



THE ENVIRONMENT FOR POLICING IN WINNIPEG

2018

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

What are the demographic trends, crime trends, social, economic, technological and legal issues that define community safety in Winnipeg? The community, police, prosecutors and the courts are all partners in preventing and reacting to criminal activity. All of these are connected and the overall effectiveness of the entire system is rarely measured. In order to understand the environment for policing, it is helpful to be aware that police are but one component of our safety. This report aims to provide information on some of the factors that form the back drop to policing activities in Winnipeg.

The Winnipeg Police Board's 2018 Environmental Scan offers a snapshot of the conditions and trends that define current and future needs for policing in Winnipeg. The report looks at:

- Population trends
- Economic trends
- Policing trends
- Crime trends
- Legislative trends
- Technological trends

The Winnipeg Police Board monitors our environment to inform the strategic priorities for the Winnipeg Police Service.

Every year, the Board publishes an updated edition of this report to describe the Board's understanding of the priorities and issues that matter to residents of Winnipeg. The report is intended to start a dialogue between the Board and the community about these issues, and encourage residents to bring new issues to the table.

POPULATION TRENDS

The size and make-up of Winnipeg's population have a significant impact on the city's policing needs. Population growth and the construction of new neighbourhoods affect the size of the city that police serve. For example, age is a factor in a person's risk of victimization or criminal behaviour, so age distribution in a city can be linked to its crime rate. This section provides a general overview of Winnipeg's population and demographics.

Fast Facts

- The City of Winnipeg estimated the city's population to be 735,600 in 2016
- The census metropolitan area (CMA) of Winnipeg includes the Brokenhead 4 First Nations reserve and the rural municipalities of East St. Paul, Headingley, Macdonald, Ritchot, Rosser, Springfield, St. Clements, St. François Xavier, Taché, and West St. Paul; approximately 811,900 people were living in the Winnipeg CMA in 2016
- Winnipeg covers 475 square kilometres
- Winnipeg has over 3148km of roads

Census Highlights

- Statistics Canada calculated there was an average of 1,518.8 people per square kilometer in 2016
- 51.2% of Winnipeg residents are female, 48.8% are male
- 30% of Winnipeg residents identify as members of a visible minority
- Indigenous people account for 12.2% of Winnipeg's population; in comparison, Indigenous people account for 4.9% of the total population of Canada
- 61.6% of all dwellings in Winnipeg are single detached houses
- 67.8% of Winnipeg residents speak English as their first language, 3.2% speak French as their first language and of the 25.8% who speak another language as their first language, 3,585 speak an Indigenous language

ECONOMIC TRENDS

The ability to have stable and rewarding employment allows people to purchase the necessities of life, provide opportunities for their children and feel confident about themselves and their contribution to society. On the other hand, unemployment and low income threatens personal and family security and exposes families to risk factors for criminal behaviour and victimization. Past events and current social conditions:

- Winnipeg is seeing steady economic growth but the most recent data still indicates that Winnipeg has the lowest median income among major Prairie cities.
- In 2016, Statistics Canada found that 15.9% of Winnipeg residents had low-income status, after tax. The Canadian low-income threshold for a person living alone in 2015 was \$22,133, after tax.
- According to the most recent report from Campaign 2000 and Winnipeg Harvest, Manitoba has the highest rate of children living in poverty of any province. In 2014, there were 85,110 children in Manitoba, or 29% of all children, living in poverty.

Key Indicators

- \$68,147 – Median Manitoban household income, 2016
- \$34,964 – Median individual income Winnipeg residents , 2016
- 6.5% - Unemployment rate, 2016
- 20% - Increase in GDP from 2006-2015
- 1,400 – People experiencing homelessness in October 2015
- 56,342 – Monthly food bank users in 2016

Community Health and Well-Being

Healthy communities are vital and resilient, with lower risk for crime. By contrast, the World Health Organization identified conditions of poor health and well-being as risk factors for violence, crime and victimization. Addictions, substance abuse, low levels of education and high rates of placement with child welfare agencies are a few such risk factors. Manitoba is still reported to have the highest volume of children in care in Canada. The province reports that there were approximately 10,714 children in care in 2016/17, predominantly Indigenous and in Winnipeg. There is planning under way to overhaul the existing child welfare system and it is hoped that community based interventions by agencies other than police may have a positive effect on the use of police resources.

