




2026 – 2028 Strategic Plan

**Strengthening Community Centres.
Strengthening Communities.**



Land and Water Acknowledgements

We acknowledge that Winnipeg's community centres 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 water is sourced from Shoal Lake 40 First Nation.



2026 – 2028

GCWCC Strategic Plan

Strengthening Community Centres. Strengthening Communities

Community centres have been at the heart of neighbourhood life in Winnipeg for generations. Rooted in grassroots recreation and sport, they have provided spaces for people to gather, connect, and build community since the 1920s. As the city grew – particularly through suburban expansion in the 1960s and 1970s and the Unicity amalgamation – so too did the community centre system.

Today, Winnipeg’s community centre system includes 63 centres operating across 81 locations, forming a city-wide network that reflects the diversity of the communities they serve. These spaces continue to play a vital role in supporting recreation, connection, and a sense of belonging.

Across the city, community centres are powered by dedicated volunteers, boards, and staff who work tirelessly to respond to the needs of the communities they serve. They support people of all ages, bring neighbours together, create opportunities for recreation and learning, and provide spaces where people feel welcomed and included.



At the same time, community centres are navigating growing pressures. Facilities are aging, community needs are becoming more complex, and many centres are operating with limited capacity. There is also a growing need for these spaces to adapt to and reflect the changing needs of the communities they serve.

This Strategic Plan outlines how the General Council of Winnipeg Community Centres (GCWCC) will work alongside community centres, partners, and the City to strengthen the system as a whole over the next three years. It reflects both the realities community centres are facing today and the opportunities to build a stronger, more connected system for the future.

What Informed This Plan

This Strategic Plan builds on extensive engagement conducted through the [Plan 2045](#) process, which included input from community centre volunteers, GCWCC and City staff, and community organizations across Winnipeg.



Rather than duplicating engagement, GCWCC drew on this work to ensure the plan reflects the voices and experiences of those directly involved in the community centre system.

The GCWCC Board reviewed the Plan 2045 recommendations, identifying areas most closely aligned with its role. Building on this foundation, the Board participated in a strategic planning workshop to define the organization's vision, mission, values, and priorities, grounded in current realities and future needs.

Draft priorities were then shared with community centre districts for validation, ensuring the plan is practical, relevant, and reflective of the system it is intended to support.

What we Heard

Insights from Plan 2045 and subsequent discussions highlight several consistent themes across Winnipeg's community centre system:

- Community centres are navigating increasing complexity with limited capacity
- There is a need for stronger coordination and shared tools
- Aging infrastructure requires long-term planning and sustained investment
- Centres want support to adapt to changing community needs
- Equity and inclusion must be reflected in practice, not just intention
- Funding processes can be difficult to navigate and sustain

These insights reflect shared experiences across the system and have directly shaped the priorities outlined in this plan.

Our Role

The General Council of Winnipeg Community Centres (GCWCC) was established in 1971 to promote cooperation and communication among community centres and between centres and the City of Winnipeg.

Over time, GCWCC's role has evolved in response to the changing needs of the community centre system. Today, this includes leadership in areas such as facility planning, governance support, grant administration, and, where needed, direct operational support.

Community centres across Winnipeg operate in a wide range of contexts, each shaped by the unique needs, strengths, and priorities of the communities they serve.

GCWCC plays a central role in supporting community centres within this environment – providing guidance, addressing common challenges, and advocating for improvements that benefit the system as a whole.

We do this by:

- connecting community centres with one another
- advocating for shared needs and priorities
- providing tools, resources, and guidance
- helping build a more coordinated and sustainable system



Our role is not to direct individual centres, but to support, connect, and strengthen the system as a whole.



Our Vision

A strong, connected, and sustainable community centre system that supports vibrant communities across Winnipeg.



Our Mission

GCWCC provides leadership, advocacy, and support to strengthen Winnipeg's community centre system, helping boards, staff, and volunteers sustain vibrant, inclusive spaces for the communities they serve.



Our Values

Integrity

We act with honesty and lead in ways that are principled and transparent.

Community-Centredness

We keep people, place, and community needs at the heart of our decisions.

Responsiveness

We adapt as circumstances change, responding to emerging needs and opportunities.

Equity

We work to reduce barriers and support inclusive, accessible, and safe spaces for all.

Trust

We build strong relationships through consistency, transparency, and follow-through.

Our Priorities

Grounded in our vision, mission, and values – and informed by what we heard through engagement – these priorities outline how GCWCC will focus its efforts to strengthen the community centre system and support communities across Winnipeg.



Stronger Community Engagement & Visibility

Community centres play a vital role, but centres vary in awareness, reach, visibility, and communication capacity. We will focus on strengthening how centres share information, connect with partners, and demonstrate their impact by:

- Increasing public awareness of the community centre system
- Supporting shared communication tools and approaches
- Strengthening partnerships across sectors
- Elevating stories that demonstrate impact and value



Sustainable & Future-Ready Infrastructure

Many community centre facilities are aging, and long-term planning is needed to support sustainability and future growth. We will focus on strengthening infrastructure planning and investment by:

- Supporting long-term infrastructure planning
- Advocating for facility renewal and investment
- Providing shared tools and templates for capital planning
- Aligning with City priorities and partner initiatives

Our Priorities



Responsive & Supported Programming

As communities continue to change, community centres need support to adapt programming in ways that reflect evolving needs. We will focus on strengthening programming support and adaptability by:

- Providing tools to assess community needs
- Sharing program models and promising practices
- Supporting volunteer development and training
- Helping centres respond to changing demographics and needs



Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion in Practice

Creating inclusive and accessible spaces requires intentional action and ongoing commitment. We will focus on advancing equity, diversity, and inclusion in practice by:

- Supporting inclusive governance practices
- Improving access and affordability
- Strengthening representation in leadership
- Identifying and removing systemic barriers



Funding Navigation & Financial Sustainability

Sustainable funding is critical to the long-term success of community centres. We will focus on strengthening financial sustainability by:

- Coordinating grant information and opportunities
- Developing shared tools and templates
- Advocating for sustainable funding across all levels
- Supporting diversified revenue approaches

Looking Ahead

Community centres are essential to strong, connected neighbourhoods across Winnipeg.

Over the next three years, GCWCC will focus on strengthening the system in ways that are practical, collaborative, and responsive to community needs. This includes supporting stronger connections across centres, advancing long-term sustainability, and helping create more inclusive and accessible spaces for all.

By working together, we can continue to build a community centre system that is more connected, more sustainable, more inclusive, and better equipped to serve communities across the city.



Acknowledgments

The development of Plan 2045 was made possible through the contributions, insights, and collaboration of many individuals and groups.

We extend our appreciation to the Steering Committee, Project Working Group, and Facility Development Sub-Committee, comprised of representatives from the General Council of Winnipeg Community Centres and the City of Winnipeg, for their leadership and guidance throughout the process.

We are grateful to the five district committees for their time, patience, and thoughtful input, and to the many community members who shared their perspectives through surveys, workshops, and interviews.

We also thank the community organizations who contributed their knowledge and experience, helping to shape a plan that reflects the diverse needs of Winnipeg's communities.

Our sincere appreciation to HTFC Planning & Design for their expertise and support in guiding this work.

Finally, we acknowledge the 2025 Board of Directors for their collaboration, commitment, and stewardship in bringing this plan forward.

