



# Human Rights Committee of Council

## Strategic Plan

**2023 - 2026**



This multi-year Strategic Plan was developed by Tracey Proctor in partnership with the Human Rights Committee of Council (HRCC), September 2022.

This is a living document. Evidence, actions, and recommendations related to human rights emerge regularly. This plan reflects the information collected at the time of development and is designed to be regularly reviewed and updated by the HRCC.

If you have any questions about the Strategic Plan, please contact Aly Raposo, Committee Coordinator - [ARaposo@winnipeg.ca](mailto:ARaposo@winnipeg.ca)

*“Where, after all, do universal human rights begin? In small places, close to home – so close and so small that they cannot be seen on any maps of the world. Unless these rights have meaning there, they have little meaning anywhere. Without concerned citizen action to uphold them close to home, we shall look in vain for progress in the larger world.”*

*Eleanor Roosevelt*





## Land acknowledgement

The City of Winnipeg, and by extension the Human Rights Committee of Council, are located in Treaty One Territory, the home and traditional lands of the Anishinaabe (Ojibwe), Ininew (Cree), and Dakota peoples, and in the National Homeland of the Red River Métis. Our drinking water comes from Shoal Lake 40 First Nation, in Treaty Three Territory.



The Gakina Gidinawemaaganidim (We Are All Related) mural has been installed at City Hall. The art piece commissioned as part of the City's long term commitment to human rights and anti-racism. Learn more about the significance of the mural.

## Executive Summary

The Human Rights Committee of Council (HRCC) recognizes that diversity is a fundamental characteristic of Winnipeg. The committee's role as an advisory body to the Mayor and City Council allows for a public perspective on human rights, equity, diversity, immigration, age-friendly, access and disabilities, and peace-related issues, with a lens on how associated matters affect the community and civic operations. This work relies on co-operative relationships with both City Departments and community organizations to inform and support the HRCC's efforts, with the goal of initiating policy ideas that support human rights.

As the HRCC is a relatively new committee (established in 2019), with a broad range of issues to work on, a strategic plan is required to provide the committee with further focus and the ability to determine the work they feel is necessary, as well as ensure the resources and support they require are in place. Four priorities were identified through the feedback process and will frame the basis of the work of the HRCC for the next four years (2023 – 2026). They will be worked on simultaneously and include:

- the creation of an annual workplan;
- increasing community engagement and development of partnerships;
- committee development (HRCC and sub-committees); and
- the establishment of Winnipeg as a Human Rights City.

As Winnipeg elects a new mayor this fall, and Council begins the work of setting its priorities for the next four years, this strategic plan will position the HRCC to present itself as a resource that desires to create pro-active solutions to human rights issues. Should the committee undertake the initiative for Winnipeg to become a Human Rights City, the HRCC will work with Council to champion a human rights culture in our city that is inclusive, mutually respectful, and equitable for all citizens.

## Process

The development of this plan included three phases. In Phase One preliminary research was conducted with three main stakeholder groups – 1) HRCC committee members, 2) Mayor Bowman, Aly Raposo, Committee Coordinator and supporting Public Service members, and 3) members of the Accessibility & Inclusion and Equity & Diversity sub-committees. This preliminary research provided insight into how the committee currently operates, as well as how it might shape itself in the future in response to current and emerging conditions. Participants attended an initial research meeting where discussion questions were presented for feedback. Members who could not attend those meetings were emailed the questions and asked to provide written feedback by email.

Phase Two involved one-on-one interviews with each HRCC member. A prepared questionnaire guided the one-hour discussions and each participant responded based on their own thoughts and opinions.

Phase One and Two findings set the stage for the Phase Three in-person strategic planning session on August 15, 2022. An organizational SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis started the discussion and was followed with the identification of four objectives the committee chose to work on, including a framework for how they will be addressed over the next four years. The plan coincides with the municipal election cycle.

Vision and Mission statements were discussed, along with other recommendations that are included in the plan.

## **Vision**

Winnipeg is a vibrant, diverse, fair and safe city built on the foundations of universal human rights.

## **Mission**

To provide public perspective and advisement to Winnipeg's Mayor and City Council on human rights, equity, diversity, inclusion, immigration, peace, age-friendly, access and disability-related issues and policies, and monitor Council's progress in implementing HRCC recommendations.