Key Indicators

- 60.4% - Winnipeg residents who rated their health “good” or “very good”
- 4.9% - Of Winnipeg residents aged 10 or older diagnosed as abusing drugs or alcohol
- 24.4% - Winnipeg residents diagnosed with mood or anxiety disorders in a five-year period

Newcomer Population

According to 2016 Census data, 28% of Winnipeg's population was born outside of Canada. In 2014, Manitoba welcomed 16,222 immigrants. Winnipeg is home to 18,630 refugees who arrived in Canada between 1980 and 2016.

Newcomers' experiences in Winnipeg can be impacted by:

- Whether they arrive as immigrants or refugees
- Access to transition and support services
- Language barriers
- Whether they experience discrimination after arriving
- Challenges finding adequate housing and employment
- Stress and trauma that may be associated with resettlement or the reasons for leaving their previous country of residence

Depending on the circumstances surrounding their arrival in Canada and the cultural differences between their new home and their country of birth, recent immigrants and refugees may find the transition to life in Canada difficult. As a result of lived experience some may have less confidence in police.

Indigenous Population

Winnipeg's reported Indigenous population represents 12.2% of the city's overall population. This is the highest percentage of all major urban centres in Canada and is likely under reported. Indigenous people have experienced and continue to experience effects of: racism, colonization, residential school trauma, oppression and dispossession from their land, loss of languages and livelihoods. These experiences of marginalization negatively affect the sense of identity and self-esteem of many Indigenous people.

Indigenous people are increasingly educated, with young Indigenous people completing high school and earning post-secondary certificates, diplomas and degrees at higher rates than in the past. Statistics Canada measures levels of educational attainment because it is recognized that having an education makes people less likely to live in poverty and more likely to enjoy a higher quality of life. Grassroots movements to empower Indigenous people and address structural barriers such as racism are increasing in number and profile in Winnipeg.

The marginalization of Indigenous people has had documented effects that can be measured in the rate at which Indigenous people live in poverty, are affected by mental illness and struggle with addictions. These are all risk factors for crime and victimization, and make Indigenous people in Winnipeg more likely to come into contact with police and the justice system. There continues to be a disproportionate number of Indigenous persons in provincial correctional facilities in Manitoba.

POLICING TRENDS

The Winnipeg Police Board has a mandate to set strategic priorities for the Winnipeg Police Service and to ensure police services are delivered in a manner that is consistent with community needs, values and expectations. The Board monitors policing trends to understand where police resources are needed most and how police services are utilized. The trends in this section are divided into three general categories:

1. Demand for police services
2. Community policing
3. Police resources

The trends in these categories overlap. For example, when there is a high demand for services provided by police, maintaining a complement with enough officers to meet that demand will affect the size of the police budget.

1. Demand for police services

- The Winnipeg Police Service communications centre received 585,984 calls in 2017:
 - o 290,040 911 calls
 - o 182,634 non-emergency calls to 204-986-6222
 - o 113,310 interactive voice response
- The communications centre is the first point of contact for all 911 calls in Winnipeg. Once call-takers have determined the nature of an emergency, they transfer calls to dispatchers for each emergency service: Winnipeg Police Service or Winnipeg Fire and Paramedic Services as appropriate.
- The best indicator of the demand for police service is the number of calls for service. These are the calls where police response is requested. They include:
 - o Citizen-generated calls to the police – 144,589 in 2017 (64%)
 - o Police-initiated events – 80,540 in 2017 (36%)
- Even as crime rates are generally declining in Winnipeg, calls for service have increased by over 46% in the last decade. It is notable that only emergency service providers are available 24/7. Often when people are contacting police, it is at times of the day when there are simply no other service providers available.

Top calls for service

- **Domestic dispute** – The most common reason people call police is to report disputes, violence, threats, information on protection orders, or request advice or other assistance on an issue involving a spouse, common-law spouse, boyfriend, girlfriend or intimate partner.
- **Check well-being** – Police have special legal authority to enter a residence and check on a person's well-being if they are not answering the door. They also have authority to detain a person in a state of mental health distress. Police may be requested to check on a person's well-being if someone is concerned about a relative or friend they cannot reach and they are concerned for that person's health or well-being. This is different from requests for police assistance to locate missing persons.
- **Report a disturbance**
- **Request assistance** – These requests come from other police agencies or the courts when they require the assistance of the Winnipeg Police Service. The Police Service's General Patrol members can also request assistance of the Community Support Unit to respond to a certain call.
- **Report a suspicious person**
- **Report an intoxicated person** – Police may be called to assist an intoxicated person or detain them until they are sober.
- **Traffic-related complaints** – Police receive calls from the public to report dangerous motorists and other traffic-related complaints.

