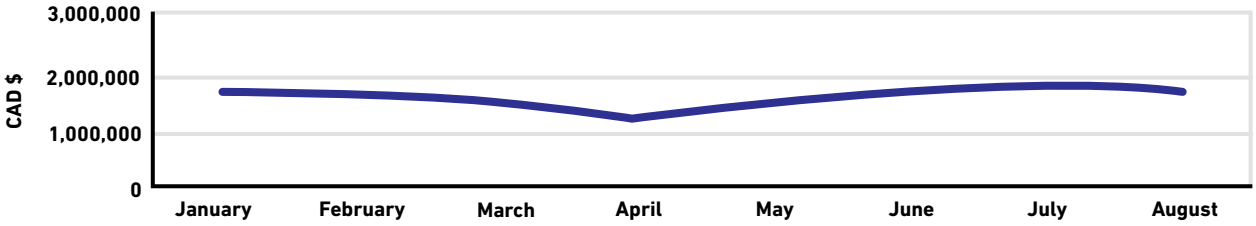
ECONOMY

Economy includes all that people do in our community to produce, exchange, distribute, and consume goods and services. Peg tracks the way our economy changes over time, including how people's work and income evolves.

COVID-19 and Our Economy

Lockdowns and closures to support physical distancing profoundly changed Winnipeg's economy. Retail sales saw a steep decline in the spring. Emerging data at the provincial level was showing encouraging trends, with retail sales recovering. The federal and provincial governments have also supported the recovery of Winnipeg businesses through grants and loans. However, the impact of Winnipeg's second wave of restrictions has yet to be measured.

Retail Sales for Manitoba, January to August, 2020



Source: Statistics Canada. (2020). Retail Trade Sales by Province and Territory.

Statistics Canada's analysis of the economic impacts of COVID-19 among Indigenous peoples, visible minority groups, and people with disabilities indicate that economic recovery is not equal for all groups. A study shows that 36 percent of Indigenous participants reported the pandemic had a strong or moderate impact on their ability to meet their financial obligations or essential needs, compared with 25 percent of non-Indigenous participants.[11] Statistics Canada also reports that Filipino and West Asian participants reported a higher share of job loss or reduced work hours, at 42 percent and 47 percent, respectively, compared to 34 percent among White participants.[12]

People with disabilities reported high levels of financial hardship from COVID-19; 61 percent of respondents aged 15 to 64 with long-term conditions or disabilities reported a major or moderate impact from COVID-19 on at least one type of financial obligation or essential need.[13] Different economic outcomes must be tracked to ensure that economic recovery is equitable for all Winnipeggers.

[11] *Arriagada, P., Frank, K., Hahmann, T. & Hou, F. (2020). Economic Impact of COVID-19 among Indigenous People, Statistics Canada.*

[12] *Hou, F., Frank, K. & Schimmele, C. (2020). Economic Impact of COVID-19 among visible minority groups, Statistics Canada.*

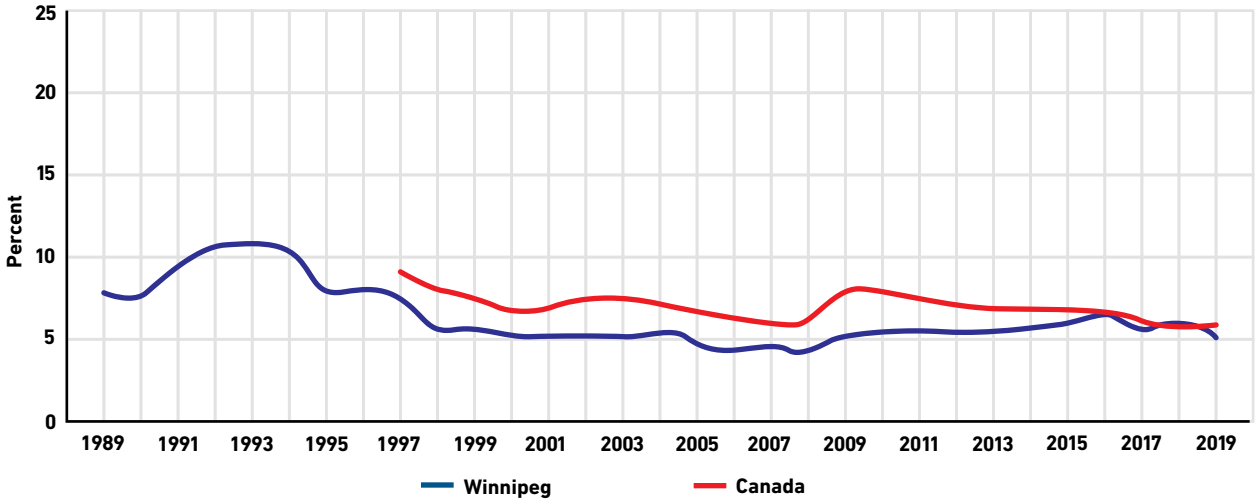
[13] *Statistics Canada. (2020). Impacts of COVID-19 on persons with disabilities.*

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

Unemployment Rate shows the percentage of Canadian adults (15 years of age and over) who are not employed, are looking for work, and are available to take a job. Unemployment rate is a common measure of economic well-being, and is one of the major social determinants of health.

Before the pandemic, Winnipeg consistently had one of the lowest unemployment rates in the country. Between 2015 and 2019, Winnipeg's unemployment rate dropped from 6.0 percent to 5.3 percent. This represents an 11.7 percent decline over five years. During this same period, the Canadian unemployment rate also declined from 6.9 percent to 5.7 percent (17.4 percent change).

Unemployment Rate, 1989 - 2019



Source: Statistics Canada

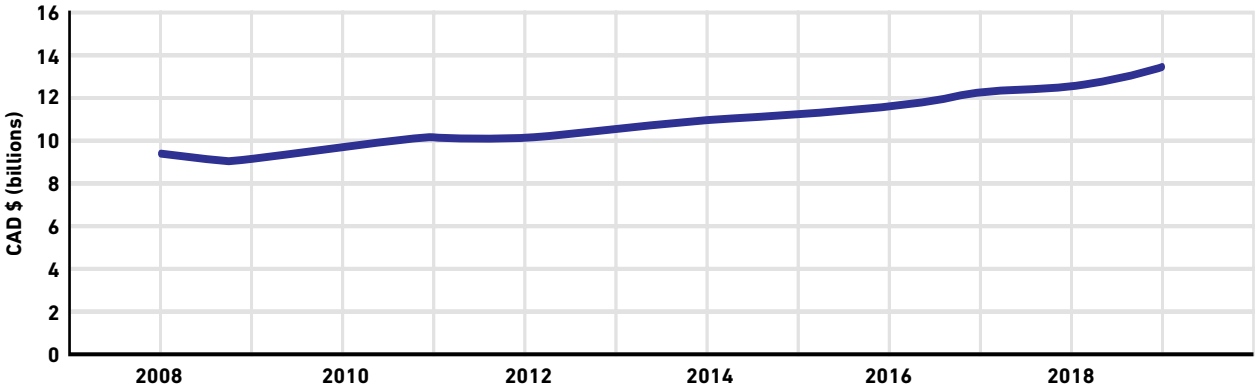
RETAIL SALES

Retail Sales tracks how many dollars' worth of merchandise is being sold by looking at a sample of retail companies within a given geographic area and time period.

Economists and investors closely watch retail sales as an indicator of economic activity because consumer spending drives much of the economy, and this indicator provides a strong picture of the robustness of that spending. Governments, policy makers and businesses rely on economic indicators like this one to forecast their revenue projections for the year, which often determines how much they plan to invest in or cut from local services, programming or projects.

In 2015, retail sales in Winnipeg (CMA) were $11.2 billion. Over the next four years, retail sales in Winnipeg increased by 19.6 percent, to a total of $13.4 billion.

Retail Sales in Winnipeg, 2008 - 2019



Source: Economic Development Winnipeg

"HOW HAS COVID-19 AFFECTED YOUR ORGANIZATION?"

Assiniboine Credit Union (ACU) is one of the largest credit unions in Manitoba. They strive to be socially, environmentally, and ethically responsible as well as financially sound.

Kevin Sitka, President & CEO, Assiniboine Credit Union

"ACU's core mission has remained the same, but the context in which we pursue our vision of sustainable futures for all has evolved.

ACU adapted quickly to the pandemic by adopting new service delivery models and leveraging digital technology. This adaptability, including allowing many employees to work remotely, has significantly reduced commuting times and ACU's carbon footprint, while maintaining productivity.