## **Values**

These values ensure all efforts to improve human rights in Winnipeg consider the perspectives, recommendations, and implications for all members of the community, including those who are marginalized and most vulnerable. These values will guide the work of this plan.

### **Anti-Oppression**

We recognize oppressions (systems of supremacy and discrimination) that exist in society and seek to mitigate their effects.

### **Anti-Racism**

We actively oppose racism by advocating for changes in political, economic, and social life.

### **Anti-Stigma**

We actively oppose stigma associated with mental health, substance use, and homelessness.

### **Equity**

We commit to systemic equity, which is the pursuit of fairness, justice, and a focus on outcomes that are most appropriate for a given group, recognizing different challenges, needs, and histories.

### **Diversity**

We value diversity and acknowledge that differences between people (i.e., race, gender, sexual orientation, class, age, country of origin, education, religion, geography, physical or cognitive abilities) are valued assets and commit to strive for diverse representation as a critical step toward equity.

### **Inclusivity**

We recognize that everyone has different challenges, risks, and needs. We also recognize that there are segments of Winnipeg residents that are particularly vulnerable, and we are committed to ensuring their needs are taken into consideration.

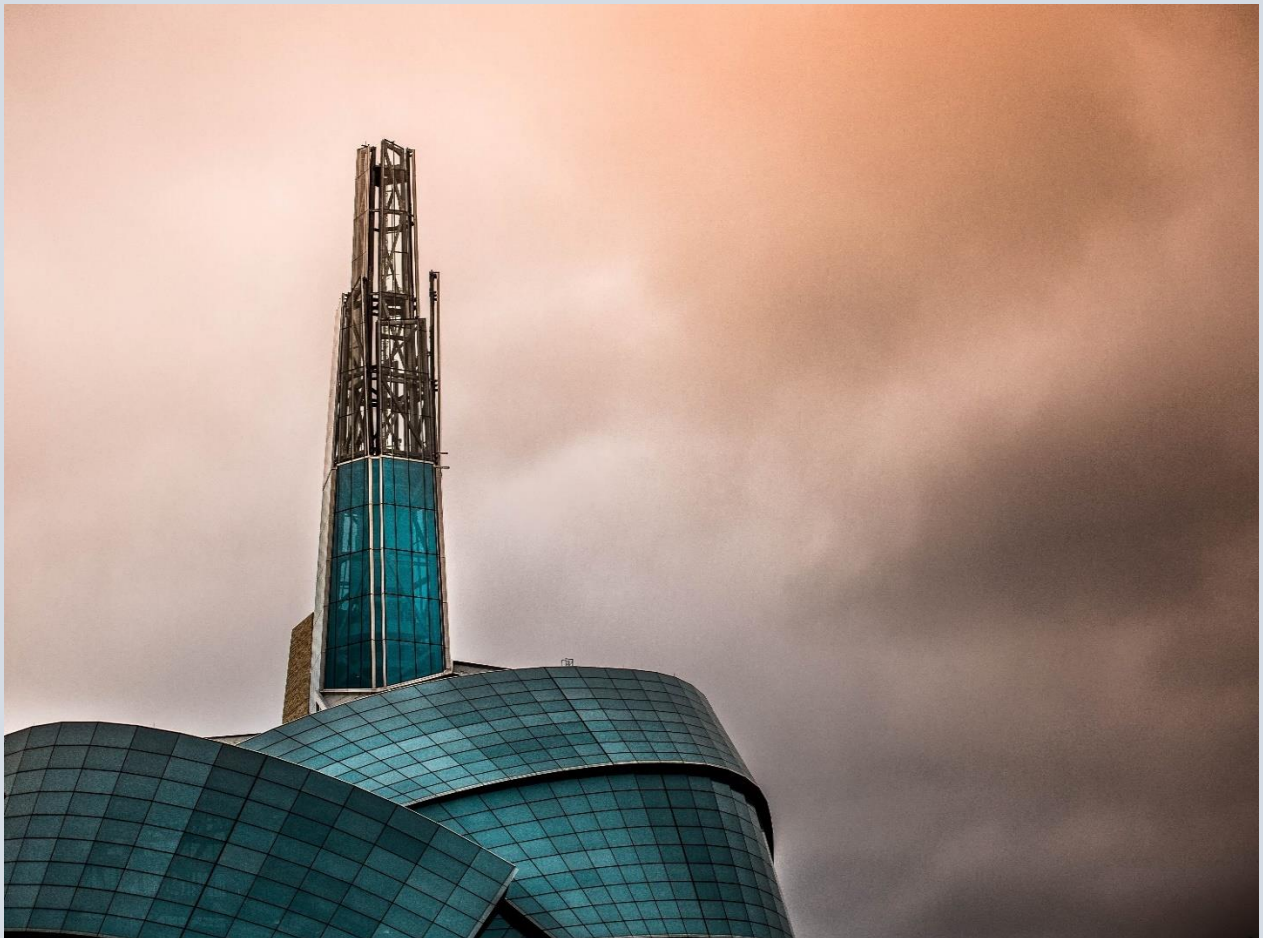


**Intersectionality**

We acknowledge that multiple dynamics of privilege and oppression (i.e., race, gender, class, sexuality, age, ability, religion, citizenship/immigration status) operate simultaneously in complex and compounding ways and must be considered to fully understand oppression and how to address it.

**Reconciliation**

We are committed to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's *Calls to Action* to establish and maintain a mutually respectful relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples in Canada through awareness of the past, acknowledgment of the harm that has been and continues to be inflicted on Indigenous Peoples, atonement for the causes, and action to change behaviour.





## **HRCC Priorities**

Four priorities were identified through the feedback process and will frame the basis of the work of the HRCC for the next four years. They will be worked on simultaneously.

### **Creation of an Annual Workplan**

The committee agreed that an annual workplan will establish priorities for each of the committees. Due to the upcoming civic election the committee realizes it is key to consult with the new Mayor and Council to determine their priorities to ensure there is alignment.

