



**Celebrating
30 years!**

2019 ANNUAL REPORT

**DOWN
TOWN**
WINNIPEG BIZ

We acknowledge that our downtown is on Treaty 1 territory and that the land on which we gather is the territory of the Anishinaabe Peoples and the homeland of the Métis Nation.

We acknowledge the harms and mistakes of the past, and dedicate ourselves to moving forward in partnership with Indigenous communities in a spirit of truth, reconciliation and collaboration.

Thirty

The Downtown Winnipeg BIZ was founded in 1989 and gives the downtown business community a strong and unified voice.

Today, building on the lessons and success of the past three decades, the Downtown Winnipeg BIZ and our 1,100 members are driving the transformation and renewal of the city centre – making our downtown more vibrant, welcoming, inclusive, prosperous, clean and safe.

As we celebrate the 30 years of the Downtown Winnipeg BIZ, we approach the year ahead with a renewed focus on our members' needs, an ambitious new brand, and the confidence that our downtown's best days are the ones still to come.

Mission

The Downtown Winnipeg BIZ's mission is to promote, care and advocate for a vibrant and inclusive downtown where business thrives and people are drawn to work, live, shop and explore.

Our work is important, and Winnipeggers recognize and appreciate our programs, services and advocacy. In a recent survey of nearly 3,000 citizens, over 90% said the Downtown Winnipeg BIZ plays an important role in making downtown Winnipeg a better place.



Message from the Chair and CEO

Happy 30th birthday Downtown Winnipeg BIZ! Hitting this milestone is an honour as we mark 30 years of transformative work in the heart of our city.

Since our inception in 1989, the achievements of this organization have paved the way to make substantial changes, and have allowed us to continue pursuing the goal of making downtown Winnipeg a place where people are excited to work, live, shop and explore. This is all possible thanks to a team of passionate, creative, inspirational and dedicated people who work tirelessly to connect our diverse population.

As we look back at everything that has been accomplished, we are also looking forward to the future and planning the next three years through our new strategic plan. We have refined our goals and strategies and transformed our internal operations with a new governance model and organizational structure to have an even longer lasting impact.

One of our 2019 highlights was the successful “Make Stuff Happen” campaign where we invited Winnipeggers to share their vision for the future of downtown – helping us better understand the needs of our community and shape our strategy. Looking through the thousands of survey responses, one thing was clear – we all want a safe, inclusive, vibrant downtown that is healthy and well connected. In order to work towards this vision, we plan to focus on these core strategies:

- **Data Driven Decisions:** Ensure we are investing member dollars soundly and effectively by increasing our capacity for sustainable, data-based decision making.
- **Strength in Numbers:** Every day tens of thousands of employees, residents and visitors are downtown. We will work to enhance their experience by focusing on the basics and target programming to extend the time and money spent downtown.
- **Target a Policy Shift:** We will work with community partners and advocate on issues that are critical to increased economic downtown success including safety, homelessness and transportation.

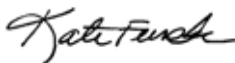


In addition, we are excited to announce our new brand identity. We have a fresh look for our organization that marks a new beginning and clearly represents who we are, who we serve and what we do.

Since 1989 we've come a long way and we remain excited, optimistic and inspired for the future of downtown Winnipeg.



Diana Wiesenthal
CHAIR



Kate Fenske
CEO

Board of Directors

Diana Wiesenthal

Corporate People Responsibility Ltd.,
Chair

Eric Wiens

Stantec, Vice Chair

Dawn Haus

True North Sports + Entertainment,
Secretary

Wes Schollenberg

Avison Young Commercial Real Estate,
Treasurer

Laurie Barkman

Alt Hotel Winnipeg

Melanie Bernadsky

Freshcut Downtown

Larry Bird

Monk Goodwin LLP

Trevor Buhnai

Canad Inns Destination Centres

Benjamin Gillies

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Julie Kiernan

24-7 Intouch

Amelia Laidlaw

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Manager of Placemaking and Transportation