ACU increased member awareness of our digital banking platforms and helped members sign on so they are comfortable using these channels, particularly when they prefer to avoid public spaces for health reasons. ACU also provided food and hygiene items to several community organizations delivering essential services during the pandemic. When times are tough, it is our most vulnerable neighbours who need us most.

It is difficult to know the long-term economic impact of this pandemic. We do know we were able to provide payment deferrals for thousands of personal and business members, providing cash flow relief when they needed it most. We connected members with millions of dollars in government support programs to help them make ends meet. Some lost their jobs, and some businesses have closed, so the economic impact for those involved is immediate and unsettling.

Overall, the Manitoba economy tends to be fairly stable and doesn't experience the boom and bust cycles of other regions, which will hopefully provide some stability going forward. Should the pandemic continue to negatively impact our economy, an important factor will be strategic government investments to support jobs, local businesses, and the community organizations providing essential community building supports and programs that support our vision of a sustainable future for all."

"HOW HAS COVID-19 AFFECTED YOUR ORGANIZATION?"

AMIK is an Indigenous owned company providing Indigenous workforce engagement & training services. They are dedicated to enhancing the socio-economic participation of Indigenous peoples.

Melissa Chung-Mowat, Indigenous Engagement Consultant, AMIK

"Like most businesses, COVID-19 had an immediate impact on AMIK. We had to quickly shift to a work-from-home structure and many of our workshops were suspended. The most challenging aspect of offering our services virtually is that our cultural awareness and work ethics training is most impactful when people can connect in person. AMIK adapted by offering small, in-person training when physical distancing is possible, and by working with companies to develop online resources for staff.

We continue to work with job seekers and employers virtually to fill term and permanent roles. AMIK has also engaged partners in land-based learning at Cedar Lake Ranch, where individuals can learn about Indigenous practices and ceremonies, including tipi building and medicine picking. Having access to land-based teachings during this time has also been vital in the work of AMIK's sister organization, Anish, which supports residential school, day school, and Sixties Scoop survivors/ thrivers. One positive outcome we have observed is that the pandemic is igniting a business spirit on reserve. People are creating businesses online selling jewelry, clothing, and arts and crafts. They're selling things like hamburgers, home baking, etc., in the community.

Many of our partners remain committed to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Call to Action 92 (business and reconciliation) and to increasing their Indigenous workforce. AMIK sees this work as increasingly important during these challenging times. We remain focused on connecting Indigenous peoples with employment and assisting our partners with Indigenous cultural awareness training, recruitment, retention, and engagement efforts."

The staff of AMIK and sister organization Anish honouring Residential School Survivors and Indigenous children on Orange Shirt Day. Photo submitted by AMIK.

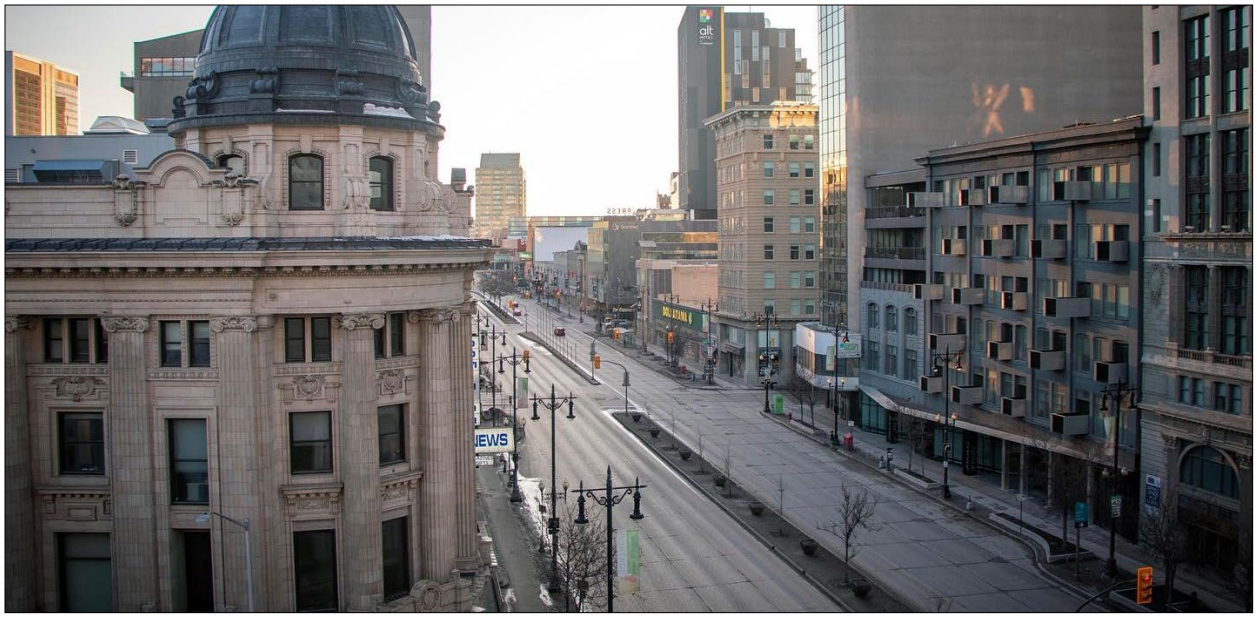
BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Our built environment encompasses all of the human-made (or built) parts of our community. It includes infrastructure such as roads, sewers, and buildings, and their uses and impacts. Peg tracks the way our built environment is changing over time.

COVID-19 and Our Built Environment

The pandemic is reshaping how our community invests in our shared physical space, including roads and buildings. The spring of 2020 saw a significant change in commuting habits with encouraging results for traffic accidents. Manitoba Public Insurance reported a significant decrease in claim insurance numbers as people stayed home and offered all insurance-holders a rebate as a result.[14] Since the spring, we have seen more vehicles on the road. In the long term, will we see reduced collision fatalities, or will they return to average levels?

The pandemic's impact on our construction industry's financial health will alter how quickly the city expands, which will also impact related costs to our built environment. While the five-year trend between 2014 and 2019 portrays a growth in the total value of building permits, early figures for September 2020 suggest a recent decline in building permit values. As of September, the total value of building permit values in 2020 (1.32 million) was down 15 percent from the 2019 reporting period from January to September (1.55 million).



Portage Avenue during rush hour in March 2020. Photo by Matthew TenBruggencate.

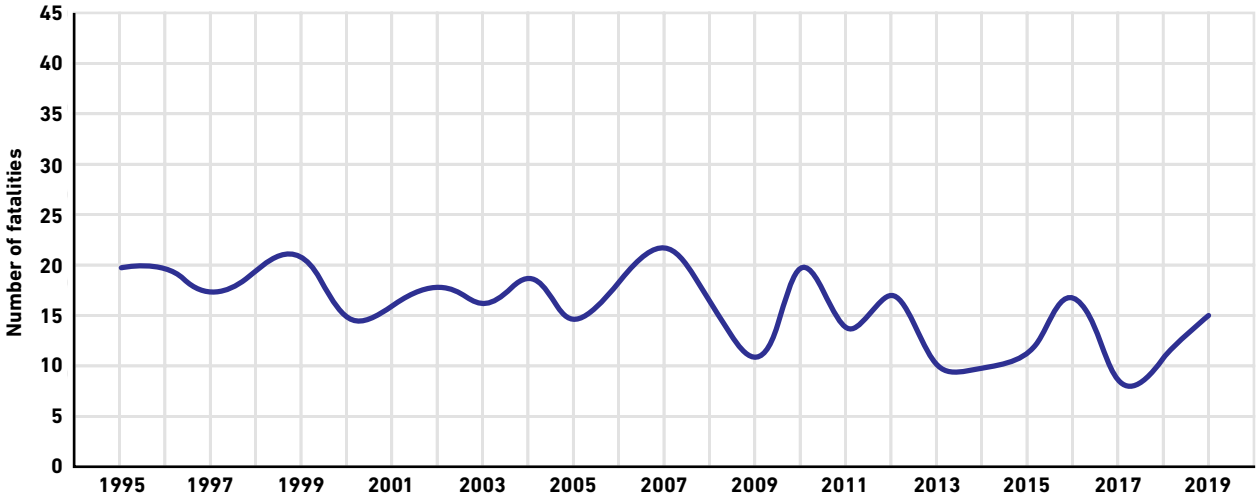
[14] *Da Silva, D. (2020). MPI claims plunge as pandemic decreases traffic. Winnipeg Free Press.*

COLLISION FATALITIES

Collision Fatalities tracks the number of traffic accidents in Winnipeg resulting in fatalities each year. Factors leading to road traffic fatalities include car safety features, the design of the built environment, road conditions, time of day, and driver behaviour (seatbelt use, drug and alcohol use, use of cell phones while driving, etc.).

