



# Quarterly report on progress

Q2 & Q3 2021





## You have put us on the path to recovery



The spring and summer (Q2 & Q3) marked the beginning of some semblance of a “new normal” with the delivery and uptake of vaccines across our province. I’m proud to say, 100 per cent of EDW’s staff stepped up early and without a mandate to get vaccinated. As we stand now, Winnipeg has the highest number of fully vaccinated people in the province. This must be

applauded because it has allowed one of our most battered sectors—tourism—to begin to see a light at the end of the tunnel.

The strain and struggle our local restaurants, shops and attractions face remains, but with new health restrictions and protocols in place, they can start to plan more consistently for product and staff. I also hope it will mean a smaller chance they face shutdowns again.

Despite the uncertainty of the fourth wave, I want to remind everyone of all the things we should celebrate.

We watched the Canadian Premier League soccer tournament come to town, giving a much-needed boost to our hotels with an economic spinoff of \$4.9 million. The Winnipeg Blue Bombers welcomed back fully vaccinated fans into the stands; the requirement to be vaccinated to watch a game was the first of its kind in North America. The Winnipeg Jets team is also following suit. Our business community’s leadership in this area is good for small businesses and our city’s recovery.

My team continued to work with companies to spur growth. We welcomed Amazon Canada, Neo Financial and Traction on Demand to Winnipeg, which are creating new jobs and opportunities for Winnipeggers.

We’re working with partners to secure Downtown Winnipeg’s post-pandemic economic and social recovery. We will have a final report to look forward to shortly.

Our business community continued to lead in areas of innovation and sustainability with Precision ADM venturing into producing compostable PPE masks, while Farmers Edge started a pilot project with Merit Functional Foods to help producers improve and better market crops. Bison Transport also started a pilot project with electric battery freight liners; two of only 40 on the road in North America.

Finally, we have spent the spring and summer reminding Winnipeggers of all the great things the city has to offer through campaigns and partnerships to encourage supporting local shops, restaurants, attractions and hotels.

We’re also sharing the Winnipeg story on the global stage. We are currently in the running to be the world’s Most Intelligent Community and hosted a co-founder of the Intelligent Community Forum in mid-September. We showcased the strong collaborations taking place across educational institutions, industry, the business community and government. We look forward to hearing the results in October. Whether we win or not, our efforts will result in a more innovative, connected, engaged, inclusive and sustainable community that looks for more opportunities for everyone in our city.

We have a lot to be proud of as we rebuild and re-imagine this city. We have our community to thank and the more than 80 per cent of people who stepped up to get vaccinated. Because of you, Winnipeg is on the path to so many new possibilities for recovery and beyond.

**Dayna Spiring**  
President & CEO  
Economic Development Winnipeg Inc.

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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) collaborated with the City of Winnipeg and the Province of Manitoba to once again enter our city into the Intelligent Community Forum annual competition. For the ninth time in 11 years, Winnipeg achieved Smart21 status. In June, our submission got us on the Top7 list of Most Intelligent Communities. In September, we produced a two-day virtual tour to showcase Winnipeg to ICF judges. The winner will be announced in October.

Our team has achieved the following sales successes from April to September of 2021:

- Our team assisted businesses with more than 400 services ranging from issues management to qualified referrals.
- We strengthened relationship building virtually, conducting 78 lead generation meetings during this time, which resulted in 12 new opportunities pursued.

Some highlights of successes in our tech sector:

- Amazon Canada bringing 300 jobs
- Traction on Demand bringing 100 jobs
- Neo Financial bringing 300 jobs

Strategic partnerships were signed with the Winnipeg Airports Authority as well as World Trade Centre Winnipeg, to work proactively, and in a coordinated fashion, to lead business development efforts.

### Business development

Over the past six months, our Business Development (BD) team continued to execute strategic plans, it created in Q1 to guide efforts to support economic recovery in 2021. Sub-sectors with the greatest potential for growth were identified.

Areas of focus include heavy vehicle manufacturing, ag-tech, supply chain, artificial intelligence, interactive digital media, film and insurance. We are actively targeting foreign investment in collaboration with partners including the Winnipeg Airports Authority and Manitoba Hydro across various sectors.