Steve Hughes

Manager of Cleanliness and Maintenance

Christy Loudon

Manager of Outreach

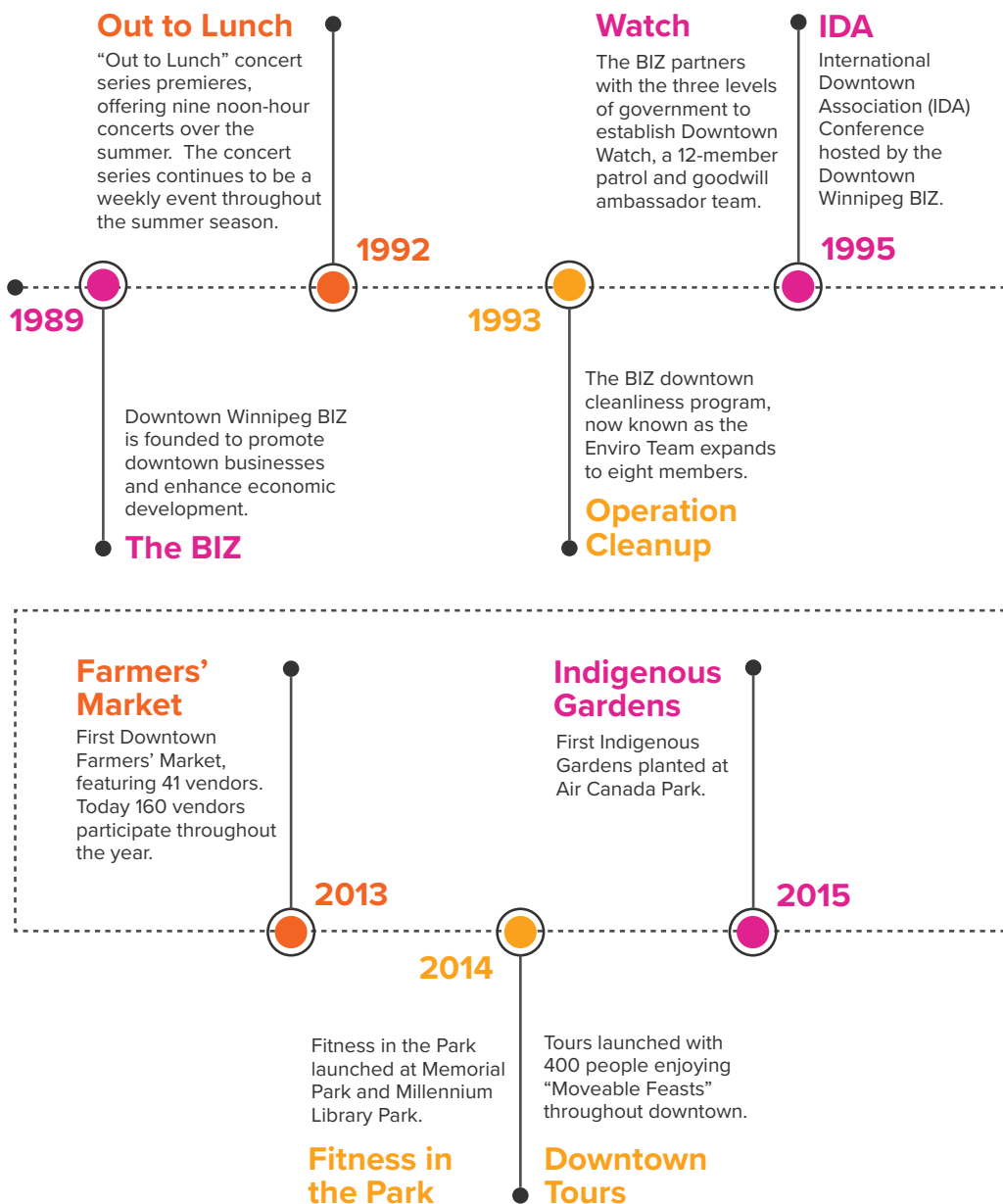
Glenda Vollrath

Manager of Safety



"A healthy downtown is
the key to a thriving city
and a strong community."

- Kate Fenske, CEO Downtown Winnipeg BIZ



Downtown Winnipeg BIZ at 30: A Timeline

Since 1989 the Downtown Winnipeg BIZ has aspired to be a trusted and authentic voice for downtown and our member businesses. As we mark 30 years, the Downtown Winnipeg BIZ celebrates the milestones that have helped make our downtown an even better place to work, live, shop and explore.