In 2019, there were 15 collision fatalities in Winnipeg. While 2019 marked a slight increase from the previous year (12), the number of fatalities over the past five has ranged from 13 to 19.

Collision Fatalities in Winnipeg, 1995 - 2019



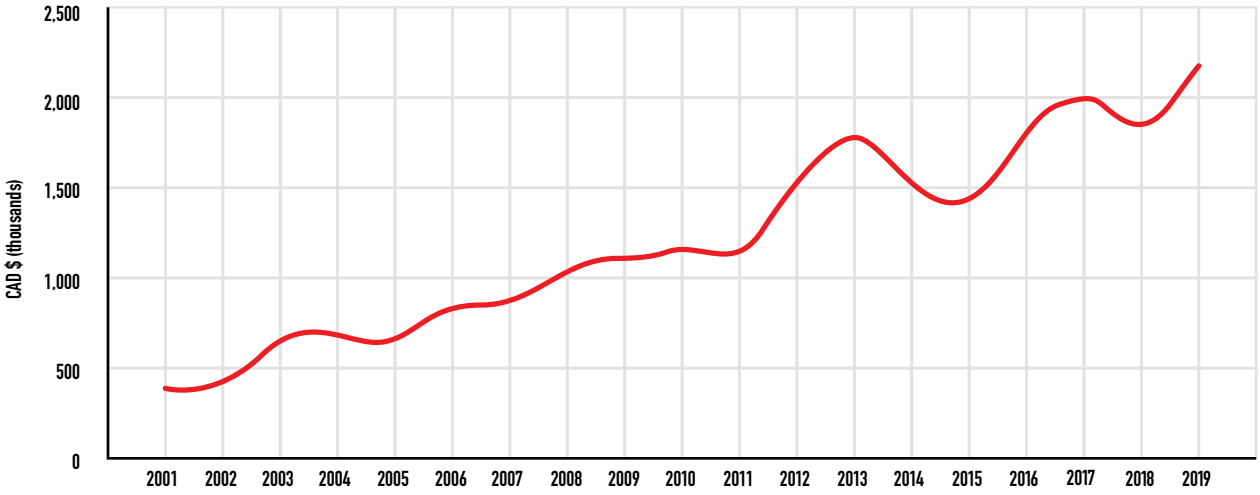
Source: Manitoba Public Insurance

BUILDING PERMIT VALUES

Building Permit Values measures the total value of residential and non-residential permit values in a given year. The total value of these permits is widely used as an economic indicator since issuing a building permit is one of the first steps in the construction process. Generally speaking, the higher the value, the more construction work is taking place in Winnipeg.

In 2019, the total value of all building permits for residential and non-residential construction was $2.17 million. This represents an increase in $631,000 since 2014, or a 41 percent change.

Building Permit Values in Winnipeg, 2001 - 2019



Source: City of Winnipeg

"HOW HAS COVID-19 AFFECTED YOUR ORGANIZATION?"

Economic Development Winnipeg (EDW) is the city's lead economic development agency. It champions local growth by attracting business, investment, events, and people to our city.

Ryan Kuffner, Vice President of Sales & Business Development, Economic Development Winnipeg

"While Winnipeg has certainly been impacted by the pandemic, economist Robert Kavcic notes in the recent Bank of Montreal Blue Book report that smaller cities like Winnipeg have held up better economically than larger centres. That said, EDW has been tracking key indicators and pivots from Winnipeg businesses related to the pandemic.

Surprisingly, June 2020 building permit values reveal that Manitoba saw an increase of 21.3 percent in total permit values compared to June last year, but September 2020 was down 19% compared to September 2019. Meanwhile, Winnipeg businesses, such as NFI Group, got to work developing products like antimicrobial air filters to keep buses safe and on the road. Additionally, PCL Construction answered the call to fill a gap for local personal care homes affected by COVID-19 by converting shipping containers into portable ICU or isolation units. They can ship easily, be set up within 30 minutes and are fully capable of being outfitted with electricity plus air filtration systems.

PCL Construction is also working closely with another Winnipeg business, Price Industries, to manufacture a fan filter unit that can pull air out of an enclosed contaminated environment, then safely filter it to the outdoors.

Another impact of the pandemic is office vacancy, as more people shift to working from home. Here, too, we see there has been a much smaller increase in office vacancies in Winnipeg than the national average (50 basis points vs. 110, according to CBRE's Q3 report). Similarly, according to Colliers Q3 market analysis, Winnipeg's industrial market appears to be poised for long-term growth as tenants, users, and developers maintain optimism through these challenging times.

Without understating the ongoing and unpredictable impacts of the pandemic, these indicators are encouraging. They show how resilient, adaptable and innovative Winnipeg businesses have been—not just mitigating the impacts of the pandemic, but using it to pivot and transition our city's growth."

"HOW HAS COVID-19 AFFECTED YOUR ORGANIZATION?"

Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1505 represents public transit workers and bus operators in Winnipeg.

Romeo Ignacio, President Business Agent, ATU Local 1505

"Between May and June, the City of Winnipeg saw a 45 percent public transit service reduction. As a result, 20 percent of ATU Local 1505's bus operators were laid off. They were recalled starting in mid-June until the end of July.

While service levels increased to 85 percent starting in August, some members have been reassigned to bus cleaning, disinfecting, and other COVID-19-related measures.

ATU Local 1505 advocated for personal protective equipment at the onset of the pandemic and for more bus service in June. We continue to monitor the situation closely, especially with the rising test positivity rate and community outbreaks. Possible exposure continues to be a major concern among our members.

The pandemic has resulted in an overall reduction in Winnipeg's economic growth, which has translated into a reduced demand for public transit. Working and studying from home has impacted demand, so it may take some time to get back to the pre-COVID-19 public transit service levels."

View of Winnipeg's downtown. Photo submitted by Economic Development Winnipeg.

EDUCATION AND LEARNING

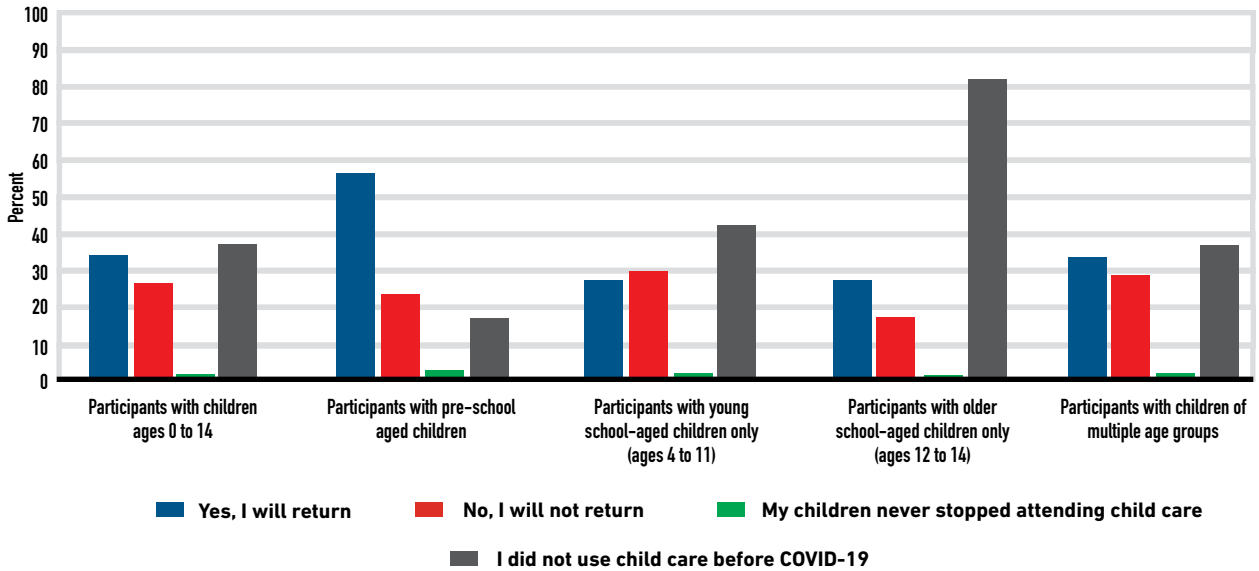
Education in the broadest sense is any experience that has an effect on the mind, character, or physical ability of an individual. Through life-long learning new knowledge, behaviours, skills, and values are transferred from one generation to another. Peg tracks indicators of Winnipeg's education landscape.

