
WEST END BIZ

STRATEGIC PLAN 2022

The West End Business Improvement Zone (West End BIZ) is a non-profit organization committed to building a stronger West End community by supporting the businesses and organizations within our boundaries. Our mandate includes beautification, safety, promotion and economic development including business development and recruitment. This mandate forms the basis of our two committees: Image & Safety, and Promotion & Development.

The West End BIZ was established by a City of Winnipeg By-law in 1991. All for-profit businesses are assigned a municipal business tax number. They are automatically BIZ members and pay a BIZ levy each year collected by the City of Winnipeg. The City then remits the levy to the BIZ to fund the budget and projects the Board has approved. The BIZ fiscal year is January to December. Although this levy is collected by the City, the BIZ operates independently and not as a department of the City. Although not members, the BIZ partners with other stakeholders including government and non-profit organizations for support to achieve programming and services that best benefit the economic health of the entire area; businesses, organizations, residents and visitors. The BIZ is run by a 12 member Board of Management, City Liaison Officer and appointed City Councillor while day to day programming and operations are carried out by the Executive Director and staff.

OUR MISSION

To work with our members and stakeholders to enhance and promote Winnipeg's West End.

OUR VISION FOR THE WEST END

To be viewed by the city as a vibrant destination, thriving with unique restaurants, entertainment venues, shops and services and enhanced by the diversity and culture of the area. A community where businesses choose to locate, people want to visit and residents choose to live. A place of Commerce, Culture, Community, and Cuisine.

The West End BIZ is now, geographically, the largest among 16 BIZ groups in Winnipeg. There are currently a little over 900 businesses and another 200 organizations located within the West End BIZ boundaries along with approximately 37,000 residents.

The business community is very diverse in the West End, with both commercial and industrial zones. Commercial vacancy rates are very low - 1% and 1.2% industrial and retail vacancies, respectively. The variety of business is supported by the central location, its vicinity to the 60,000 people that come to work downtown every day, the 8,000 people who work Health Sciences Centre as well as the 9,000 enrolled annually at the University of Winnipeg. The West End is also unique in its population density, among the highest in Winnipeg, and. These institutions and high density living lend to the commute make-up of West End residents, 38% of whom use active or public transportation to get around, compared to 22% of Winnipeggers.



OUR ROLE IN ACHIEVING THE VISION



- Develop programming and initiatives to address specific opportunities and challenges in four key areas – Image, Safety, Promotion and Economic Development to:
 - Enhance the look of the West End through street beautification
 - Advocate, develop and support for increased community safety
 - Identify and promote the area’s amenities and attractions such as unique restaurants, shops and services
 - Assist current businesses with information, assistance, programming and initiatives to support their viability and growth
 - Promote the West End as a positive environment for business to locate and thrive, and as a destination for visitors and customers.
- Support the community and community economic development initiatives.
- Advocate for and support best practices and policies from government, to create and sustain a growing and thriving business community.
- Be the champion for the West End; changing perception, and creating a new reality.

PROGRESS SUMMARY

The West End BIZ has accomplished much of what was laid out in the last strategic plans, influencing significant improvements in the West End. More capital projects of appealing and functional public space have been undertaken, including a Gateway Feature and Community Corner, while graffiti removal, litter pick up and the new Brush Up BIZ program have had positive impacts on the image and streetscape. Crime has decreased since the last strategic plan with our patrols acting as good resources for the businesses and community members. Efforts continue to present the West End as inviting with attractive and activated space, while providing safety grants to businesses and supporting various safety initiatives.

Promoting the area has through social and print media has brought more attention to our businesses. Social media followers have increased significantly and tour attendance has seen its best two years in 2015 and 2017, giving exposure for the area and individual businesses. Development has reached a new height for West End BIZ. From the multi-award winning **Open for Business** package, business and available space tracking, data collection and reporting, we personally visit every business at least once per year. These factors have become key pieces for attracting new businesses and helping current businesses connect with BIZ initiatives such as our grants program which encourages and supports private investment. In the last three years of the plan 170 new businesses have chosen the West End to set up shop.