Outreach

Outreach Patrol established. The program's success leads to the creation of the Community Homeless Assistance Team (CHAT) in 2013.

2006

2003

First Chinatown Banner competition. Each year the winning design is showcased around Chinatown.

Chinatown Banner

2010

ManyFest

First ManyFest. Nine years later, a record-breaking 80,000 people attend the three-day festival.

Pop-Ups

Pop-Up Toilet and Pop-Up Parks launched around downtown.

2018

2017

The Watch Customer Service team becomes Host - the BIZ's welcoming ambassadors, providing information on everything downtown.

Host

2019

New brand and direction unveiled.

Rebrand







"A place is only as vibrant as its people,
and that is why we strive to create places
that people love."

Melanie Andrushko

MANAGER OF PLACEMAKING AND TRANSPORTATION

Creating Places People Love

More to do. More to see. More reasons to work, live, shop and explore. Working with our partners, the Downtown Winnipeg BIZ helped create more places people love in 2019.

2019 Highlights

- The Downtown Winnipeg BIZ **launched MiniPeg Golf** in collaboration with Mart Design Company encouraging players to check out downtown businesses while exploring downtown Winnipeg on foot.
- **80,000 people came downtown** during ManyFest – downtown’s biggest street festival – setting a new all-time attendance record.
- Downtown Winnipeg’s popular Pop-Up Toilet returned for a second run, **helping ensure washroom services are accessible to all**. The toilet was also recognized at the International Downtown Association (IDA) Conference, winning a 2019 Pinnacle Award, the IDA’s highest recognition.
- Local and visiting artists created **11 new downtown murals**, part of the Wall-to-Wall Mural & Culture Festival.
- The thriving **Downtown Winnipeg Farmers’ Market expanded** yet again.
- The Downtown Winnipeg BIZ partnered with the City of Winnipeg to further **increase cycling connectivity** throughout the downtown, including the redevelopment and beautification of Garry Street which includes a new bi-directional bike lane, and the installation of **82 new bike racks** which adds **164 bike parking spots** to the downtown.
- **859 participants** took part in Downtown Winnipeg BIZ-led Downtown Winnipeg Tours – a new attendance record.
- Continuation of the Host It Downtown campaign, which helped bring over **20 events downtown** in the past year alone.



"Love" mural by Queen Andrea

"The people I had the opportunity to meet, the conversations I had and the experience I gained all prepared me for my work with the Winnipeg Police Service. I wouldn't be where I am today without the support and guidance of the staff at the Downtown Winnipeg BIZ."

A Safer Downtown for Everyone

Downtown safety remains a top priority, both for citizens and Downtown Winnipeg BIZ members. Successful initiatives like the Downtown Winnipeg BIZ's Downtown Watch Ambassador Program continue to play a critical role in making downtown safer and more inviting.

Now in its 25th year, the Watch Ambassador Program has grown to employ 25 uniformed ambassadors who patrol the downtown seven days a week from 8:00 a.m. until midnight.

2019 Highlights

- **3,961 calls*** to Watch Ambassadors for service.
- **391 SafeWalks*** and **1,025 well-being checks*** provided.
- Additional Watch Ambassador patrols during evening hours.
- **Expanded ParkSafe** initiative to increase perceptions of parking safety during evening hours, and to reduce theft from motor vehicles.
- **Launch of Downtown Safety Partnership** to improve community safety and public confidence in downtown Winnipeg, allowing resources to be coordinated, deployed and addressed more effectively.
- **Increased reporting and recording**, plus new surveys, focus group data and other research, to enhance data-driven responses to downtown safety issues.

*Reporting period: January 1, 2019-October 31, 2019

In a survey of nearly 3,000 Winnipeggers, 78% agreed that Downtown Watch Ambassadors make them feel safer when they visit downtown.



Constable Christine Mazerolle (pictured right) started her journey toward becoming a police officer with the Downtown Winnipeg BIZ – first as a volunteer, then as a Watch Ambassador and finally as the Downtown Security Network (DSN) Coordinator. (Photo provided by Const. Christine Mazerolle)

"Our goal is to support and empower individuals that we work with by building trusting relationships and helping them connect and reconnect to the resources they need to ensure their well being and quality of life."