COVID-19 and Our Education and Learning

Any student, parent, guardian, or educator in Winnipeg has experienced unprecedented change to our education system during the pandemic. Children sent home from daycare and school placed new caregiving responsibilities on parents, while educators adapted to online learning. As schools adapt to physical distancing requirements, our education system, including all forms of child care, faces a highly uncertain future that will have impacts on learning and care for years to come.

Prior to the pandemic, Statistics Canada measured that 60 percent of children aged 0-5 participated in some form of child care.[15] Since the spring of 2020, one quarter of parents surveyed said their children would not return to child care. Of that group, 49 percent reported that they would not attend because they were concerned about their children's or other's health. One in three participants said that once formal child care services reopened, their children would resume attending. Of these participants, 88 percent said they required child care in order to work.

Proportion of Participants Who Reported Their Children Will Return to Child Care Once Services Reopen, by Age of Child(ren), Spring 2020



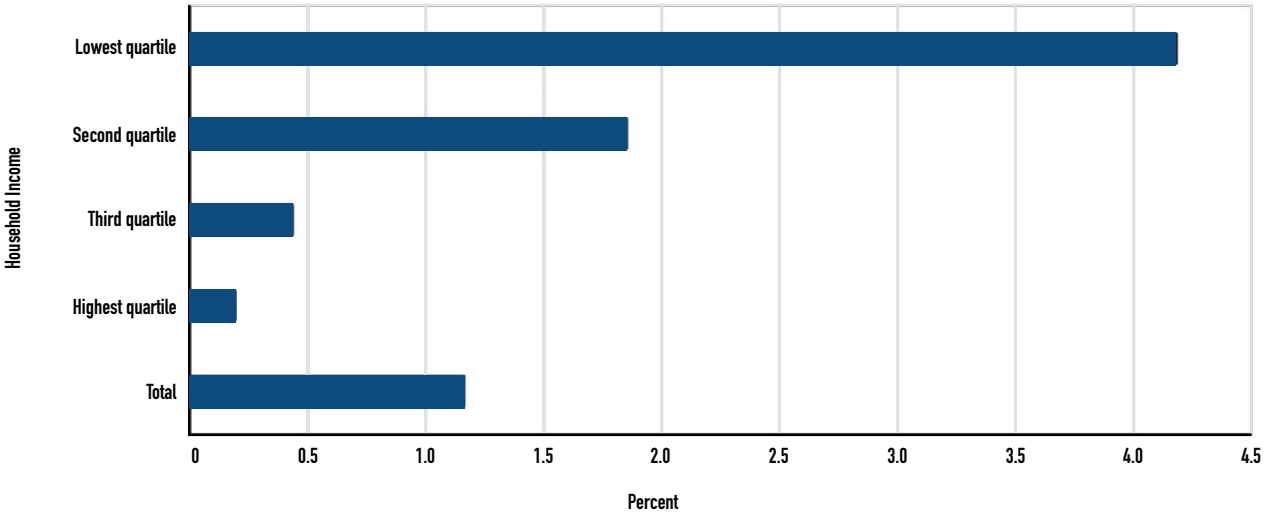
Source: Statistics Canada. (2020). Child care use during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.

[15] *Statistics Canada. (2020). Child care use during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.*

EDUCATION AND LEARNING

Formal education has shifted to rely heavily on home internet use. However, internet accessibility is not equal for all households in Canada. The graph below shows home internet accessibility according to households' income quartile, demonstrating that lower income households have less internet accessibility. This will have significant outcomes on children's access to educational materials during lockdown periods.

Percent of Households with Children Under Age 18 Who Have No Home Internet, 2020



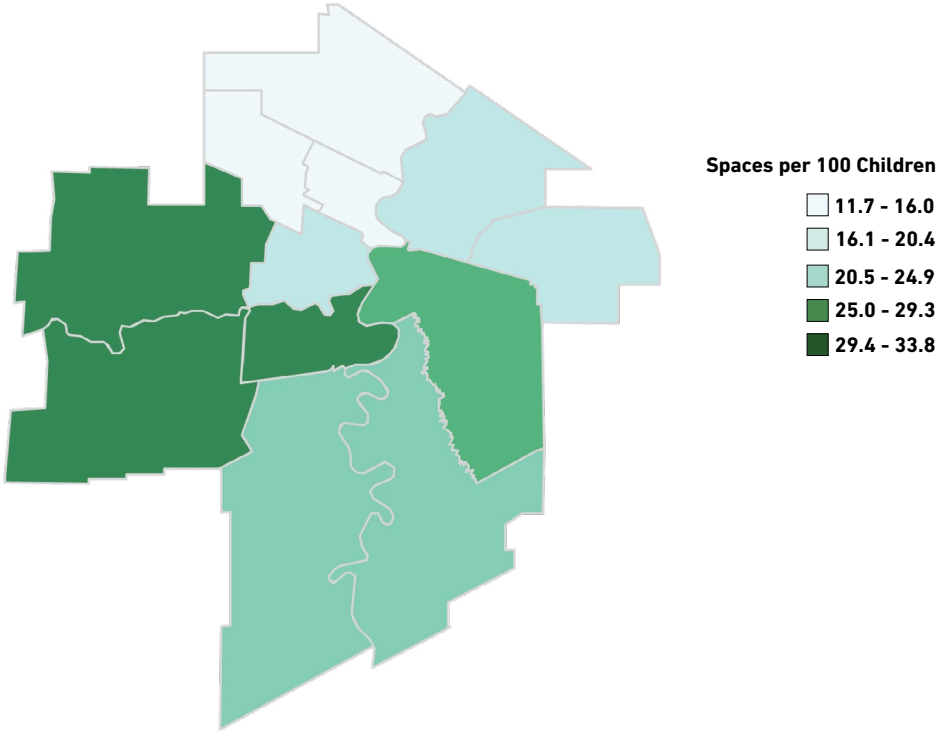
Source: Statistics Canada. (2020). COVID-19 Pandemic: School Closures and the Online Preparedness of Children.

CHILD CARE SPACES

Child Care Spaces measures how many licensed child care spaces are available for every 100 children. Child care is not only an important service for parents who work or have other commitments, but it can also help prepare children for school by building cognitive, language, and social skills.

In 2014, the most recent year with available data, there were 20.8 child care spaces for every 100 children in Winnipeg. This is a 6.1 percent change since 2010 (19.6). However, discrepancies exist between communities in the number of child care spaces available. In 2014, Point Douglas (12.8) and Inkster (13.6) had the fewest child care spaces available per 100 children, while River Heights (33.2) and St. James-Assiniboia (32.3) had the most.