Top police-initiated events

Police record their activities as calls for service if they observe an incident in progress or are engaging in proactive policing.

- Conducting a traffic stop
- Monitoring a crime "hot spot" identified through the Smart Policing Initiative that uses data to spot crime trends and focus police resources accordingly
- Paying special attention to a location that has ongoing crime and safety problems
- Checking on wanted persons or persons who are on parole and must comply with curfews or other conditions

Top community-rated policing activities

The Winnipeg Police Service's 2017 survey asked 606 residents which crime and community safety issues concern them. Residents rated police activities on a scale of 1 (not important at all) to 5 (extremely important). Interestingly, there are direct relationships between the top and least important activities. Notably, gang enforcement is a high priority (4.46) but vandalism and graffiti as well as gang violence are low priorities (2.6 and 2.0). Traffic enforcement is a relatively high priority (3.74) but traffic violations are relatively low (2.5).

Average (1 to 5)	Priority
4.57	Criminal investigations
4.48	Responding promptly to calls
4.46	Concentrating on gang enforcement
4.36	Concentrating on drug dealers
4.34	Crime prevention
4.24	Being visible on patrol
4.08	Keeping peace and order
3.74	Traffic enforcement
3.48	Concentrating on intoxicated/street persons

Top community-rated neighbourhood problems

In the same survey, residents rated crime and victimization issues in their neighbourhoods on a scale of 1 (not important at all) to 5 (extremely important).

Average (1 to 5)	Priority
2.6	Vandalism & graffiti
2.5	Traffic violations
2.5	Drug use and dealing
2.5	Theft from cars
2.4	Break & enter to homes
2.3	Robbery
2.1	Assaults
2.0	Gang violence

Factors that affect the demand for police services

Downloading

- The public can contact the police 24/7.
- Police respond in a reactive capacity to people who are at-risk and may receive or require help from community organizations and government agencies to meet their needs for health care, addictions treatment, housing supports and support caring for children.
- When local agencies do not have the capacity to meet the needs of at-risk people, they are more likely to have contact with police:
 - Police may be called to assist people with mental illness or intoxicated persons (or detain people under the Mental Health Act or the Intoxicated Persons Detention Act). This happens when adequate treatment and support are not available, or are only available during the day.
 - Police are called when children in the care of Child and Family Services are reported absent or missing from their residences, particularly group homes. There is a disproportionate use of police resources when provincial resources are not available. For example: crisis stabilization units that are not staffed overnight cause police to retain custody of youth while awaiting responses from other systems; elders suffering from dementia who may have left non-secure residential care facilities cause police to search for them.

Crime trends

- Various factors can result in increased crime. Increases in the volume and severity of crime in Winnipeg affect the workloads of many divisions and units in the Police Service, including General Patrol and Investigative Services.

Other actors in the “safety and security web”

- The Council of Canadian Academies published a report describing police as just one part of a “safety and security web.” The report’s authors made the point that in the current environment, controlling crime and promoting community safety are also the concern of:
 - Civilian members of police services
 - Private security companies and guards
 - Health care providers
 - Social workers
 - Insurance companies
 - Security regulators
 - Intelligence agencies
 - Border security agents
 - By-law enforcement agencies
 - Transportation officers
 - Conservation officers
 - Neighbourhood groups
- The presence and effectiveness of these professionals and organizations can reduce the public’s reliance on police to control crime as well as to engage in crime prevention activities. They can also have an impact on police workloads.

2. Community policing

The U.S. Department of Justice defines community policing as “a philosophy that promotes organizational strategies that support the systematic use of partnerships and problem-solving techniques to proactively address the immediate conditions that give rise to public safety issues such as crime, social disorder, and fear of crime.”

The Winnipeg Police Service uses a community policing model. It emphasizes good relationships with the community to make police more effective. It also aims to empower community organizations and neighbourhood groups to take steps to prevent crime and to keep vulnerable people safe.

The role of community partnerships

Police are just one part of an entire community's efforts to prevent crime. Police cannot prevent crime on their own, and depend on the work of other agencies, community organizations, neighbourhood groups and members of the public.

The Police Board and the Winnipeg Police Service promote a strategy of Crime Prevention Through Social Development. Since the prevalence of poverty, discrimination, mental illness and addictions issues in a community are linked to the risk of crime, addressing these issues can be an effective and more efficient way to prevent crime.