Christy Loudon
MANAGER OF OUTREACH

Addressing Addiction, Homelessness and Poverty

The Downtown Winnipeg BIZ's Community Homeless Assistance Team (CHAT) connects Winnipeg's most vulnerable citizens with vital resources including addictions and mental health supports, permanent housing options, and education and employment opportunities. The CHAT program is built on a best-practices model that focuses on trustful, one-on-one relationships to help clients more effectively address the barriers they face.

2019 Highlights

- **4,294*** individuals connected to health services, community services and employment and income assistance.
- **138*** homeless individuals connected with stable housing.
- **2,032*** individuals connected to substance use treatment, detox and safe-space support.
- **Program expansion to include voluntary pickups**, allowing CHAT staff and project partners to transport more individuals living on the street to shelters and medical facilities.

*Reporting period: January 1, 2019-October 31, 2019



More street outreach remains a top priority for Downtown Winnipeg BIZ members. In a recent survey, 84% of members said that more street outreach by social service agencies would improve downtown safety.

“I take pride in the work I do because I don’t look at myself as just a litter picker. I am someone who on a daily basis is respecting the land that has given so much to me.”

A Cleaner, Greener Downtown

Seven days a week the Downtown Winnipeg BIZ Enviro Team works to clean and beautify downtown streets, sidewalks, storefronts and public places. Every day, team members pick up litter, clean bus shelters, water flowers, remove graffiti and posters, and clean downtown sidewalks of dirt, debris and snow.

2019 Highlights

- **56,849 pails*** of litter picked by hand.
- **2,935 graffiti tags*** removed.
- **2,030 sidewalks*** plowed.
- **3,156 posters*** removed.
- **6,173 transit shelters*** cleaned.
- **196 planters** and hanging baskets planted downtown.
- New **native plantings at four locations**, all planted with prairie plants.

*Reporting period: January 1, 2019-October 31, 2019



“To see that the Downtown Winnipeg BIZ has grown in influence, staff and programming has been heartening for me. After 30 years it is a vibrant organization that continues to make an important contribution to Winnipeg’s well-being.”

Tom Martin

FOUNDING CHAIRMAN OF THE DOWNTOWN WINNIPEG BIZ (1989-1991)

Activating, Advocating and Connecting

The Downtown Winnipeg BIZ is responsive to the needs of our 1,100 member businesses and the wider downtown community. In 2019 we worked with a market research company to gather detailed insight into the downtown community's perceptions, needs, expectations and ideas to make downtown Winnipeg even stronger.

We've listened, and we're taking action. Feedback, like the need for expanded safety programs, increased downtown cleanliness and a continued focus on community events and activities, is directly reflected in our 2020 strategic plan.

2019 Highlights

- **Nearly 3,000 Winnipeggers completed our survey** – including over 700 within hours of the survey launch, affirming that people are keen to help shape the future of their downtown.
- Over 80% of respondents said the **Downtown Winnipeg BIZ plays an important role** in strengthening Winnipeg's economy, as well as helping businesses attract more visitors downtown.
- The Downtown Winnipeg BIZ Instagram account – where we showcase member businesses and downtown activities and events – nearly doubled in the past year to **13,000 followers**. Nearly **24,000 people follow** the Downtown Winnipeg BIZ on Twitter.
- The **#finditdowntown** hashtag has been **used over 42,500** times on Instagram.
- In partnership with Green Action Centre, brought Dr. Donald Shoup, the parking guru, to Winnipeg for an in-depth discussion with City officials and transportation advocates to look at how to **modernize Winnipeg's on-street parking system** to support businesses and encourage more activity downtown.



"Make Stuff Happen" public engagement
Photo source: @lemon.buttons



Instagram photos from
@downtownwpgbiz

#finditdowntown

“To me, Truth and Reconciliation will be visible in the concrete actions that individuals and organizations undertake to achieve this worthwhile goal. The Downtown Winnipeg BIZ has, in creating the Indigenous Advisory Committee, embedded a way forward.”

Damon Johnston

PRESIDENT, ABORIGINAL COUNCIL OF WINNIPEG &
MEMBER, DOWNTOWN WINNIPEG BIZ INDIGENOUS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Indigenizing Downtown

The Downtown Winnipeg BIZ continues to work with our Indigenous partners to make downtown a place where everyone feels welcome and represented, and where everyone belongs.

