



# Quarterly report on progress

Q4 2021



ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT  
WINNIPEG



TOURISM  
WINNIPEG



YES!  
WINNIPEG



## Laying the foundation for growth in 2022



The last three months of 2021 offered us a chance to start laying the foundation for a life beyond COVID-19. People were starting to return to offices, finally meeting face-to-face again or planning in-person events and meetings. It was a boost that our downtown core and Winnipeg businesses desperately needed and still need today. We worked with our partners

to launch Retrain Manitoba, offering businesses up to \$2,500 per employee up to a maximum of \$75,000 per company to upgrade employees' skills with the goal to position companies for growth. As December began and news of another variant took hold, we all had to face a reality that would include more setbacks for our business community, tourism sector and would slow our progress getting 'back to normal.' Despite the Omicron variant and the safety measures we have had to put back in place, I'm still optimistic for increased growth in 2022. Our team has done the work. Businesses are ready to grow and we are ready to support. The pipeline is full.

Companies continued to invest in Winnipeg at the end of 2021, including Maple Leaf with a \$182 million expansion that would create another 300 jobs for our city, while Amazon officially opened its two distribution centres right before Christmas, also creating hundreds of jobs.

In December, Winnipeg was once again on the international stage as RRC Polytech and the Vehicle Technology Centre hosted its Heavy Vehicle and Equipment Technology Conference bringing together participants from across North America, academia, industry and companies for two days of interesting ideas and innovations. Winnipeg is unique in the country for offering a high concentration of heavy vehicle and equipment manufacturers in one place, including MacDon Industries Ltd., Buhler Industries, NFI Group, Fort Garry Fire Trucks along with

another 25 manufacturers specializing in recreational vehicles, truck trailers and snowplows.

It tops off a year where Winnipeg continued to gain international attention. Years of hard work and diligence by Winnipeg businesses, educational institutions and government to create a more inclusive and connected city paid off when Winnipeg was recognized as the **2021 Intelligent Community of the Year** by the Intelligent Community Forum—a think-tank based out of New York, NY, backed by a network of global thought leaders like Michael Bloomberg and Canada's Jim Balsillie and communities across the globe. This is not an award that a city can 'buy'—you earn it. Winnipeg earned it. In 2021, we checked every box.

This distinction belongs to Winnipeg for an entire year, and you can be sure we will be leveraging it on the global stage in 2022. If you're going to build or expand a business, why wouldn't you consider growing in the most intelligent community in the world? Site Selection magazine continues to rank Winnipeg as one of the Top 20 best places to invest, while Winnipeg is also on TIME's Greatest Places in 2021 list. Maybe it's time for your friends and family to visit?

This kind of recognition provides a strong foundation that will only make it easier for us to attract people, businesses and investment for Winnipeg once we move past pandemic challenges. When that happens, we are ready and poised to move forward towards renewed growth.

**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. We acknowledge that we are located on Treaty 1 territory, the original lands of Anishinaabeg, Cree, Oji-Cree, Dakota and Dene Peoples and on the homeland of the Métis Nation.





## YES! Winnipeg

In Q4, EDW's business development team, YES! Winnipeg, successfully supported businesses looking to expand or grow in Winnipeg in the following ways:

- 195 Services
- 17 Business Retention and Expansion meetings
- 15 Pitch decks delivered to companies
- 22 Investor referrals
- 25 Qualified referrals

### Business development

Throughout Q4, our Business Development (BD) team had the opportunity to attend local sector related events in person for the first time in more than 20 months. These events included:

- **Bioscience Association Manitoba's (BAM) Annual General Meeting:** The purpose of the event was to engage with key industry stakeholders such as the BAM leadership, government officials and industry leaders. Winnipeg is well positioned in the life sciences sector as one of the top exports of medicaments in the country.
- **Agriculture Enlightenment 2022:** The event highlighted that there is a clear gap between technology and agriculture that needs to be fueled and filled through collaboration. EDW gained much insight that will be implemented into sector strategies moving forward.
- The Manitoba Environmental Industries (MEIA) Emerging Issues conference brought together academia, government, industry and other stakeholders to discuss the new developments in climate change, waste diversion, sustainable energy and cleantech opportunities in Manitoba. This year's theme was the Net-Zero Future: Investing in sustainability and included a focus on ESG investments, economic and environmental recovery and Indigenous paths to sustainability.

### Foreign Direct Investment

During this quarter, our Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) team added four new investment leads to the pipeline from the following markets: Chile, Italy, the United Kingdom and China. We are gaining a better understanding of the decision-making requirements for investments of the targeted companies from our partners at Global Affairs Canada.

EDW, CentrePort and the World Trade Centre Winnipeg presented a webinar with YW investor, Thompson Dorfman Sweatman. The objective of the webinar was to promote the value of doing business in Manitoba and to attract foreign investment. The virtual event attracted more than 200 people and received positive feedback.