### **Community Engagement and Partnership Development**

The committee has successfully created workforce and public engagement opportunities in the past few years and plans to continue with these efforts. As well, the committee plans to join the City of Winnipeg's Indigenous Accord, create an online presence via a web page on the city's site and social media, create criteria and intake periods for grant funding and assist the sub-committees to create community partnerships that will benefit the work of the HRCC.

### **Committee Development (HRCC and Sub-Committees)**

All committee members (including sub-committees) indicated they lack understanding of City Council procedures and decision-making. It was agreed that the development of on-boarding and orientation procedures would be helpful and strengthen the knowledge and understanding of members.

The sub-committees require greater focus. A review of committee structures will identify where refinements must occur. A process for recruitment and selection of members will lead to interested candidates being attracted and selected to join the committees.

The sub-committee work will be included in the annual workplan, with the possibility of forming working groups to tackle specific projects. The sub-committees will be encouraged to seek advice or education from local organizations and form working partnerships where expertise will aid work the sub-committees desire to undertake.

## **Establishing Winnipeg as a Human Rights City**

In June 2022 Jackie Smith, Professor of Sociology, and Co-coordinator of the Pittsburgh Human Rights City Alliance (University of Pittsburgh) and Fulbright Canada Research Chair in Globalization and Cultural Studies (McMaster University) visited Winnipeg to meet with people in our city involved in human rights work, including HRCC member and University of Winnipeg Human Rights Program Director Kristi Kenyon, Mayor Bowman, Councilor Chambers, Ericka Fritzsche and Aly Raposo.

Prof. Smith sent an email message after her visit saying, “Based upon my research on human rights and cities, one thing that stands out for me is the extent to which Winnipeg represents an ideal model of a “human rights city.” In fact, I can think of no other city (at least in North America) that is as deserving of the name as is Winnipeg. It seems fitting, then, for Winnipeg to join the ranks of a growing number of cities around the world that are explicit in naming human rights as a formal commitment and guide to the policy and cultural work in their communities and municipal governments.”

Prof. Smith believes that the HRCC would be an appropriate body to initiate a conversation in Winnipeg about becoming a Human Rights City and how best to move this idea forward. The HRCC is interested to investigate the work needed to do this.

## **We Must Ask the Question**

The only Canadian city with the Human Rights City designation is Edmonton. Their discussions began in 2003 and by 2006 much of the work was done. The Edmonton project would be a logical starting point for exploration. (See attachments on the Resources page for the Human Rights Edmonton Project.)