Child Care Spaces per 100 Children in Winnipeg, 2014



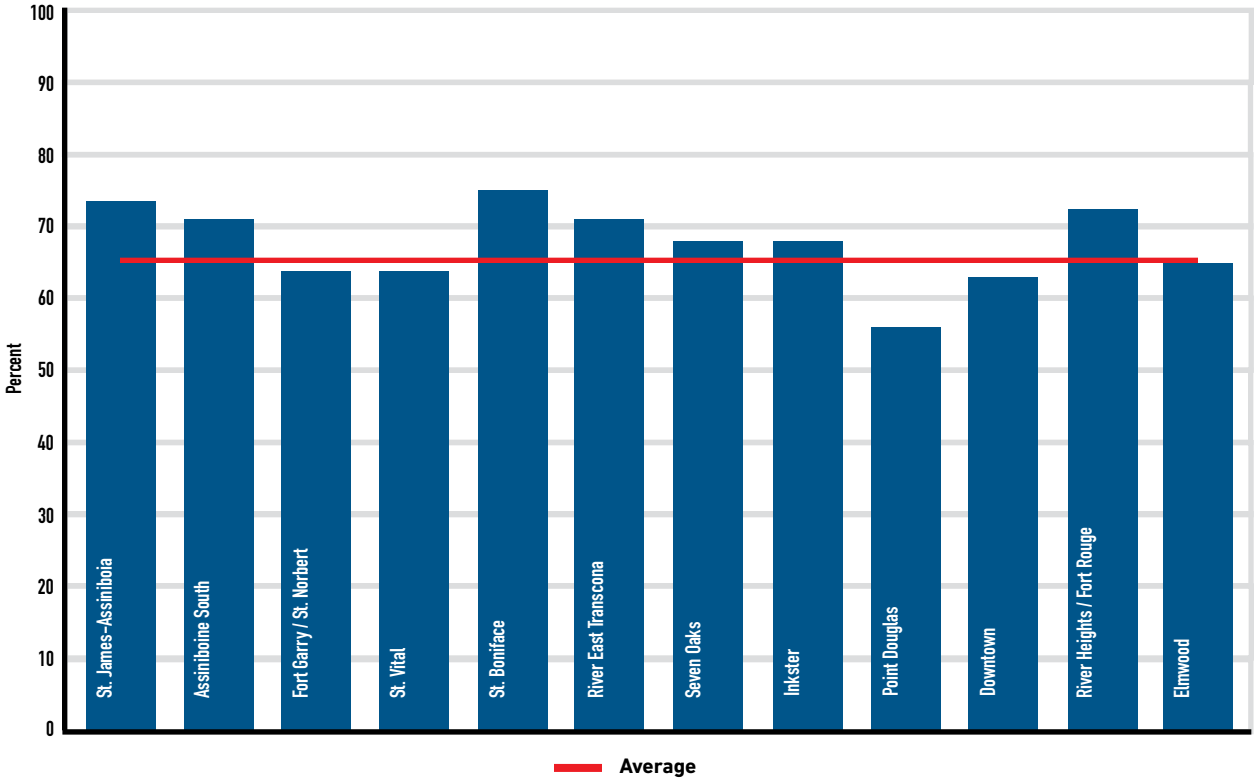
Source: Manitoba Families

READINESS TO LEARN

Readiness to Learn measures the percentage of children that are assessed as ready to learn when they enter kindergarten. Readiness to learn is measured using the Early Development Instrument (EDI)—a questionnaire that provides an indication of children's learning in their first five years of life at home. Children that begin school ready to learn are more likely to have future successes in learning throughout their lives.

In 2016-2017, 66 percent of children entering kindergarten were assessed as being ready to learn, based on EDI scores. The communities whose children were assessed as most ready to learn were St. Boniface (75 percent), River Heights (71 percent) and St. James–Assiniboia (73 percent), while Point Douglas (56 percent) and Downtown (63 percent) had the lowest EDI scores. The percent of children ready to learn in Winnipeg in 2016 was slightly higher than in 2012-2013 (63 percent).

Readiness to Learn in Winnipeg Neighbourhoods, 2016/17



Source: Healthy Child Manitoba

"HOW HAS COVID-19 AFFECTED YOUR ORGANIZATION?"

The Manitoba Child Care Association (MCCA) is a 4,000+ member organization made up of licensed child care facilities, Early Childhood Educators, Child Care Assistants, and Family Child Care Providers.

Jodie Kehl, Executive Director, MCCA

"This pandemic has amplified many challenges within Manitoba's early learning and child care sector. Licensed facilities and home-based providers have lost or reduced income while incurring extra costs. Many facilities that had waiting lists before are still struggling to return to their licensed capacity. This is leading to significant financial instability, particularly when the federal subsidies cease.

Child care facilities, some of which remained open at the onset of the pandemic, are strained but resilient. They quickly figured out how to physically distance when working with young children who thrive on relationships, rearranging their physical environments and increasing outdoor play. Some facilities connected with children and families through Zoom get-togethers while others put their programs on YouTube.

MCCA's role as the voice of early learning and child care in Manitoba has remained consistent, even if advocating looks very different. From the onset, MCCA developed resources for our members and informed governments of pressure points within the sector. For example, the difficulty of recruiting skilled and knowledgeable Early Childhood Educators—already a challenge before the pandemic—is even more so now.

The staff of Seven Oaks Child Day Care Centres connecting with their families and children during COVID-19. Photo submitted by the Manitoba Child Care Association.

If the pandemic reinforced anything, it's that reliable early learning and child care is essential. MCCA will continue to advocate for a comprehensive workforce strategy to support a stable, educated, and adequately remunerated early learning and child care sector. Thanks to child care, Manitoba works—figuratively and literally."

35

"HOW HAS COVID-19 AFFECTED YOUR ORGANIZATION?"

The West Central Women's Resource Centre (WCWRC) empowers women to help themselves, their families, and their community to safer, healthier lifestyles.

Lorie English, Executive Director, WCWRC

"One of the biggest impacts we saw immediately was food insecurity. Families we work with are on such a tight budget—we're talking $17 left after rent each month. When schools shut down, their breakfast and lunch programs shut down, too. A lot of panicked parents came to us, now unable to feed their kids.

WCWRC has been delivering food hampers twice a month to 150 of our most vulnerable families throughout the pandemic. When we heard kids at home were really struggling with their mental health, we also put together activity kits with board games, books, and crafts.

Now we're looking toward the holiday season. This is a really hard time for families who have lost their sense of community and connection. WCWRC is donating larger hampers this year with enough for a full holiday meal to 250 families in total.

Many families have mixed feelings about sending their kids back to school this fall. But those who can't afford daycare and don't have family support don't have a choice. If they work, they have to send their kids to school. If their kids have to stay home, they have to quit their jobs. That's it. For families who have kept their kids home, most of them don't have computers or tablets. It's a very different world without access to basic things like that.

In the long term, housing insecurity scares me most. Even at the best of times, finding safe, affordable 2- to 3-bedroom apartments in Winnipeg is like finding a unicorn. When the moratorium on evictions lifted, we knew it was going to be very difficult to find new housing for families. And being without housing puts them at far greater risk.

Mental health will also be one of the longest-reaching effects of the pandemic. Children are living in fear and dread all the time, which is no way to live. But it's beyond every parent's control."

Photo by Ian McCausland / WCWRC.

36

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

The natural environment encompasses all living and nonliving things occurring naturally in our community. Respect for the environment through sustainable practices contribute to clean water, clean air, and habitat for flora and fauna. Peg measures how our natural environment changes over time.

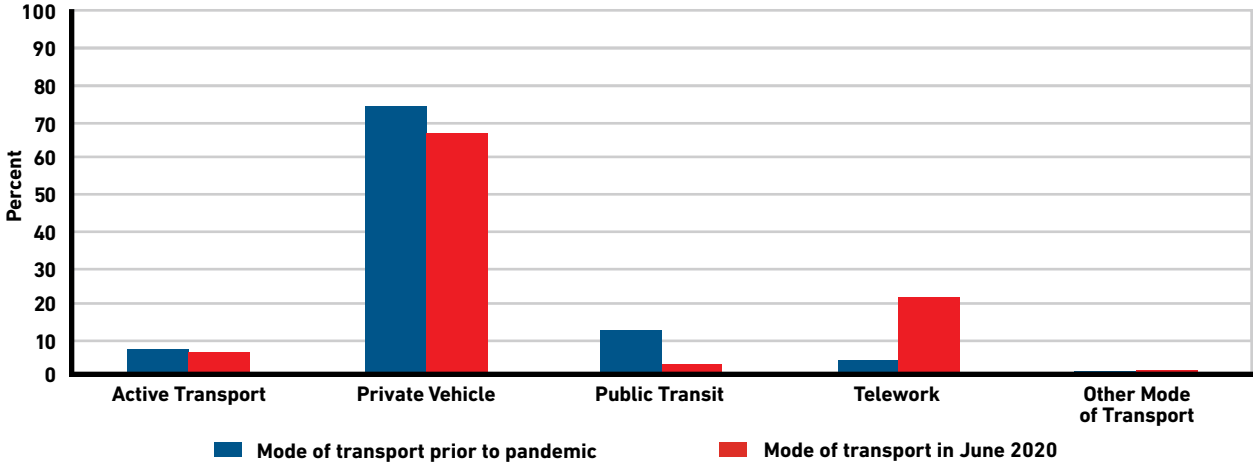
COVID-19 and Our Natural Environment

The way we spend time in 2020 shifted in ways that impact our natural environment. Staying home more often leads to higher residential environmental footprints. Our lockdown in the spring of 2020 also created a boom in active transportation. Will these shifts that connect to our natural environment stick around over time?

According to the City of Winnipeg, landfills saw an increase of more than 1,400 metric tons of trash trucked to the dump in March 2020 compared to March 2019. However, households are now using disposable personal protective equipment and creating more food waste as a result of the pandemic.

