



Quarterly report on progress

Q1 2021 January | February | March





Reducing barriers now will ensure our success and a stronger economy in recovery



I recently spoke with the City of Winnipeg's innovation and economic development committee about the challenges facing our economy and what barriers still stand in the way of growth. As vaccines continue to roll out and get into more arms, businesses will be in a better position to plan with an end to the pandemic in sight. Still, we are at a critical time for Winnipeg,

and we need to make sure we are working together with our partners and all levels of government to unlock the city's full potential as we start to recover. Barriers need to be removed now to build back stronger.

The pandemic has not impacted all sectors equally. It's no surprise that tourism, restaurants, aerospace and creative industries have suffered the most with restricted travel. Other parts of the transportation and distribution sector surpassed expectations, as did advanced manufacturing and the tech sectors because of the massive growth in e-commerce and online shopping. While some sectors were more resilient than others, they are all important to our economy's future growth.

Competition for investment will be fierce as the pandemic subsides, and businesses need certainty. If we can work together to create a pro-business environment, where there is

transparency and red tape is reduced, it will aid in our success. If companies clearly understand the process and the timelines involved to get established or grow, it will help them make an informed decision about investing here in Winnipeg.

Our team continued to collect the data and insights we need to show companies where Winnipeg excels and where we are best positioned for growth. We are building on our existing relationships with partners and government to ensure there is a clear path for businesses to expand or locate here. We're targeting new relationships and creating tools that showcase Winnipeg as an ideal place to work, study, live and visit.

We may have setbacks as we start down the road to recovery but as vaccinations ramp up and our case numbers are under control, we are ready for Winnipeg's next chapter. Read on to see what we're doing now to ensure our city is on the right path to prosperity.

Dayna Spiring
President & CEO
Economic Development Winnipeg Inc.

Economic Development Winnipeg Inc. (EDW) is the city's lead economic development agency and champion for local growth. We use expert analysis to highlight the Winnipeg Advantage and prove why we are the best place to live, work and visit. Through our Tourism Winnipeg and YES! Winnipeg business development teams, EDW grows the local economy by attracting business, investment, events, meetings and people to our city. EDW is governed by a private-sector board and driven by the needs of the business community.

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YES! Winnipeg

YES! Winnipeg (YW) has been focused on building strategic plans to aid in the economic recovery of Winnipeg and has identified key sub-sectors with the greatest potential for growth in 2021. These strategic plans will inform the sales efforts of the team as we dive into the remaining three quarters of the calendar year.

Business development

Over the past three months, our Business Development (BD) team has strengthened its relationship building virtually, participating in 11 industry events and conducting numerous virtual meetings to seek out new opportunities. In addition to its work building strategic plans, the team secured critical partnerships with key stakeholders across various industries to align our business development efforts going forward. Areas of focus include heavy power users, digital ag and artificial intelligence, supply chain and creative industries, such as film and special effects.

YW's [COVID-19 Government Programs](#) and [COVID-19 Toolkit](#) web pages continue to be available and updated as new program information is released. Our programs page has maintained its spot as one of the top 10 visited pages on our website.

Business retention and expansion (BRE)

These meetings are meant to identify opportunities and support to fast-growing companies, so they stay and expand in Winnipeg. YW held seven BRE meetings in Q1, working with companies across various sectors, including advanced manufacturing, agribusiness, aerospace and ICT.

Investment attraction

In Q1, our team conducted lead generation meetings with 46 companies locally, nationally and internationally. It led to **10 investment opportunities** in various sectors, which we are now pursuing.

Services delivered

In support of local company growth, investment attraction and talent, we provided 162 services to local companies, potential investors and top talent in Q1.

Foreign Direct Investment

Our Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) team led the drafting and signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with

the World Trade Centre Winnipeg. The MOU outlines the first stage of collaboration between the two organizations with the objective of pursuing trade and investment opportunities internationally as a unified team.

We launched an FDI toolkit that uses several data tools to strategically target potential international companies for our business development team. This tool offers unique benefits, including the ability to produce a list for investors on key markets, companies, incentives offered by other jurisdictions and contacts within identified companies. This toolkit is a valuable competitive advantage for us in an increasingly competitive world

Our team delivered a presentation on investment opportunities in Winnipeg to members of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines. In partnership with the province, we presented to Canadian Investment Officers in Europe, the Americas and Asia on investment opportunities in Winnipeg and Manitoba. The event was organized by Invest in Canada and Global Affairs Canada with approximately 100 officers in the targeted markets. We also worked on four new investment leads from Singapore, Netherlands, Germany and the U.S.

Talent and workforce development

Our Talent team completed the Winnipeg Calling recruitment campaign. We received more than 2,400 applications and 32 employers participated. We are now following up with employers to track results for a final report.

We partnered with Magnet, a sophisticated job-matching system, to create an interactive centre for Winnipeg companies and job seekers. We are encouraging employers to post their jobs and directing job seekers to create accounts through the portal. Over one million students and 150,000 skilled professionals are already on the platform.

The Magnet platform is one of the features recently added to the [Talent Hub website](#), which is meant to be a one-stop resource for Winnipeg companies looking to attract and retain talent. It helps them sell Winnipeg to prospective hires with videos, marketing images and other resources.