2019 Highlights

- **Enhancements to the Indigenous Gardens at Air Canada Park**, in celebration of the Gardens' fifth year. Local Indigenous artist Peatr Thomas painted the sidewalk on the north side of Portage from Carlton to Hargrave with the colours of the traditional medicine wheel to draw visitors to the Gardens and enhance awareness of the area.
- The Downtown Winnipeg BIZ **renewed relations with our Indigenous Advisory Committee** to better ensure Indigenous perspectives help guide the programs and services we lead or sponsor.
- **New partnership with Ogijiita Pimatiswin Kinamatawin (OPK) and CHAT** walking the streets of downtown together every week connecting with and supporting individuals in our community.



| Sidewalk art by Peatr Thomas



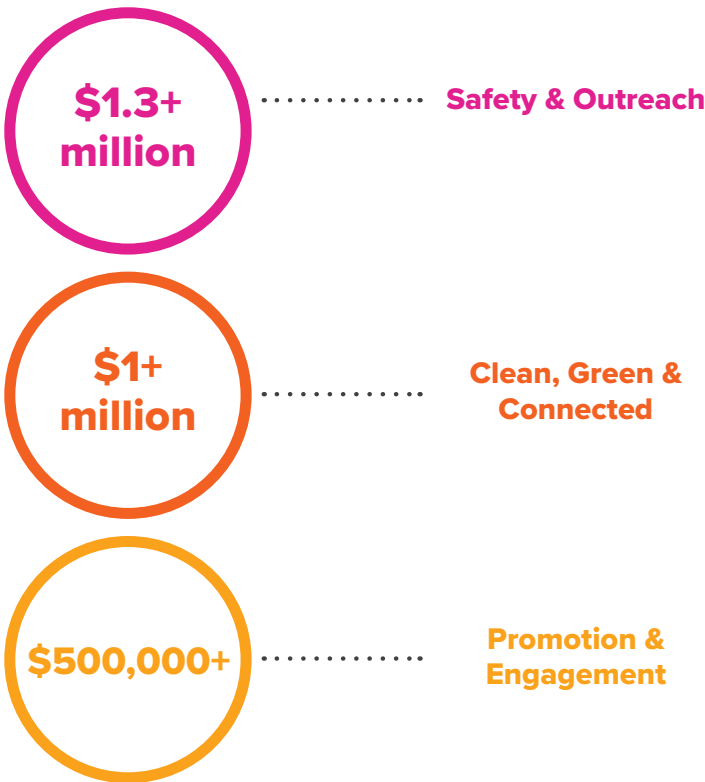
| Volunteers and Elder David Budd at Indigenous Gardens

Finance and Governance

The Downtown Winnipeg Business Improvement Zone (BIZ) is governed and administered by a board of 15 members who are a proprietor, director or employee of a member business, and one member appointed by Council. The Downtown Winnipeg BIZ is primarily funded by zone levies collected by the City of Winnipeg based on an Annual Rental Value (ARV) of a business operating within the designated downtown Winnipeg zone. The Downtown Winnipeg BIZ works with an annual operating budget of nearly \$4.3 million. Almost \$3 million is funded through the levy and more than \$1 million is funded through non-levy contributions including sponsorships, grants and partnerships.

Funds are focused on initiatives aimed to provide a downtown that is clean, safe and well-connected, where businesses can thrive.

2019 Program Highlights*



*Additional operating expenses not shown include advocacy and research, funding reserves and administration costs (incl: staffing, building lease, IT).



Forward, together.

The Downtown Winnipeg BIZ is grateful to our partners and sponsors who share our belief that a strong downtown benefits us all.

The success of our programs and events wouldn't be possible without the commitment of our sponsors including Manitoba Hydro, Manitoba Liquor & Lotteries, Manitoba Public Insurance, RBC Convention Centre, Winnipeg Free Press, Workers Compensation Board, as well as our invaluable partners at the City of Winnipeg including Planning, Property and Development; Winnipeg Parking Authority; Winnipeg Transit; Public Works; Graffiti Control; Active Transportation; Special Events; and the Mayor's Office. The Downtown Winnipeg BIZ appreciates all of our program and event partners and sponsors.

On behalf of our 1,100 member businesses, thank you for your continued collaboration and support. We look forward to working together over the coming year.









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