The Phase One report for their project states, “By becoming a Human Rights City, Edmonton declared itself to be a city of imperfections. The citizens of the city are committed to remedy the deficiencies that exist between the reality of citizens’ lives and experiences and the inalienable human rights that are the common birthright of all humankind -- whether you live in Rosario, Argentina, Nagpur, India, or Edmonton, Canada. It is a commitment to humility and to compassion, a commitment to act ethically and morally as a community to better the Common Good. Most importantly, it is a lifelong commitment to work cooperatively in addressing the needs of fellow citizens who are unable to enjoy the full expression of their rights to be human.”

While other Canadian cities have undertaken significant human rights initiatives, none have fully committed to becoming a Human Rights City. After twenty years, it is surely time for another city to take up the cause. The HRCC should ask Winnipeggers the question, “Can Winnipeg become a Human Rights City?”



## Objectives and Action Steps

To create an annual workplan	To engage with the community and create partnerships	To establish Winnipeg as a Human Rights City	To develop the committees (HRCC and sub-committees)
<p><b>Year One action steps:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Consult with new Mayor and Council to determine their priorities. Examine these to see where current HRCC work fits and what adjustments may need to occur to create alignment. <b>Committee Coordinator and HRCC</b></li> <li>2. Create an overview for council outlining current and proposed HRCC activities and plans. Present HRCC as a resource to Council that desires to create pro-active solutions to human rights issues. <b>Chair/ Committee Coordinator</b></li> <li>3. Formulate a one-year workplan that encompasses the HRCC and sub-comms, considering Council plans and priorities, required resources, constraints, and timing. <b>HRCC (possible working group task)</b></li> </ol>	<p><b>Year One action steps:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continue workforce and public engagement activities - I.E. Online Speaker series. <b>Committee Coordinator/ Public Service</b></li> <li>2. Explore how the HRCC can raise awareness, provide support, and collaborate on the City of Winnipeg's Indigenous Accord. <b>Committee Coordinator/ Public Service</b></li> <li>3. Create annual report. <b>Committee Coordinator</b></li> <li>4. Develop criteria for grant application and disbursement and assign two intake periods each year. <b>HRCC</b></li> <li>5. Create an online presence via web page and social media, including areas for explanation of committee work, grant funding info, public information regarding HRCC activities. <b>Committee Coordinator and Communications</b></li> </ol>	<p><b>Year One action steps:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Explore work required to establish Winnipeg as a Human Rights City including buy-in from mayor and council, advisement from experts in human rights city work and outreach to other human rights cities. <b>Committee Coordinator / Working group</b></li> <li>2. Form a working group to move forward with identifying activities required for project - I.E., community engagement exercise. Consult with Engage Winnipeg to determine scope of that work. <b>Committee Coordinator/ Working group</b></li> </ol>	<p><b>Year One action steps:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop orientation and on-boarding procedures for new and existing members of all committees. Includes a review of sub-comm structures and refinement where needed. <b>Committee Coordinator/ Committee Clerk</b></li> <li>2. Ensure committees are familiarized with the strategic plan and how their work relates to the plan. <b>Committee Coordinator</b></li> <li>3. Call for applications to HRCC. Triage some of these applications for potential sub-committee membership or advertise sub-committee position as a separate opportunity. <b>City Clerk's/ Chair/ Committee Coordinator</b></li> <li>4. Review strategic plan to ensure objectives and action items are being addressed. <b>All committees</b></li> </ol>