Industry, post-secondary institutions (PSIs) and government have agreed there is a need to streamline the work-integrated process for employers and increase the number of work-integrated-learning placements. We proposed a partnership with PSIs and government to provide a neutral, centralized coordination role for industry and PSIs to improve employer satisfaction, with a single-window platform to enable employers



to find talent easily and quickly, and labour market data to inform decision making. We're working with the province to formalize the proposed approach.

Investor relations

On February 4, 2021, YW officially **launched its next five-year funding campaign** with the private sector. The Real Impact campaign kicked off with a virtual event attended by 85 people, featuring the release of a dynamic video and a unique live virtual networking session.

We also launched our new online investor directory featuring our investors, their level of investment, brief company information and link to their websites and social media channels.

As of March 31, 2021, there are 46 organizations investing in the Real Impact campaign, with a total confirmed annual investment of \$420,000. Of the 46 investors, 25 per cent are first-time investors in YES! Winnipeg and 30 per cent are returning investors and have increased their investment from Campaign 2020. For information regarding investment in YES! Winnipeg, please contact **Ilona Niemczyk**.

Tourism Winnipeg

Meetings, conventions, sports and special events

While business events came to a standstill, our Tourism Winnipeg (TW) business development managers resumed client sales calls, virtually attended several key industry events to connect with clients and submitted several requests for proposals for future business. Several local ambassadors have stepped up to bid on hosting their future conventions in Winnipeg.

TW also saw more interest in sports and special events and was awarded several national sport tournaments as well as confirming Breakout West, Western Canada's music awards and conference in 2022.

Tourism and visitor experience activities continued virtually as TW collaborated with the RBC Convention Centre Winnipeg and the hotel community to rebook and/or cancel business events.

To date, more than 173 business events have been affected by the pandemic, 68 cancelled events and 105 other events that opted to postpone to a future year.

TW was appointed to the National Advisory Group for the Canadian Urban Institute's Restore the Core to represent

the tourism interests regarding the reimagining of the city's downtown and central business districts.

TW led several business event industry virtual meetings to discuss how to position Winnipeg for hybrid meetings and a strategy for recovery.

Group and student travel trade

We shared the latest group travel trends and market intelligence with tourism partners as tour companies are now looking for lesser-known and short-haul destinations for one-day and overnight trips with smaller group sizes, more outdoor activities and less group dining options.

Attractions offering virtual tours saw an increase in uptake among schools and it's expected to result in more in-person visits once it is safe to travel again.

Market Intelligence

Process development on business sales/life cycle

We are currently reviewing our Customer Relationship Management (CRM) platform. This platform is used to coordinate and update interactions with our clients and partners. Our team established a business development life cycle that is consistently applied across EDW development teams while allowing for specialized service delivery across the organization.

In collaboration with YES! Winnipeg and Tourism Winnipeg, we examined the existing business development sales funnel to achieve alignment when possible and identify areas of specialization throughout the process. This information will be integral to aligning the work of our teams with common understanding, language and enable better decision-making when selecting tools to use across the organization.

Economic Insight Data Warehouse

As restrictions lift and the vaccine roll-out advances, good data will be critical to our recovery effort. Our team continues to develop our data warehouse to ensure that current and relevant data is readily available to our teams to help inform potential investors in Winnipeg. Recently, we added Statistics Canada's domestic travel data to assist us in understanding patterns in the behavior of Manitoba travelers. A domestic tourism dashboard has been designed to visualize overnight stays and estimate expenditures by visitors to Manitoba from other Canadian provinces.



Marketing & Communications

Tourism Winnipeg and Travel Manitoba joined forces to support local businesses with a fall and holiday shopping campaign which wrapped up in December 2020, but results were final at the start of Q1. Our team shifted focus to create engaging content for shopping local and safe staycations.

- A partnership with Expedia resulted in 2,500 hotel room nights and 524 airline ticket sales for a gross booking value of \$388,000.
- More than 951 packages & deals were selected with those direct leads going to the 10 participating tourism partners.
- Four video commercial spots along with three on-location Here for It videos garnered more than 7,400 hours of combined viewing time and more than 576,000 views on YouTube.
- The [Here for It microsite](#) saw more than 6,400 visitors from September to December viewing shop local, outdoor experiences, attractions and culinary offerings.
- Our team partnered with #saveMBrestaurants and shop local campaigns to work with more than 30 creators who helped amplify messaging. In addition, three local influencers were hosted on hotel staycation packages, which received almost 9,000 reactions, comments and shares on social media.
- To promote shop local, our 30 Days of Gift Giving contest was launched on social media and received more than 5,600 contest entries and 315,136 impressions.

We launched a brand-new video answering the question “What is economic development?” in a fun and engaging LEGO stop-motion format. The project was released as part of International Lego Day and included a microsite with resources for teachers and kids to educate themselves on the importance of economic development. The video and microsite were a huge success, earning over \$200,000 in earned media, 385,000 video views, 3,300 visits to the microsite, and both national and international partners sharing the video to their audiences and stakeholders.