RECENT HIGHLIGHTS & NEW PROJECTS

- 170 new businesses tracked as opening in the West End since 2015
- 'Journeys Begin' commercial released in 2015
- Brush Up BIZ began repairs in 2016
- Concert Series at Saigon Park launched in 2016
- Open For Businesses Package and Project Launch in 2015
- Tours
 - 2015 and '17 had the 1st and 2nd highest tour attendance in tour history
- Trends Report released in 2017
- Canada 150 Mural in 2017
- BIZ Grants/Rebates
 - 2015, '16, and '17 saw the three highest amounts of funding given and private investment induced from grants and rebates.
- Over \$60,000 investment in Community Corner pocket park - completed in 2017
- IDA Conference hosted in 2017 by the West End, Downtown, and Exchange District BIZ's



KEY OPERATIONAL & ADMINISTRATION OBJECTIVES

OBJECTIVES

- 1) Ensure the appropriate administrative, financial & human resource policies, procedures, guidelines, and records are in place to ensure accountability, transparency and legislative compliance.
- 2) Attract and retain qualified productive personnel, as needed – and growing when required, by providing competitive wages and benefits, professional development opportunities, a positive work environment with the “tools to do the job,” rewards and recognition, and sound human resource policies for all staff.
- 3) Strive to ensure the Board of Management and Committees have the skills and knowledge needed to guide the organization and that they accurately reflect the various neighborhoods and business sectors represented in the West End.
- 4) Develop realistic and achievable programming that is current and follows best practice. Ensure ongoing program evaluation to monitor and assess impact, effectiveness and progress and to identify any problems and determine resolutions as needed.
- 5) Seek and develop new partnerships by approaching and engaging all levels of government, crown corporations, other organizations, agencies and businesses to advocate for BIZ sponsorship and support to maintain and expand initiatives.
- 6) Monitor operational performance and provide annual updates.
- 7) Protect assets of the BIZ through sound financial management protection of resources.
- 8) Be accountable to our members.
- 9) Ensure we provide the best possible customer service at all times.

TASKS/PROJECTS

- When appropriate, update office computer hardware and software.
- Continue to improve database to store and track relevant data and information.
- Update our soft copy filing and archiving system, ensuring a complete and comprehensive backup system.
- Continue to improve BIZ office and premises to provide a functional, secure, and professional workspace.



IMAGE

GOAL

To improve the visual appeal and usability of the West End and create an environment for businesses to thrive, and residents to enjoy while attracting visitors to shop and dine.

OBJECTIVES

- 1) Focus on the image of key routes (Portage, Ellice, Sargent, Notre Dame, Erin, and Wall) as a first priority.
- 2) Identify street elements in need of repair, replacement or “enhancement”.
- 3) Concentrate on investment in projects that make an impact; projects large enough to improve quality of life, improve the walkability and usability of commercial streets, and catalyze further public and private investment to improve and enhance the streetscape.
- 4) Build business owner pride and support private investment in beautification efforts.
- 5) Seek to ensure year-round cleanliness.
- 6) Support community organizations and stakeholder initiatives that are working to achieve the same goals.

TASKS/PROJECTS

- Continue to build on the amount of attractive and usable public and commercial space and maintain investment in the growing number of established capital projects.
- Continue to add important and impactful murals, expanding on themes and types of art. Repair older murals.
- Pursue new or relocated garbage/recycling bins to be placed in key spots.
- Implement creative ideas and programs to educate businesses and residents on the importance of property image and cleanliness.
- Continue with other area beautification projects: banners, public art, litter and graffiti removal, and other aesthetic improvements.
- Advocate for the improvement of public infrastructure including road repairs, tree wells and the replacement of dead trees and shrubbery.
- Advocate for improvement and enforcement of City by-laws including graffiti and poster removal, bulky waste and derelict buildings.
- Support the upkeep of area parks, gardens and green-spaces to enhance and beautify.
- Develop and implement strategies for improving the image and activation of streets, especially key routes.



SAFETY

GOAL

To assist in creating a safe, walkable and vibrant West End, challenge negative perceptions and promote an area that is safe and advantageous for people to live and do businesses.

OBJECTIVES

- 1) Support crime prevention initiatives by the City of Winnipeg, our businesses and other stakeholders for the benefit of the community.
- 2) Develop programming and initiatives to assist with and support crime reduction.

TASKS/PROJECTS

- Advocate for an increased police presence and crime prevention initiatives in the West End.
- Continue to enhance the safety guide to remain current and relevant for businesses, employees, visitors and community.
- Identify new opportunities and implement strategies to support crime prevention initiatives.
- Work with community police, businesses, area stakeholders and the City of Winnipeg to develop or facilitate safety initiatives.
- Educate businesses on safety and crime prevention initiatives and options.
- Provide and promote grants to improve the safety and security of businesses.
- Advocate for, and pursue new funding or sponsorship to create, support or enhance all BIZ safety programs, initiatives and projects.