To create an annual workplan	To engage with the community and create partnerships	To establish Winnipeg as a Human Rights City	To develop the committees (HRCC and sub-committees)
<p><b>Year two action steps:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Create annual work-plan. <b>Suggested plan item:</b> How does the public address human rights issues with the City?Examine City mechanisms currently in place for members of the public to address human rights issues / launch complaints. <b>A&amp;I Sub-committee or working group</b></li> <li>2. Look at other Human Rights cities that have experience with these issues. <b>Committee Coordinator/A&amp;I sub-committee</b></li> <li>3. Provide information to the public via the HRCC web page on how to address or report human rights issues to the City. <b>HRCC/Committee Coordinator</b></li> </ol>	<p><b>Year two action steps:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continue workforce and public engagement activities. <b>Committee Coordinator/ Public Service</b></li> <li>2. Create annual report. <b>Committee Coordinator</b></li> <li>3. Review web and social media pages, updating where needed, with additional content added. <b>Committee Coordinator/ Public Service</b></li> <li>4. Review grant processes to ensure they're working well. <b>Committee Coordinator</b></li> </ol>	<p><b>Year two action steps:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Conduct community engagement activities -based on schedule developed with Engage Winnipeg - to raise awareness of the Human Rights City concept and gain public buy-in. <b>Committee Coordinator/Working group/ Public Service</b></li> <li>2. Undertake other recommended activities/steps to forward the Human Rights City designation. <b>Committee Coordinator/HRCC/Working group</b></li> </ol>	<p><b>Year two action steps:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review sub-committee refinements, including resource and membership requirements, to determine if committee operations have improved. Re-visit amalgamation question. <b>Committee Coordinator/HRCC/ Sub-committees</b></li> <li>2. Ongoing member recruitment. <b>Committee Coordinator/Sub-committee Chairs</b></li> <li>3. Sub-committees create potential partnership list and prioritize the development of these through outreach and meeting or presentation opportunities. <b>Committee Coordinator/Sub-committees</b></li> <li>4. Review strategic plan to ensure objectives and action items are being addressed. <b>All</b></li> </ol>

To create an annual workplan	To engage with the community and create partnerships	To establish Winnipeg as a Human Rights City	To develop the committees (HRCC and sub-committees)
<p><b>Year Three action steps:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Create annual workplan. <b>HRCC</b></li> <li>2. Develop a report card which can be used to ensure human rights compliance among City projects that have a direct impact on the public. I.E., street renewal. <b>A&amp;I sub-committee or working group</b></li> <li>3. Set a timeframe to review the report card with designated departments, receive feedback and recommend solutions where deficiencies may have been identified. Report to Council on findings. <b>HRCC</b></li> </ol>	<p><b>Year Three action steps:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Suggested idea:</b> Creation of an HRCC Human Rights Citizen Award to be awarded each year. <b>HRCC</b></li> <li>2. Continue workforce and public engagement activities. <b>Committee Coordinator/ Public Service</b></li> <li>3. Create annual report. <b>Committee Coordinator</b></li> <li>4. Review web and social media pages, updating where needed and additional content added. <b>Committee Coordinator/ Public Service</b></li> </ol>	<p><b>Year Three action steps:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Human Rights City designation is reached. Create an event or ceremony to mark the occasion. Could include hosting a human rights conference or summit to raise awareness of a specific issue. <b>Committee Coordinator/HRCC/Working group</b></li> </ol>	<p><b>Year Three action steps:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review sub-committee work – includes relationship with HRCC, development of partnerships and subsequent benefits realized. Identify gaps or resources required by committees. <b>Committee Coordinator/ HRCC/Sub-committees</b></li> <li>2. Review strategic plan to ensure objectives and action items are being addressed. <b>All committees</b></li> </ol>

To create an annual workplan	To engage with the community and create partnerships	To establish Winnipeg as a Human Rights City	To develop the committees (HRCC and sub-committees)
<p><b>Year Four action steps:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Create annual workplan.</li> <li>2. Strategic planning cycle begins. Review committee work from previous three years as part of upcoming strategic planning process. Align planning process to occur six months post-election to ensure Council priorities will align with plan development. <b>Chair/ Committee Coordinator/ HRCC</b></li> </ol>	<p><b>Year Four action steps:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. If taken up in Year Three - select HRCC Human Rights Citizen Award. <b>HRCC</b></li> <li>2. Review engagement initiatives from previous three years to include in upcoming strategic planning process. <b>HRCC</b></li> <li>3. Continue workforce and public engagement activities. <b>Committee Coordinator/ Public Service</b></li> <li>4. Create annual report. <b>Committee Coordinator</b></li> <li>5. Review web and social media pages, updating where needed and additional content added. <b>Committee Coordinator/ Public Service</b></li> </ol>	<p><b>Year Four action steps:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review initiatives from previous three years to include in upcoming strategic planning process. <b>HRCC</b></li> <li>2. Continue work and activities related to Human Rights City designation. <b>Committee Coordinator /HRCC/Working group</b></li> </ol>	<p><b>Year Four action steps:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review operations of all committees over previous three years to include in upcoming strategic planning process. <b>HRCC</b></li> </ol>

## Recommendations

Discussions during all phases of the planning highlighted areas the committee felt could support their work. These are recommendations from those discussions.