The way people move around our city changed dramatically in 2020. Data show how Canadian workers' commutes changed during the pandemic, with more people teleworking and fewer people getting themselves to work by car, transit, or active transportation. In March, vehicular traffic in Winnipeg declined by approximately 40 percent.[16] Vehicular traffic has since rebounded strongly, while public transit use remains substantially lower than usual. Active transportation spiked as people purchased bicycles and used Winnipeg's Open Streets in record numbers. The longer-term impact of these changes will be determined by measuring changes in commuting patterns and active transportation over time.

Workers' Mode of Transportation to Work Before and During COVID-19 Pandemic, 2020



Source: Savage, K. & Turcotte, M. (2020). Commuting to work during COVID-19.

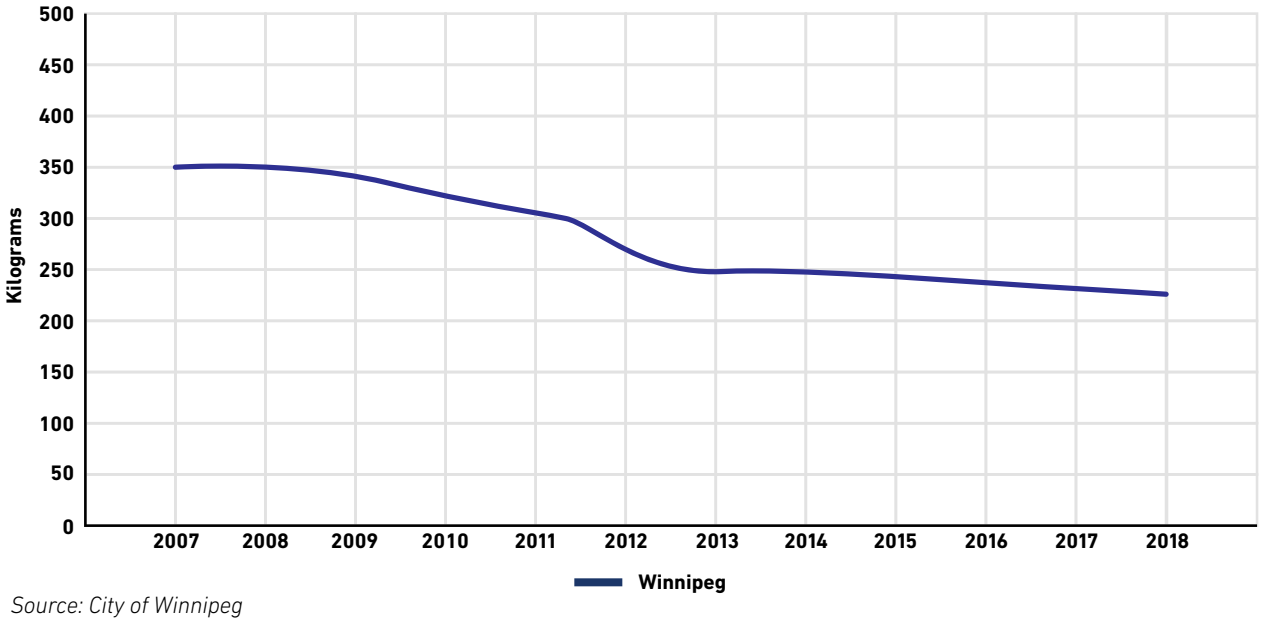
[16] *Callaghan, C. & Thompson, S. (2020). Traffic volumes down in Winnipeg amid pandemic: city data. Global Winnipeg.*

RESIDENTIAL WASTE TO LANDFILL

Residential waste going to the landfill measures the average amount of stuff (in kilograms) each person sends to the landfill over a year. Changes in data could relate to recycling, composting, and reuse, as well as overall decreases in total materials produced (e.g., decreased packaging). Diverting waste from landfills has important environmental benefits, including the reduction of greenhouse gases and increasing resource conservation.

In 2018, Winnipeggers sent, on average, 228.3 kilograms of waste to the landfill. This represents a decrease in per person waste of 8.7 percent since 2014 (250.1 kilograms).

Residential Waste Going to Landfill Per Capita, 2007 - 2018



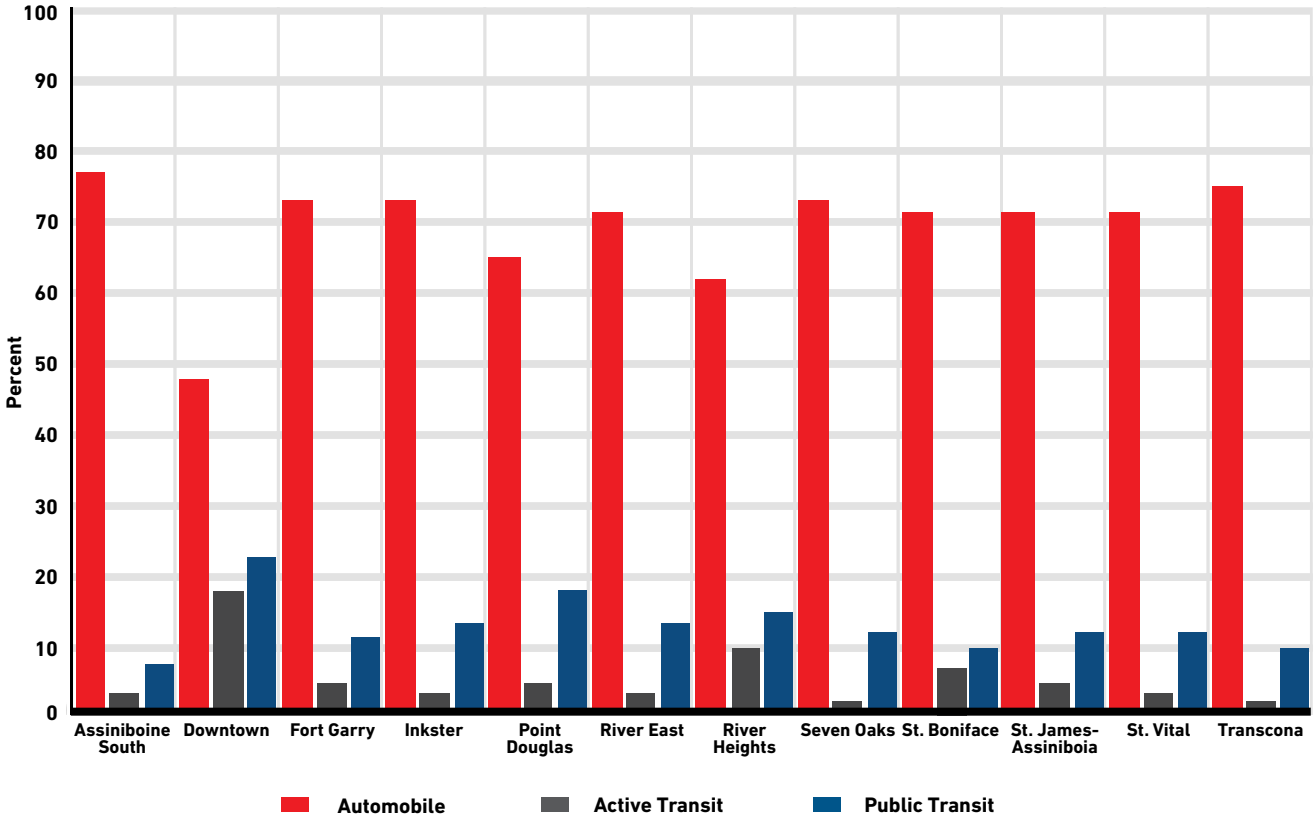
Source: City of Winnipeg

COMMUTING PATTERNS

Transportation is an unavoidable part of our daily lives, whether we are going to work, school, or social gatherings. Commuting Patterns shows the percentage of people who use public transit, active transit (e.g. walking or cycling), or an automobile (e.g., car, truck, van), either as a driver or passenger, to get to work.

According to the 2016 Census, automobile use remains the primary means of commuting to work in Canada. In 2016, 77.4 percent of Winnipeggers used an automobile to commute to work, while 14.9 percent used public transit and 6.7 percent used active transportation. Among those community characterization areas who were most likely to walk or cycle to work were Downtown (20.1 percent) and River Heights (12.1 percent), while the communities most likely to use public transit were Downtown (25.4 percent) and Point Douglas (20.8 percent).

Commuting Patterns by Winnipeg Neighbourhood, 2016



Source: Statistics Canada

"HOW HAS COVID-19 AFFECTED YOUR ORGANIZATION?"

Green Action Centre is a nonprofit organization encouraging practical green solutions for households, workplaces, schools, and communities.