Police officers are highly qualified and receive extensive training. They interact with people from all walks of life. Their training and their legal powers are largely focused on enforcing laws. Social workers, health professionals, educators, recreation providers and neighbourhood groups play important roles in crime prevention too. Police work with these groups to coordinate their efforts and share expertise.

3. Police Resources

Police resources include the complement of staff, equipment and infrastructure that is necessary for police to carry out their accountabilities. Winnipeg reports on the total staff complement as there are many essential tasks that contribute to community safety that may not be uniform operations such as Communications Centre staff who are civilian members of the Winnipeg Police Service. The WPS continuously examine what the right ratio is for civilian staff as opposed to specialized sworn officers so that highly trained police officers are dedicated to tasks that only they can perform.

- In 2016, police agencies employed 97,005 people across Canada, 68,773 of who were sworn officers.
- In 2016, the Winnipeg Police Service had a total authorized complement of 1925 members. That total included 1421 sworn officers (73% of police employees) and 504 civilians (27%).

LEGISLATIVE TRENDS

New legislation and precedent-setting court decisions affect how police services are delivered in Winnipeg. This is a survey of key legislative trends and relevant developments.

The Cannabis Act

In the summer of 2018, federal legislation will be proclaimed that creates a legal framework for controlling the production, distribution, sale and possession of cannabis. Police services across Canada will be responsible for enforcing the new law. It will require additional training for police officers, tools for conducting roadside drug impaired testing, and public education.

The Restorative Justice Act

The Provincial government implemented this Act in 2015 and is in the midst of a five-year strategy to expand its capacity to deliver victim-centered restorative justice. An alternative to the traditional court system, restorative justice focuses on treatment or counseling for offenders to reduce recidivism. Police services can make referrals to restorative justice programs. The Winnipeg Police Service has a restorative justice pilot project underway in the North District. The programs and resources available to undertake a more robust approach to restorative justice are limited.

The Provincial Offences Act and Municipal By-law Enforcement Act

On November 20, 2017, Provincial legislation came into effect that reduces the requirement for officers to attend traffic court. Instead of testifying in person, officers may submit written certificates. This change is anticipated to affect the amount of time members of the Winnipeg Police Service spend in court. In 2017, the courts were summoning officers to testify in traffic court when they were not scheduled to work, requiring the Police Service to pay those officers overtime.

The Police Services Act

Enacted in 2009, this Provincial legislation includes provisions for civilian governance of municipal police services that came into force in 2012. The Province committed to undertaking a review of these provisions after they were in effect for five years. The Winnipeg Police Board is still developing its framework for civilian governance of the Winnipeg Police Service. The Act could further affect police services if the Province exercises its authority to adopt a model code of police conduct or regulations on police operations and conduct.

National Inquiry on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls

Indigenous women and girls in Canada are disproportionately likely to be victims of violence. According to Statistics Canada, they are six times more likely than non-Indigenous women to be the victim of a homicide. The Canadian government launched a national inquiry on missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls in September 2016. The inquiry is conducting forensic analyses of police records and will include examination of police practices within its scope. The inquiry will not be completed within the timeframe originally anticipated. One of the high profile cases that sparked the inquiry was that of a young Indigenous girl living in Winnipeg at the time of her death (Tina Fontaine). This particular case is apocryphal in terms of her involvement with child welfare systems and her victimization prior to her death.

Police Oversight

The Law Enforcement Review Agency is a provincial body that is authorized to investigate public complaints about police conduct. The Independent Investigations Unit is a provincial body that investigates serious incidents involving police officers in Manitoba. Both agencies have mandates that empower them to investigate the Winnipeg Police Service when warranted, and the results of any investigations can serve as indicators of the Service's discipline and effectiveness.

Supreme Court Decisions

Decisions made by the Supreme Court of Canada can influence how police agencies investigate criminal cases and participate in the prosecution process. Some of the key decisions that affect policing include:

- *R. v. Paterson (2017)* – Clarifies the strict standard police must meet in order to justify a warrantless search
- *R. v. Bingley (2017)* – Police officers who assess motorists for drug impairment can present their opinion in court as expert testimony
- *R. v. Jordan (2016)* – Set a precedent for criminal charges against an individual to be stayed if the delays in going to trial exceed specified time frames (18 months in provincial courts and 30 months in superior courts)
- *R. v. Fearon (2014)* – Addresses when police can conduct warrantless searches of a person's cell phone while arresting them
- *R. v. Spencer (2014)* – Imposes limits on whether police can request that internet providers voluntarily supply private information associated with individuals' IP addresses
- *R. v. McNeil (2009)* – Police officers have a duty to disclose misconduct records for officers involved in an investigation in case this information is relevant to a defendant's case
- *R. v. Stinchcombe (1991)* – Prosecutors have to disclose all relevant information to the defense, including the written notes of police officers