### Sub-committee operation

1. Strengthening and supporting the sub-committees (SC) was mentioned often and included suggestions for the development of recruitment and on-boarding procedures to ensure suitable members are selected and are aware of the role they will play on the SC. Membership may currently be too casual, so formalizing the position description and expectations would help. Terms for SC members could be created to foster longevity and after missing three meetings membership would be terminated. Recruitment through outreach to certain organizations that could recommend someone would help fill specific needs. As well, filling of SC roles could occur at the same time the public are invited to join civic committees each year.
2. Creating set meeting dates and times for the year ahead would ensure members can commit well in advance. Sending out a draft agenda with a meeting reminder several days in advance also offers members the chance to ask for items to be added, as well as prepare for discussion. SC meeting agendas should also be provided to the HRCC in advance. With the hope that the Covid virus diminishes, the sub-committees would benefit from, even occasionally, gathering in person for a meeting or presentation and to enjoy some camaraderie.
3. The sub-committees must operate with intention. Topics or issues each committee finds important should be brainstormed and prioritized, as well as determining what information and supports are required to work on a topic. This list should be shared with the HRCC to ensure they are aware and in favour of what the SC intentions are. Another benefit could be found in setting a protocol for determining if an issue the SC wishes to bring forward to the HRCC and/or Council falls within the City's mandate before spending time on an issue that may not be able to move forward. SCs should also be aware they can request more information when needed – I.E., looking at a report, plan or by-law to see what the City plans to do, or has done/decided regarding an issue.



4. Discussion also took place around amalgamating the two sub-committees into one group. Pros and cons were weighed and the HRCC decided to keep the two groups separate for now and focus on improving their functionality. The HRCC will review the operation of the SCs in Year Two of the strategic plan to determine if recommended changes have been implemented and if SC operations have improved.
5. Another suggestion was to create working groups for projects that require more commitment or expertise. SC and HRCC members could be recruited, as well as external supports such as a community organization or agency. This would allow members to work on what they are interested/ experienced in, as well as foster community partnerships.

#### **HRCC operation**

1. Members almost unanimously felt they do not fully understand how Council's decision-making process works, as well as the roles of the Public Service departments that support the committee work. A more informative on-boarding and orientation of all committee members (HRCC and SC) is needed and will be planned with the assistance of the City Clerk's office.
2. Since the committee meets every second month, members could be provided with a monthly email update concerning motions or discussions that have taken place about an item they are working on. Members could also be provided with other information I.E., news clippings of local human rights issues coverage to inform their work.
3. Space for informal meetings or conversations was mentioned often, as members felt this would help create a sense of community that would boost the committee. Perhaps once a quarter an informal meeting could take place, with a topic or presentation for discussion, in addition to the regular bi-monthly meetings. These meetings would be easier to schedule than trying to add more formal meetings to the City calendar. HRCC members should be aware of upcoming SC meetings, be provided with the meeting agenda and feel free to attend even if they are not a SC member.

## Resources

### City of Winnipeg:

Our Winnipeg – 2045

Welcoming Winnipeg

Newcomer Welcome & Inclusion Policy

Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Policy

Poverty Reduction Strategy

Anti-Racism Week

Accessibility Plan – 2021-22

Engage Winnipeg

City of Winnipeg Indigenous Accord

HRCC Terms of Reference (Dec. 2018) – EPC report – Item 4

<https://clkapps.winnipeg.ca/DMIS/ViewDoc.asp?DocId=17482&SectionId=516215&InitUrl=>

### Other:

Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015

The Anti-Oppression Network - <https://theantioppressionnetwork.com/>

Maytree Foundation - <https://maytree.com/what-we-focus-on/human-rights-cities/>

European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights - HUMAN RIGHTS CITIES IN THE EU — A FRAMEWORK FOR REINFORCING RIGHTS LOCALLY (2021) - [fra-2021-human-rights-cities-in-the-eu\\_en.pdf](#)

Human Rights Edmonton Project -

<http://s411069912.onlinehome.us/sites/default/files/files/Research-Report-1.pdf>

<http://s411069912.onlinehome.us/sites/default/files/files/Microsoft-Word-HRC-Report-October-2007-Draft-One.pdf>

John Humphrey Centre for Peace and Human Rights - <https://www.jhcentre.org>

Canadian Urban Institute - <https://canurb.org/>