### 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 45 BRE meetings in Q2 & Q3, working with companies across various sectors, including advanced manufacturing, agribusiness, aerospace and ICT.

### Investment attraction

In both quarters, our team conducted lead generation meetings with 77 companies locally, nationally and internationally. It led to 12 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 Q2 & Q3.

### Foreign Direct Investment

Our Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) team continued to pursue investment leads from markets such as Brazil, Mexico, the United Kingdom and India. Additionally, the FDI team has been operating the FDI toolbox to identify investment targets in key economic sub-sectors. The economic sub-sectors were supplied by the Sector Team leads.

Through both quarters, outreach continued to Canadian Investment Officers in relevant regions in the United States to promote Winnipeg's value proposition.

### Talent and workforce development

In Q2 our Talent Hub launched, followed by our Job Connections Portal in Q3.

The refreshed Talent Hub offers current information on federal and provincial grants, which can be stacked or combined for businesses to take advantage of government supports.

The portal is meant to connect employers and job seekers to ongoing opportunities across a variety of sectors. This will become a crucial tool for us when we plan international recruitment missions.

Our team delivered three employer webinars through World Trade Center Winnipeg and Tech Manitoba. From these sessions, 44 employers created accounts and posted jobs to the portal. A full promotion of the portal will begin in Q4 directly targeting employers.

We have finalized the program Retrain Manitoba in partnership with the Manitoba Chambers of Commerce. Under this program, Manitoba businesses will be eligible for a skills development bursary for retraining and upskilling employees to adapt to the changing needs of businesses of the pandemic.

Our team began planning for virtual international recruitment missions to Hong Kong and Los Angeles to attract international



talent with skills such as software development, fintech and agtech to support local businesses.

We continued to move our Work-Integrated Learning (W-IL) Engagement Framework Development Project forward. It is a partnership between YW and the University of Manitoba:

- We finalized a project and consultation package engaging 230 businesses: a mixture of small, medium and large representing the Agriculture & Agrifoods Sector.
- Undertook consultations with five sector councils, securing a collaboration partnership with Manitoba Food & Beverage Association for the first round of W-IL placements.
- Identified one capstone project for fall term in collaboration with the Faculty of Agriculture and Food Sciences and Food and Beverage Manitoba. This resulted in 21 W-IL placements with six businesses from September to December 2021.
- Secured partnership with Indigenous Professionals Association of Canada and funding for four Indigenous W-IL placements.

### Investor relations

Since our Investor Relations (IR) team launched its new five-year funding campaign with the private sector in February 2021, the Real Impact campaign has hit some impressive goals.

Private sector investment supports the activities of the YW team and its mandate to grow the Winnipeg economy by creating jobs, attracting capital investment and growing the GDP.

As of September 30: 82 companies are investing in the 2025 campaign. The number of investors at this point in the year is a significant milestone. We continue to be impressed with how our business community is stepping up in this recovery.

IR will continue to work with other YW teams to identify investor prospects, connect with past and lapsed investors and build relationships in the absence of networking events or in-person meetings.

Our team is actively pursuing new investments for the campaign while ensuring that confirmed investors are welcomed and introduced into the wider investor network.

## Tourism Winnipeg

### Meetings, conventions, sports and special events

In-person business events remained at a standstill in Q2, but our Business Development Managers resumed client sales calls and virtually connected with them at several key industry events. It resulted in several requests for proposals for future business. Some local ambassadors have also stepped up to bid on hosting their future conventions in Winnipeg.

Tourism Winnipeg 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.

More than 30 tourism nominees were honoured at the 9th Annual Winnipeg Tourism Awards of Distinction on May 6, 2021, at a hybrid event featuring 10 categories including employee, volunteer, large/small business, Bring It Home ambassadors, marketing and partners. Ida Albo was the recipient of the lifetime achievement award for her contributions to our tourism industry.

Our bid to attract and host the Canadian Premier League soccer tournament resulted in a successful event in Q3 that brought the 29-day, 32-game tournament to our city. It was a much-needed boost to our hotel partners with 5,500 room bookings and \$4.9 in economic spinoff.