Inquiries

Significant incidents and investigations sometimes become the subject of judicial inquiries. Some recent and key inquiries that produced recommendations on how police services are delivered and that offer insights on what the community expects from police include:

- The Chamberland Commission will submit its final report in March 2018 on how police in Quebec respect journalists' protection of their sources
- The Braidwood Commission on the Death of Robert Dziekanski addressed the appropriate use of force by police officers, particularly on a distressed person
- The Taman Inquiry emphasized the importance of investigating police officers thoroughly and impartially if they are suspected of committing a crime
- The Aboriginal Justice Inquiry resulted in recommendations to address issues of racism, cultural sensitivity and accountability in policing

Independent Reports

- Ontario's Office of the Independent Police Review Director is conducting a review on systemic racism and bias regarding how the deaths of Indigenous people are investigated in Thunder Bay
- *Police Encounters with People in Crisis* ("the Iacobucci Report") was released in 2014 after the Chief of the Toronto Police Service requested a report on how the Service used lethal or potentially lethal force on emotionally disturbed, mentally disturbed or cognitively impaired people
- *Independent Civilian Review into Matters Relating to the G20 Summit* ("the Morden Report") was released in 2012; the Toronto Police Services Board requested a review of police planning and procedures and the Board's own policies with respect to how protests and arrests related to the G20 Summit in Toronto in 2010 were managed by the Toronto Police Service
- *Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future*, and *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action* were released in 2015.

TECHNOLOGICAL TRENDS

Rapidly evolving technology provides police with new tools to enforce laws and investigate crimes. It also affects crime, creating new opportunities for illegal activity. This section highlights some of the ways in which changing technology shapes police work.

Impact on Crime

First, innovations in technology have an impact on the types of crime that are committed, the opportunities to commit crime, and ways that criminals can make their illegal activity more difficult to detect and investigate.

- Traditional crimes can now be committed with the help of technology, including:
 - Identity theft
 - Child pornography
 - Commercial fraud
 - Attacks against computer data and systems
 - Threats against infrastructure controlled by technology
 - Recruiting for and inciting terrorism
- The internet makes it easier to commit crimes that victimize people living in a different city or country
- Phones and applications can encrypt communications affecting whether and how police can collect evidence
- The internet affords a greater degree of anonymity making it more difficult to track criminal activity

Impact on Policing

Police investigations become more complex and resource-intensive when:

- The person committing a crime lives in a different jurisdiction (country, province or city) than the victim(s)
- The digital records police need to review for evidence are stored on servers in other countries
- Some criminal activity, like sexual exploitation, has shifted online making them harder for police to monitor and requiring specialized training
- Police require additional training and tools to keep pace with new technologies
- The volume of evidence for police to sift through in an investigation increases if they need to review a person's phone, computer, or browsing history or indeed video interviews or interrogation
- There are new types of evidence being considered such as GPS watches, fitness trackers and personal home assistant devices

Law enforcement benefits from technological advancements such as:

- Automation allows police services to process more criminal record checks and alarm permits in the same amount of time
- Online crime reporting makes it more convenient for people to report property crime, and more crime data allows police to identify patterns and trends
- Specialized software for data collection and analysis allows police to identify hot spots for crime
- Photo enforcement of traffic laws is more efficient for certain infractions, like speeding through intersections or running red lights
- Police can use CCTV footage, video footage shot with cell phones and other types of evidence in their investigations
- Police services can equip their officers with body-worn cameras
- Police who carry smart phones or have computers in their patrol cars have consistent access to databases and dispatch information

CONCLUSION

This scan opened by asking what conditions and circumstances exist in Winnipeg that effect the delivery of police services. The environment for policing is created by the collective responses of the ecosystem that make up our criminal justice system. The police take proactive steps and respond as necessary to contribute to a culture of safety for all of us. The Winnipeg Police Board is available to hear from all community members or groups representing community interests on needs, values and expectations so that strategic priorities for police can continue to reflect what is important to citizens of Winnipeg.



The Environment for Policing in Winnipeg 2018