To help increase Winnipeg's visibility on the international stage, FDI is working on three videos targeting different international audiences. We met with companies and interviewed senior executives to capture testimonials on their experiences investing and doing business in Manitoba.

### Talent and workforce development

Since the **YW Job Connections portal** officially launched on the Talent Hub on the EDW website in the spring of 2021, it has:

- Delivered 37 webinars and demos to employers, employment assistance agencies, Sector Councils and Chamber of Commerce members.
- Connected with 11 Employment Assistance Agencies to partner and streamline their talent pools into the Job Connections Portal.
- Delivered three webinars on the Job Connections Portal to over 100 Employment Assistance Agencies and Workforce Training and Development offices across Manitoba.

As of January 13, 2022, our jobs portal has:

- 102 employer accounts
- 1021 Job seekers registered total:
  - » 908 domestic jobs seekers
  - » 113 international job seekers

During Q4, we continued to promote **Retrain Manitoba**, a joint initiative through the Province of Manitoba, Chambers of Commerce and delivered by EDW's talent team. Launched on November 8, 2021, Manitoba businesses can be reimbursed \$2,500 per employee up to \$75,000 per company to retrain and upskill their workforce. Webinars were provided to employers in eight rural regions and Winnipeg, as well as YW investors, sector councils and post-secondary institutions. The program ends March 31, 2022, or until funds run out.

As of January 11, 2022:

- The total amount of funds approved is just over \$7,000,000 which represents more than half of the \$12.5 million program.



- Out of the 1,000 businesses who have received training grants, 839 are small businesses with 0 to 99 employees.
- So far, 65% percent of businesses participating are located in Winnipeg, followed by Brandon, Steinbach and Winkler.

Our Work-Integrated Learning Engagement Framework Development project, a partnership between YW and the University of Manitoba (U of M), continues to make considerable progress.

- 25 work-integrated learning placements with six businesses are completed, in partnership with the Faculty of Agriculture and Food Sciences, the Asper School of Business and Food and Beverage Manitoba.
- 40 more placements are scheduled for the winter and spring sessions and a total of 22 businesses are expected to benefit from participating in the project.
- There are four departments within U of M participating, with a wide variety of placements, including marketing, strategic planning, food quality, food regulation and policy, business consulting and industry consulting in Biosystems Engineering.
- Of the completed projects, more than 85 per cent of businesses felt the experience was worthwhile and more than 80 per cent of students felt the experience helped them with their career goals. 90 per cent would recommend it to other students.

### Investor relations

Since Investor Relations (IR) **launched its next five-year funding campaign** with the private sector in February 2021, the Real Impact campaign continues to attract more businesses who are interested in investing in our team and city.

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 Winnipeg's contribution to Manitoba's GDP. Our IR team along with all other teams across EDW are engaging with investors on client referrals, marketing opportunities, event attraction, webinars, team introductory events and business retention and expansion interviews.

## Tourism Winnipeg

### Meetings, conventions, sports & special events

Throughout Q4, there was a much-anticipated return to visits across all our key markets: business events, sports and special events and travel trade. Our team represented Winnipeg and participated in seven in-person initiatives including sales missions, conferences and tradeshows.

Since March 2020, 188 events that were expected to be held in Winnipeg have been affected by the pandemic.

- 55 per cent of events were cancelled (105)
- 27 per cent rescheduled (50)
- 18 per cent are in the process of rebooking (33)

Winnipeg was awarded the 2026 International Museums for Peace conference, the 2023 Canadian Association of Foot Care Nurses and the 2022 Honorary Colonel Conference.

### Group and travel trade

In Q4, we hosted 16 international/national clients representing seven organizations on personalized site visits to Winnipeg to secure future opportunities for business events and sports and special events.

Our team hosted 23 national association clients virtually with six Winnipeg partners. In addition, we held our annual Sport Forum in partnership with Sport Manitoba to engage with provincial sport organizations with the goal of encouraging them to bid on future sporting events for Winnipeg. 42 provincial sports organizations participated.

We also represented Winnipeg as part of the Team Canada group, alongside 60 Canadian partners and Destination Canada at IMEX America in Las Vegas. This was the first in-person marketplace gathering US meetings planners, association executives to position Winnipeg as a destination for future consideration for U.S. decision-makers.

### 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.

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## Market Intelligence

The review of our Customer Relationship Management (CRM) platform was a major focus for our team throughout 2021. Assisted by our implementation partner, Traction-On-Demand, we have successfully merged our data into the Salesforce platform. It officially went live on December 20, 2021.

This CRM will capture data from teams across EDW and will allow us to better identify development opportunities on an account-by-account basis.