To date, TW was trying to bring 186 events to Winnipeg. They were affected in the following ways:

- 55% of events were cancelled (103)
- 25% rescheduled (46)
- 20% are in the process of rebooking (37)

### Group & student travel trade

In Q2, our team started targeting short-haul destinations for one-day or overnight trips with smaller group sizes. We also focused on some groups looking for more outdoor activities and fewer group dining options in order to fall in line with the shifting landscape around the pandemic.

By Q3, TW developed city and provincial travel itineraries to promote hyper-local travel for locals to more than 100 Travel Professionals International (TPI) travel agents. These agents will promote Winnipeg/Manitoba itineraries to their clients who are looking for in-province activities due to public health restrictions. We also worked with TPI to develop an online process where agents can receive a commission to maximize sales.



### Site visits

- We hosted a Winnipeg Tour Connection partner familiarization tour of FortWhyte Alive for 25 stakeholders displaying the new interpretive centre and programs for groups and leisure visitors.
- Our team also hosted a Winnipeg Tour Connection partner familiarization tour for 30 stakeholders. They toured the Canadian Museum for Human Rights, highlighting its virtual programs and new offerings for groups and leisure visitors.
- Winnipeg will host the Student Youth Travel Association conference in 2023 and participated in the most recent North American virtual marketplace, meeting with 16 B2B tour operators.
- We hosted a luxury tour operator based in Toronto, Destinations Collection, that will bring a travel group to Winnipeg/Churchill in summer 2022.
- We attended Rendezvous Canada, an international marketplace, with 105 virtual B2B appointments over three days. Meetings were scheduled via the time zone of the buyer and therefore appointments were scheduled throughout the evenings and as early as 2 a.m.

## Market Intelligence

The review of the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) platform at the beginning of the year, was a major focus in Q2 & Q3 for our Market Intelligence (MI) team.

This CRM will capture data from Tourism Winnipeg and YES! Winnipeg teams to create a single source of truth for our client data resulting in a complete client view. The intended outcome is to enable EDW to better identify development opportunities on an account-by-account basis.

This platform is used to coordinate and update interactions with our clients and partners. MI established a business development life cycle that is consistently applied across EDW development teams, while allowing for specialized service delivery across the organization.

This information will be integral to aligning the work of our teams with mutual understanding and language. The process will enable better decision-making when selecting tools to use across the organization.

Our Senior Economist, Chris Ferris continues to give his weekly snapshot of sectors and trends across our economy for investors and the public in his regular feature, *Weekly Economic Digest*.

## Marketing & Communications

Tourism Winnipeg and Travel Manitoba joined forces to support local shops and restaurants safely with our spring Here for It campaign which wrapped up in May. It was highly successful despite code red restrictions.

- 6,608 packages & deals sold through Tourism Winnipeg's website
- 2,221 hotel room bookings through Expedia Media Campaign
- 33,597+ visits on Here for It microsite
- 327,000+ views and more than 14,700 hours of combined watch time on our Here for It videos

In Q2, we supported a live, moderated virtual discussion on the federal budget with Dayna Spiring, EDW President & CEO and Hon. Mary Ng, Minister of Small Business, Export Promotion and International Trade.

We celebrated Winnipeg's tourism industry during Tourism Week May 23-30 inviting Winnipeggers to support local tourism attractions, shops, hotels and restaurants, resulting in multiple media interviews.

In Q3, our Here for It summer campaign kicked off a little later than previous years because of ongoing restrictions, but still had strong engagement and results across Facebook, Instagram and Twitter:

- 1.94 million video views
- 12.6 million impressions
- 2.18 million engagements

### Videos worth watching

The Best of Winnipeg: Tribute to 2020 [Watch](#)

Wide open space for exploring at the Canadian Museum for Human Rights [Watch](#)

- YES! Winnipeg Investor Insights:
  - Launch Co-working Space [Watch](#)
  - Johnston Group [Watch](#)
- Sweet escape at the Fort Garry Hotel [Watch](#)