We created several new sector-focused pieces to sell the Winnipeg Advantage:

- A cooperative sell sheet with the Province of Manitoba, featuring our province’s protein processing sector.
- Two business events sell sheets highlighting life sciences and agribusiness.

Our LGBT microsite has been updated to include new content and several new community ambassador profiles.

We completed the leisure winter campaign, which had excellent results despite code red restrictions.

- 5,100 packages & deals were selected through Tourism Winnipeg’s website.
- 2,228 hotel rooms booked through Expedia.
- The winter microsite saw more than 83,000 visits.
- Our video content had 1.2 million views and more than 7,000 hours of combined watch time.

Social media and blog highlights

Both Tourism Winnipeg blogs, Only in the Peg and Peg City Grub saw huge growth in 2021 compared to the same time last year. We shifted focus toward the local market and reflected COVID-19 travel restrictions.

- Only in the Peg (OITP) Q1 pageviews grew 317 per cent, from 34,691 in 2020 to 110,152 in 2021.
- Peg City Grub (PCG) Q1 pageviews grew 247 per cent.
- Blog subscriber numbers were up on both PCG and OITP compared to 2020. There were 359 new OITP subscribers and 343 new PCG subscribers in this year’s first quarter, compared to 28 and 25 in 2020.
- We gained 3,160 new Instagram followers.
- YouTube video views were also up in Q1 with 1,062,646 views compared to Q1 of 2020, which had 89,983 views.

Videos worth watching:

What is Economic Development? [Watch now](#)

Investor Insights—Winnipeg Airports Authority: [Watch now](#)

Winnipeg is a transportation powerhouse [Watch now](#)

Winnipeg is the centre of life sciences innovation [Watch now](#)

YES! Winnipeg’s Real Impact campaign launch [Watch now](#)

Let’s take ‘support local’ to a whole new level [Watch now](#)

Winter in Winnipeg—we’re here for it! [Watch now](#)

Here for it: Hotel Staycations in Winnipeg [Watch now](#)

Here for it: Stories and spaces at CMHR [Watch now](#)



Spring in Winnipeg—We're here for it! [Watch now](#)

Media relations highlights

We hosted a joint virtual media tour in partnership with Destination Canada and Travel Manitoba for the brand-new Qaumajuq at the Winnipeg Art Gallery. More than 80 different media outlets from around the globe attended, resulting in immediate coverage in *Forbes.com*, *EnRoute Magazine*, *Travel + Leisure* and more. The event was a huge success—within the first month of the media tour, almost \$3 million in earned media was generated—and that amount will continue to grow over the next few months and even years.

Local media coverage focused on stories around COVID-19-related restrictions and their impact on the community and economy. There was particular interest in the Downtown Bay redevelopment committee and the release of EDW's "What is economic development?" Lego project.

COVID recovery for Manitoba hospitality, tourism sectors may be years away

January 17, 2021—Winnipeg Sun

Bold moves needed in post-pandemic economy

January 21, 2021—Winnipeg Free Press, editorial by Dayna Spiring

Winnipeg Free Press editorial discussion

January 22, 2021—CBC's Up to Speed

How to become a master Lego builder, according to a Winnipeg artist

January 28, 2021—CTV News Winnipeg

Lego stop motion video on economic development in Winnipeg

January 28, 2021—Global Winnipeg

Valentine's Day options in the time of COVID-19

February 11, 2021—Global Winnipeg

Bay Building summit held

February 19, 2021—Manitoba Post

Pandemic expected to hamper tourism with a 3-year hangover

February 24, 2021—CBC Manitoba

Red River College targets growing industries with new programs

March 24, 2021—ChrisD.ca

Spring break ideas the whole family will enjoy

March 29, 2021—Global Morning Winnipeg

EDW newsroom stories

Lessons in resiliency: The Winnipeg Airports Authority [Read more](#)

YES! Winnipeg Real Impact campaign: Get to know the Co-Chairs [Read more](#)

RBC's Shawn MacDonald on the resilience of Manitoba businesses [Read more](#)

Manufacturing week: 10 Reasons Winnipeg is Canada's advanced manufacturing hub [Read more](#)

21 reasons Winnipeg is one of the world's smartest communities in 2021 [Read more](#)

High Reliability Organization Council's innovative plans for Winnipeg [Read more](#)

Investing in Winnipeg: YW launches Real Impact campaign [Read more](#)

Breaking down the walls for women in tech: Inaugural Nova Women in Tech Summit runs virtually from Winnipeg February 11 [Read more](#)

Catching up with Obby Khan and everything Good Local [Read more](#)

Travel media highlights

Media coverage

We hosted seven local influencers on staycations from January-March, following all provincial health guidelines. Sixty-seven travel media articles were generated during the same time period for an earned media value of \$4.3 million.

Significant coverage included:

"Winnipeg's new showcase and meeting place for Inuit Art & Artists"

By Ian Austen—Nytimes.com

"World's largest public collection of contemporary Inuit art opens in Winnipeg, Canada"

By Sandra MacGregor—Forbes.com

"Inside Qaumajuq, Canada's Shining New Home for Inuit Art"

By Bert Archer—enRoute