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

- A new campaign to attract tech talent to Winnipeg, which included a new video, article and targeted advertising campaign in tech talent-rich parts of Ontario and Alberta. The video focused on the quality-of-life aspects of working for growing tech companies in our city and used testimonials from Tech Manitoba, SkipTheDishes and Bold Commerce. Read the story and watch the video: **Developing the 'Swagger of the prairies.'**
- A new campaign was launched to promote the hydro-electricity advantage of Manitoba, with a video, article and local advertising campaign. In the 2022, this video will be part of a larger marketing strategy to promote the sustainability and affordability of our hydro power to heavy electrical users and foreign companies looking to reduce their environmental footprint. Read the story and watch the video: **Hydroelectricity: The Manitoba Advantage.**
- We brought together businesses and partners from across the province to produce two 3-hour live broadcasts for judges with the Intelligent Community Forum, a think-tank out of New York, NY. It's backed by a vast network of global cities and leaders striving to highlight communities that work collaboratively to improve connectivity, engagement, inclusivity, innovation and sustainability for all its citizens. Winnipeg was awarded the Most Intelligent Community for 2021 in October. Since then, our team developed and promoted a campaign to leverage the win and highlight everything Winnipeg has to offer people, businesses and investors. Read the story: **Winnipeg named the world's Most Intelligent Community for 2021.**
- We partnered with CTV Winnipeg in Q4 to launch Winnipeg Works, a weekly feature highlighting stories about Winnipeg's economic landscape across tv broadcasts and online platforms. TV ads promoting the feature were also run across all of CTV's news programs and EDW channels. The initiative allowed us to amplify great Winnipeg business stories and helped position EDW as the experts on the Winnipeg economy. Learn more about **Winnipeg Works**.



- Our team launched a TIME World's Greatest Places promotional campaign to raise awareness of Winnipeg's recognition on the publication's list. The campaign included 21 reasons it made the list in a [Winnipeg's TIME blog post](#), [promotional video](#). We also created a [contest](#) to encourage Winnipeggers to share why they think our city is one of the world's greatest places. The winner can be found here on Tourism Winnipeg's [Instagram](#).

### Travel media coverage

Three local influencers and five travel media/content creators were hosted in Winnipeg throughout October, November and December.

Significant coverage included:

#### Canada, we missed you

By Andrea Sachs—Washington Post/various outlets

#### Surprising Winnipeg

By Mary Ann Simpkins—Fifty-Five Plus Lifestyle Magazine

### EDW Newsroom stories:

Over the Q4 period, EDW's Marketing & Branding team wrote, produced and featured a variety of companies and sectors. Everything from manufacturing, new funding supports for business and stories to complement new videos featuring Winnipeg's thriving tech sector and how hydroelectricity is a Manitoba advantage when it comes to attracting new businesses to our city.

Showcasing Winnipeg's heavy vehicle and tech expertise [Read more](#)

Recycling business brings new opportunities: Mother Earth Recycling and the Indigenous Chamber of Commerce leading the way for the next generation of business owners [Read more](#)

5 things you should know about Traction on Demand [Read more](#)

Retrain Manitoba will help local businesses build skills and grow [Read more](#)

Winnipeg named the world's Most Intelligent Community for 2021 [Read more](#)

Hydroelectricity: The Manitoba Advantage [Read more](#)

Helping business meet the modern economy: MCC launches Digital Manitoba [Read more](#)

3 Notable reasons why small businesses drive the economy [Read more](#)

Developing the 'swagger of the Prairies': How the tech sector is growing and thriving in Winnipeg [Read more](#)

Winnipeg company is changing the parking game [Read more](#)

Maple Leaf cooks up a major expansion in Winnipeg [Read more](#)

National Trucking Week [Read more](#)

### Media coverage

In October, November and December, local media coverage focused on the state of the economy, Downtown Winnipeg and tourism sector recovery, Retrain Manitoba program launch, Traction on Demand coming to Winnipeg, Maple Leaf expansion, Amazon Distribution centres or supporting local for the holidays.

Here is a sampling of media stories covering EDW work or partners:

Retrain Manitoba program launch, multiple media outlets including Winnipeg Free Press, CHVN, Winnipeg Sun & CTV Winnipeg [Read more](#)

Customers wanted: city hall urged to bring its workers back downtown [Read more](#)

New tech firm set to open shop in Winnipeg [Read more](#)

Manitoba, Winnipeg Tourism sector hopeful for the Fall and Winter season: TW's Natalie Thiesen & WAA Tyler MacAfee speak with CBC host Faith Fundal. [Read more](#)

There is positive economic momentum in Winnipeg [Read more](#)

Maple Leaf investing in province: Company adding pre-cooked bacon operation to its Winnipeg plant, expanding workforce [Read more](#)

B.C.-based info-tech firm to hire 100 people in city [Read more](#)

Winnipeg named worlds' Most Intelligent Community, multiple sources including Insauga, CTV Winnipeg, Access Winnipeg and IT World Canada [Read more](#)

Winnipeg proposing two-year COVID recovery plan [Read more](#)

Amazon delivers hubs, jobs in time for holidays [Read more](#)