- Take your tastebuds on a tour at Hargrave St. Market [Watch](#)
- Qaumajuq shines light on Inuit art and culture in Winnipeg [Watch](#)
- Explore Winnipeg on two wheels this summer [Watch](#)
- EDW Annual Report: 2020 Lookback [Watch](#)
- Investor Insights: GFit Wellness [Watch](#)
- Summer in Winnipeg: We're Here For It! [Watch](#)
- Here for It: Summer Staycations in Winnipeg [Watch](#)

## Media relations highlights

In Q2, we hosted two local travel YouTube influencers on staycations following all provincial health guidelines. Significant coverage included:

- **"Canada's Creative Heart"**  
By Chloe Berge *Elle Canada*
- **11 sculpture gardens across Canada where you can view art while taking a walk**  
By Matthew Hague *The Globe and Mail*

In Q3, restriction relaxed a little more and five local influencers and travel media were hosted in Winnipeg throughout June, July and August. Significant coverage included:

- **Canada travel guide: From Victoria to St. John's, summer highlights to explore**  
By Waheeda Harris *The Globe and Mail*
- **The World's Greatest Places of 2021: Reveling in Art, Winnipeg, Manitoba**  
By Karen Burshtein *TIME*
- **9 scenic Canada road trips within a two-hour drive of the US border**  
By Caleigh Alleyne *cntraveler.com*

## EDW newsroom stories

### Q2 stories

- How Johnston Group is providing new tools to help businesses take care of their employees' mental health [Read more](#)
- How SkipTheDishes used its marketing expertise to support restaurants during the pandemic [Read more](#)
- Innovating for the workforce of tomorrow [Read more](#)

- More diversity on set means more business for Manitoba Film industry [Read more](#)
- The future of work: Insights from Launch Coworking Space [Read more](#)

### Q3 stories

- Neo is banking on its roots to grow [Read more](#)
- Amazon Canada: Delivering opportunities in Winnipeg [Read more](#)
- Raising the profile of Winnipeg [Read more](#)
- Winnipeg named Top7 Intelligent Community [Read more](#)
- Bring on summer in the 'Peg: Hereforitwpg.com lines up fun for everyone [Read more](#)
- Cypher Environmental's road to success begins with clean tech innovation [Read more](#)
- GFit: Taking employee wellness to the next level [Read more](#)
- National Indigenous Hiring Week: AMIK's online event offering tips, tours and resources [Read more](#)

## Media coverage

In Q2, local media coverage focused on the state of the economy, budget reaction, business support, redevelopment of the Bay Downtown building and Tourism Week. EDW and TW combined earned media coverage across 74 articles for this period is valued at \$3,317,334. Some of those articles included:

- **Survey shows growing economic optimism**  
April 5, 2021, *Winnipeg Free Press*
- **Minister touts federal budget to Winnipeg biz leaders**  
April 24, 2021, *Winnipeg Free Press*
- **Winnipeg missing out on opportunities because of BIZ hurdles**  
April 26, 2021, *Winnipeg Sun*
- **Winnipeg featured in Can I see you in my office? series**  
May 6, 2021, *Industry West magazine*
- **Staycations an opportunity to see city 'in a different light,' says Economic Development Winnipeg president**  
May 20, 2021, *Winnipeg Sun*
- **Tourism Week: May 20-30**  
Global Morning Winnipeg



In Q3, Local media coverage focused on the state of the economy, pandemic recovery, Neo Financial opening an innovation hub in Winnipeg, our city making the list of TIME's World's greatest places for 2021 and our 'Here for It' summer campaign. EDW and TW combined earned media coverage across 60 articles for this period valued at \$3,781,096 Some of those included:

- CPL to start season with a month worth of games in Winnipeg [Read more](#)
- Winnipeg's historic Hudson's Bay building showcases Indigenous artwork [Read more](#)
- Border reopening required to get economy back up and running [Read more](#)
- Winnipeg named one of the Most Intelligent Communities in the world [Read more](#)
- Winnipeg makes the list of TIME's greatest places [Read more](#)
- 'We watched our Downtown streets empty': report highlights pandemic's pinch on Downtown Winnipeg [Read more](#)
- Downtown BIZ report-Natalie Thiessen on Radio- Canada [Read more](#)
- Neo Financial prepares to open innovation hub in Winnipeg [Read more](#)