Tracy Hucul, Executive Director, Green Action Centre

"A big impact we've seen in the community is the added pressure placed on teachers and parents, resulting in reduced time for competing priorities like environmental education and climate action. School transportation also looks very different this year, with dramatically reduced bus capacity and families scrambling to get their kids to school.

There was a big increase in biking and walking this summer, especially with Winnipeg's Open Streets initiative. However, our recent transportation surveys of schools and workplaces have already shown an increase in driving, which has negative environmental impacts.

Learning about composting and other green initiatives. Photo submitted by Green Action Centre.

Organizationally, Green Action Centre was hit hard. We saw a 60 percent commercial revenue reduction from our social enterprise, Compost Winnipeg, at the onset of the pandemic. Recovery of lost revenue is still ongoing. We also lost key sponsors for events, such as the Commuter Challenge.

Looking forward, we face two extraordinary crises of our time: climate change and COVID-19. This makes it all the more apparent we have no time to waste. We need to build our climate resilience and look for sustainable choices close to home."

"HOW HAS COVID-19 AFFECTED YOUR ORGANIZATION?"

Bike Winnipeg works to make cycling in Winnipeg a safe, enjoyable, accessible, and convenient transportation choice year-round.

Mark Cohoe, Executive Director, Bike Winnipeg

"We were absolutely blown away by the uptake in Winnipeg's pedestrian and cycling networks, especially with the expanded Open Streets network—something we partnered with like-minded groups to advocate for. Our counts this summer showed that Wellington Crescent saw up to five times as many pedestrians and 2.5 times as many cyclists as in 2016. That's amazing.

We also partnered with Seven Oaks House Museum and Save Our Seine to expand our themed group rides as a socially distanced activity. We led more than 300 participants over nearly 4,000 kms before the resurgence in cases forced us to shut our rides down.

Without question, the massive increase in the number of people riding their bikes this year shows many Winnipeggers would ditch their cars if provided with safe, convenient routes. We are hopeful they will continue to ride post-pandemic, and that this accelerates the development of a well-connected cycling network in our city."

Peg City Car Co-op's mission is to provide a safe, reliable, and inclusive carsharing program.

Philip Mikulec, Operations Manager, Peg City Car Co-op

"In March and April, we saw a 40 percent reduction in hours booked, and had to work quickly to mitigate losses. We put vehicles in storage, increased vehicle cleaning by 300 percent, and delayed expansion. By June, we were back to normal demand, but not all users came back—fewer people used the service more. It wasn't until the late summer that we returned to baseline user numbers.

An essential part of our mandate is to support community groups. We added a Frontline Price Plan, with substantially discounted rates for those who needed a car for extended periods. The plan was well received by community organizations, but there wasn't significant uptake from individuals.

It seems people continue to feel safe using our vehicles. Over the long term, changing commuting patterns will depend on how well we fund public and active transportation, how we build our infrastructure, and if people who drive pay for pollution and congestion. These are the fundamentals, with or without COVID-19."

SOCIAL VITALITY AND GOVERNANCE

Social vitality is the energy in our community. It reflects our sense of belonging and inclusion, and how engaged we are in our community. Governance concerns how our city is run and includes whether we have opportunities to get involved and have a say in governing processes.

COVID-19 and Our Social Vitality and Governance

COVID-19 will impact our social vitality and governance for years to come. Nonprofit and arts and culture sectors face significant challenges in 2020 and an uncertain future.

Early data shows that charitable donations are going down.[17] According to Imagine Canada, charity revenues have declined an average of 31percent since the onset of the pandemic, with 69 percent of charities reporting decreased revenues. Nearly three quarters of Canadian charities report lower donations. Angus Reid reports that nearly 40 percent of surveyed Canadians who have donated to at least one charity in the past two years say they're giving less since March.[18]

Over 80 percent of Winnipeg's registered charities operate in the social service sector (55 percent) or the health sector (28 percent).[19] Social services organizations are comparatively likely to have had layoffs, even though they are also more likely to report increased demand. To cope, charities have made significant reductions to paid staff and more cuts are likely. Imagine Canada estimates that charities have already laid off 37,000 full-time and 46,400 part-time paid staff, measuring triple the average percentages of staff they did in 2008/09. Nearly one in five charities have suspended or ceased their operations.

The pandemic hit Winnipeg's rich arts and culture sector hard. The Canada Council for the Arts conducted a survey of over 8,000 Canadians involved in arts and culture and found that no interviewees were untouched by the pandemic.[20] Artists, musicians, and other entertainers drew on the Canadian Emergency Response Benefit (CERB), the Canadian Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS), and other emergency supports heavily. The Canadian Council for the Arts report that 61 percent of respondents felt that the emergency aid measures would help them withstand the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, but sustained, targeted support is essential to support the arts.

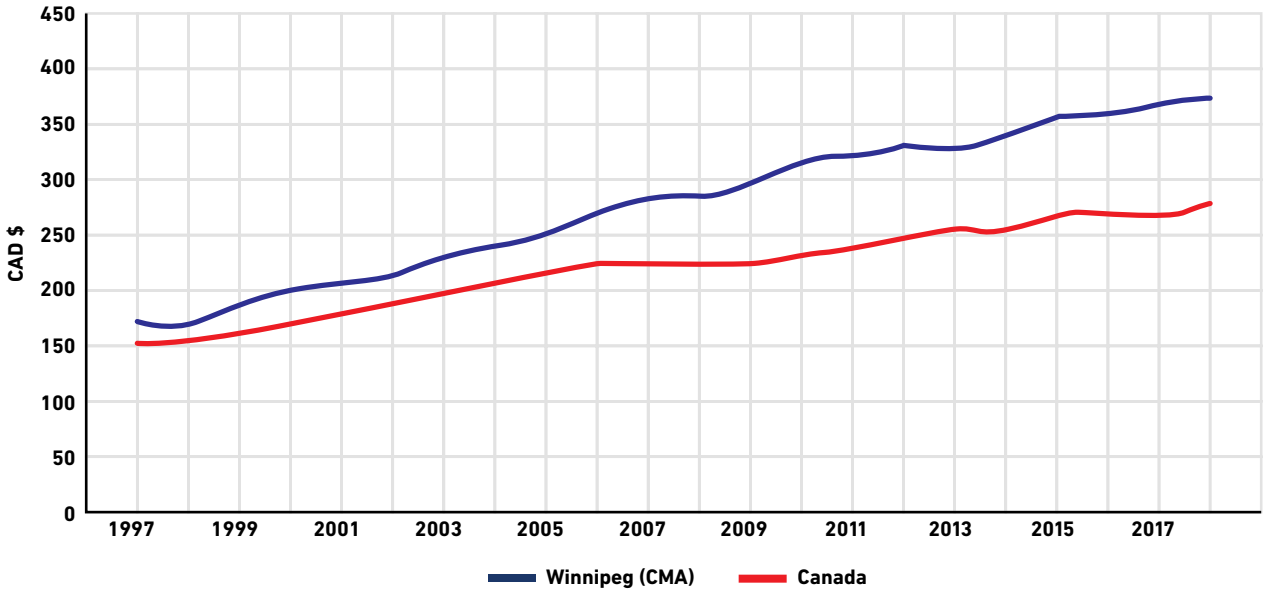
[17] *Lasby, D. (2020). Imagine Canada's Sector Monitor: Charities & the COVID-19 Pandemic.*
[18] *Blunt, M. (2020). Charitable donations in Manitoba dwindling amid COVID-19: survey. Global Winnipeg.*
[19] *Hutton, J. (2020). Fast Facts: Charitable Organizations vital for social and economic health. CCPA.*
[20] *Canada Council for the Arts. (2020). Input on measures to off-set impacts on arts sector of COVID-19.*

CHARITABLE DONATIONS

Charitable donations make a significant difference in the community, supporting organizations, causes, and values Canadians believe in and contributing to well-being. The charitable donations indicator measures the median amount donated by Winnipeggers per year. In other words, half of Winnipeggers who donated to charitable organizations donated greater than or equal to this amount, and half donated less than or equal to this amount.

In 2018, the median amount donated to charities was $420, up 10.5 percent from 2014 ($380). In 2018, Winnipeggers' median charitable donations were also $110 more than the Canadian median donation ($310). This trend of high generosity among Winnipeggers has been consistent over the past several years.