GOAL

To have the West End and its businesses viewed as a positive and a unique destination for visitors to shop, dine and visit.

PROMOTION

OBJECTIVES

- 1) Actively seek and optimize opportunities for marketing and promotion, using media to the best advantage and counteracting negative perceptions and publicity.
- 2) Continue to grow social media presence and influence and take advantage of opportunities to network social media with member businesses and other influential organizations.
- 3) Identify opportunities for members to network and learn.
- 4) Work with businesses to educate and support how they can better promote through social media and other methods.
- 5) Build our brand and the west end advantage.

TASKS/PROJECTS

- Continue to identify and incorporate into programming new ways to promote our businesses and area amenities, and bring visitors to the area.
- Continue to adapt the functionality and attractiveness of the BIZ website to best serve our members and engage our visitors.
- Create stronger awareness of the BIZ advantage to encourage member participation in programs.
- Develop better electronic communication to our members.
- Increase social media presence and effectiveness. Network social media presence with other influential organizations and businesses.
- Create opportunities for great experiences for visitors to the area.



IMAGINE
YOUR
BUSINESS
here

West
End *biz*
BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT ZONE

Join our growing community of businesses in the
West End! Contact 204-954-7900 or visit
www.westendbiz.ca

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

OBJECTIVES

- 1) Be viewed as a leader, both in the West End and city at large.
- 2) Advocate for the BIZ model.
- 3) Work with other BIZ groups and stakeholders as appropriate to advance economic development in the City.
- 4) Enhance our liaison and partnerships with the City of Winnipeg
- 5) Pursue business recruitment opportunities aimed at attracting new businesses to the West End.
- 6) Become a research arsenal, developing good information to advocate for urban and West End development.
- 7) Be the go-to resource for our businesses seeking information.
- 8) Support Community Associations to help build residential density, community well-being and wealth.
- 9) Continue to effectively network with all levels of government, community leaders and other stakeholders to create awareness of and gain support for the West End.
- 10) Enhance communications between the BIZ and its members by maintaining an accurate list of businesses with up-to-date contact information.
- 11) Obtain feedback from members to measure success in performance and business retention.

TASKS/PROJECTS

- Create strategies for new business recruitment and existing business development.
- Improve awareness and effectiveness of grants, especially storefront and business development.
- Work with brokers to ensure they are aware of BIZ initiatives to attract and support business.
- Actively promote available retail and commercial space in our communications.
- Identify locations where retaining businesses is a problem. Determine causes and develop solutions.
- Develop non biz member support for initiatives.
- Continue to update area statistics for the development of current and relevant data.
- Track and measure success of tasks and projects.

GOAL

To have the West End viewed as an ideal location for business to locate. Retain attract and support business and investment. Increase area vibrancy, strength and health through advocacy, engagement and initiatives.

MONITORING PROGRESS & SUCCESS

The Strategic Plan 2022 takes into consideration the importance of monitoring programs and progress. The BIZ is tracking more information than ever before with which monitoring can be more effective. Metrics used in specific programming areas are as follows:

OPERATIONAL AND ADMINISTRATION

- Staff turnover ratio
- Number of business sectors represented on the Board of Management and Committees (i.e. hospitality, services, retail)
- Number of new partnerships established
- Number of existing partnerships maintained

IMAGE

- Number of street elements repaired or replaced
- Amount of investment in streetscape and capital projects
- BIZ street enhancement initiatives statistics (including 311 reporting, graffiti removal and litter pick-up)

SAFETY

- WPS area Safety statistics
- Number of safety grants awarded

PROMOTION

- Tour attendance and survey response
- Customer surveys
- Statistics on website usage, Twitter and Instagram followers, and Facebook likes
- Feedback from businesses
- Media coverage

DEVELOPMENT

- Number of new businesses locating in the zone
- Business retention and turnover statistics
- Number of business development and storefront grants awarded and amount of private investment encouraged from grants
- Vacancy rate and length of lease listings

In addition to the listed measurement tools, other indicators will be developed for brand new initiatives yet to be defined. The listed measurement tools will be complemented by the extensive information already collected by the West End BIZ in regards to other services provided to our membership. Together, these indicators will provide insight into our progress towards achieving the objectives of Plan 2022.

Plan 2022 is all about the continued revitalization and supporting the existing momentum of the West End through the dedicated work of the BIZ staff and board and our valued partners and stakeholders.



Our business is your business.



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