Median Charitable Donation, 1997 - 2018



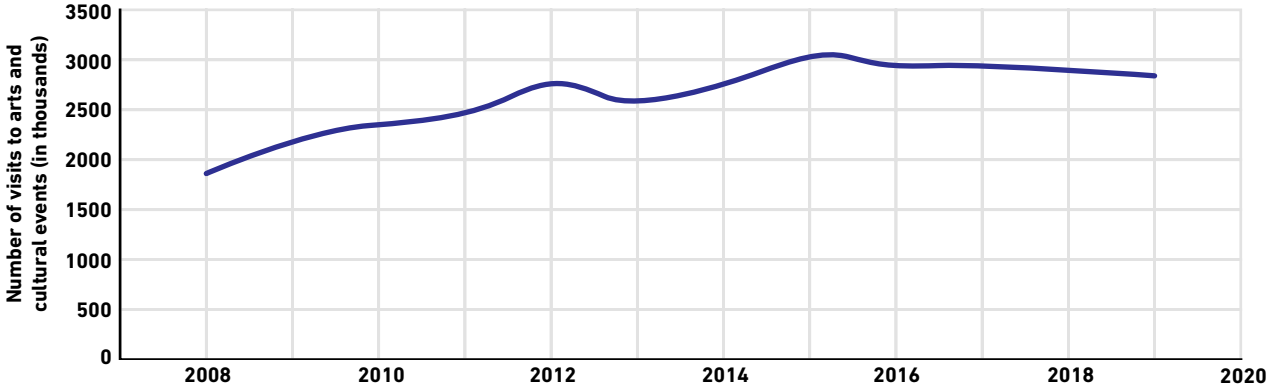
Source: Canada Revenue Agency, via Statistics Canada

PARTICIPATION IN THE ARTS

The arts are a critical element of any community's social vitality. They help define our identity, they attract tourists and residents, and give life to the community. The arts also contribute significantly to the economy. Peg's Participation in the Arts measures the total number of visits (in thousands) to arts and cultural events in Winnipeg. Participation is measured as the number of engagements; one individual could count towards multiple engagements over different events.

In 2019, there were 2.83 million visits to arts and cultural events in Winnipeg. Since 2015, Participation in the Arts has decreased by 5.7 percent (from 3 million visits).

Participation in the Arts in Winnipeg, 2008 - 2019



Source: Winnipeg Arts Council

A performer at the Winnipeg International Jazz Festival caught up in the moment. Photo by Matthew TenBruggencate.

"HOW HAS COVID-19 AFFECTED YOUR ORGANIZATION?"

United Way Winnipeg is Winnipeg's community fund. United Way donors invest in 100+ local agency partners and programs while also supporting nonprofit sector innovation and capacity building.

Kathy Knudsen, Vice-President of Community Impact, United Way Winnipeg

"As soon as the pandemic hit Manitoba, we communicated to all United Way agency partners our commitment to continued funding to let them focus on supporting urgent needs. We quickly established a COVID-19 Community Fund Response Fund, which has now supported 15 family resource centres and 14 homeless-serving agencies to help meet those immediate needs.

On October 15, we launched phone service for 211 Manitoba in partnership with the Government of Canada. Now Manitobans can dial 2-1-1, 24 hours a day, to reach a Community Navigator who will connect them with a range of services. During the spring, the most frequent requests for help were for food security and mental health supports.

United Way Winnipeg has adapted every element of our organization to ensure we remain a stabilizing force and responsive partner to support our community's most vulnerable."

The Winnipeg Foundation is Canada's first community foundation, where the interest earned from endowments generates a sustainable source of support for local charitable projects.

Megan Tate, Director of Community Grants, The Winnipeg Foundation

"In the earliest days of COVID-19, The Winnipeg Foundation's priority was supporting front-line agencies meeting the essential needs of vulnerable Winnipeggers—primarily food security and shelter. We worked to proactively fund organizations like family resource centres to put together essential needs kits (food, diapers, personal hygiene items) for families. As time went on, meeting essential needs expanded to include mental health and reducing social isolation.

The Foundation also recognized that the entire charitable sector was being impacted by COVID-19, and so launched Stabilization Grants in late spring to provide support for any local charity financially impacted by the pandemic. Difficulty fundraising, as well as how difficult it is for charities to plan, are the two biggest challenges we see as we continue to partner with local community agencies and support the charitable sector."

"HOW HAS COVID-19 AFFECTED YOUR ORGANIZATION?"

Artspace is a nonprofit arts corporation in the heart of the Exchange District, Winnipeg's cultural centre. Its mission is to create space for arts and culture to flourish.

Eric Plamondon, Executive Director, Artspace

"There are a lot of ways COVID-19 has hit us and Winnipeg artists. No more Artspace as a semi-public building. No more Cinémathèque showing work by Manitoba filmmakers to a full cinema. No writing workshops, theatre workshops, stop animation workshops. No film shoots in the green rooms. No Fringe plays. No festivals.

Artspace is far from the hub of overlapping, cross-pollinating activities it was meant to be.

For Winnipeg artists, adapting to the new reality has been... awkward. The success of Winnipeg art is in its relationship with an audience. Currently, that relationship is at a distance, or encouraged to go online. However, many art forms were not meant to exist virtually.

At a Drayway Art Lounge event and live mural installation hosted by Artspace. Photo submitted by Artspace.

This new reality has put severe economic stress on artists and institutions, but it also impacts patrons. Winnipeggers have a great relationship with the arts, but while the pandemic lasts, they will not be nourished through shared art experiences.

Not everyone will come back from this. If and when the gates of the arts reopen, it is unclear if we will still have the keys to the institutions or the human resources to run them, if artists will be ready, and if we will have an audience. We must invest in the arts so they continue to serve our community."

COMMUNITIES AS EXPERTS

Winnipeggers are the experts on how COVID-19 impacts their lives. One way that Peg draws on this expertise is to share data that matters. Peg's original set of indicators were selected through a comprehensive consultation process. In this year's report, we paired our data with emerging official statistics and stories from our community to paint a picture of the pandemic's impacts here at home.

Early data shows that the pandemic is profoundly shaping all aspects of our lives in different ways. COVID-19 and associated physical distancing requirements are not necessarily equal for everyone; data suggests patterns of inequality that we will continue to monitor. Our stories from the community show that organizations are adapting fast and committed to delivering crucial programming. Altogether, our report shows that good data is crucial to understand the impacts of COVID-19 in our community and ensure that recovery efforts benefit everyone, especially people in our city who are at risk of being left behind.

Encouragingly, other institutions across our city are adopting a similar, evidence-based approach to plan for the future. In 2020, the City of Winnipeg adopted Peg indicators to track its 25-year vision for the city's future, outlined in the *OurWinnipeg 2045* planning document. Peg indicators will help the City of Winnipeg orient its planning toward activities that support residents' well-being, and transparently report on progress. In this time of great uncertainty and crisis, adopting a vision for the future signals hope, optimism, and our community's drive for future prosperity for all. Similar to Peg, *OurWinnipeg 2045* is also aligned to the SDGs to serve as a blueprint for our community to grow in sustainable and equitable ways.

Peg is committed to evolving and adapting to suit Winnipeg's data needs. Aligning our community work to the SDGs gives us a shared global language to discuss solutions, as cities around the world share how they are emerging from crisis to longer-term recovery. At the same time, the SDGs' commitment to leaving no one behind can be applied to develop locally targeted policies to support all Winnipeggers and rebuild our community, stronger.

Photo by Matthew TenBruggencate

Peg is a community indicator system that was developed to inspire action and create change through tracking key measures of well-being. Peg measures the health of our community year-over-year in ways that count. Our mission is to build the knowledge and capacity of Winnipeggers to work together to achieve and sustain the well-being of current and future generations.

mypeg.ca

United Way Winnipeg

United Way Winnipeg is Winnipeg's community fund. Guided by volunteers and the wisdom of our community, United Way Winnipeg donors invest in 100+ local agency partners and programs to ensure an essential network of support.

United Way Winnipeg also supports capacity building in the nonprofit sector and brings together diverse partners to tackle tough challenges. United Way Winnipeg is about connecting Winnipeggers from all walks of life around a single goal — making Winnipeg a better place for all of us.

IISD
International Institute for Sustainable Development

The International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) is an award-winning independent think tank championing solutions to our planet's greatest sustainability challenges.

IISD's vision is a balanced world where people and the planet thrive. Their mission is to accelerate solutions that drive a global transition to fair economies, clean water and a stable climate. Through excellence, independence, creativity and collaboration, IISD reports on international negotiations, conducts rigorous research and engages citizens, businesses and policy-makers in the shared goal of developing sustainably.