

THE PATH TO RECONCILIATION ACT



ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

PREPARED BY
MANITOBA INDIGENOUS RECONCILIATION SECRETARIAT
2024/25

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Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that Manitoba is located on the traditional territories and ancestral lands of the Anishinaabeg, Anisininewuk, Dakota Oyate, Denesuline and Nehethowuk Nations.

We acknowledge that Manitoba is located on the national homeland of the Red River Métis.

We acknowledge that northern Manitoba includes lands that have always been the ancestral lands of the Inuit.

This report was prepared in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Historically, Winnipeg has always been a place of convergence – of the Red, Assiniboine and Seine Rivers, and the Indigenous peoples who relied on those waters for their livelihood, sustenance and mobility. Winnipeg is on Treaty 1 Territory and is home today to more than 40,000 Anishinaabeg, Anisininewuk, Dakota Oyate, Denesuline and Nehethowuk people from many different communities. Winnipeg is also the birthplace of the Métis Nation, the heart of the Red River Métis homeland, and nearly 50,000 Métis live here. Further, hundreds of Inuit who have come to Winnipeg from Inuit Nunangat, whether to access services or pursue opportunities, have made Winnipeg their home.

Winnipeg's drinking water is sourced from Shoal Lake 40 First Nation. Winnipeg also receives electricity from generating stations in northern treaty areas, and we take this opportunity to acknowledge the impact those projects have had on Nations across Manitoba over many years.

The Manitoba Indigenous Reconciliation Secretariat staff who prepared this report work to engage, respect and focus on understanding Indigenous people here in this location and across the lands and waters of what is now the province of Manitoba. In all things, we hope our contributions and efforts contribute positively to the lives and experiences of Indigenous Manitobans. We are grateful to be able to do our work in this place, and we commit to taking meaningful actions on the path of truth and reconciliation.

Acronyms Used in this Report

| Full Text | Acronym |
|--|------------|
| Child and Family Services | CFS |
| Indian Residential School | IRS |
| Indigenous Services Canada | ISC |
| Manitoba Indigenous Reconciliation Secretariat | MIRS |
| Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak | MKO |
| Manitoba Métis Federation | MMF |
| Memorandum of Understanding | MOU |
| Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQIA+ People | MMIWG2S+ |
| National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation | NCTR |
| Royal Canadian Mounted Police | RCMP |
| Seal River Watershed Alliance | SRWA |
| Southern Chiefs' Organization | SCO |
| Treaty Land Entitlement | TLE |
| Truth and Reconciliation Commission | TRC |
| Two-spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex, asexual, and people who identify as part of sexual and gender diverse communities, who use additional terminologies | 2SLGBTQIA+ |
| United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples | UNDRIP |

Executive Summary: The Path to Reconciliation in Manitoba

The Path to Reconciliation Act recognizes that Manitoba is situated on the traditional lands and territories of seven Indigenous Nations: the Dakota, Dene, Cree, Ojibway, Anisininew, Métis, and Inuit. The Act also recognizes that Manitoba continues to benefit from the historical relationships, contemporary cultures and treaties with Indigenous peoples and Indigenous nations, while Indigenous peoples in Canada have shown tremendous resilience making many important contributions to society, while also being subject to a wide variety of systemic and ongoing abuses. The Act draws on principles established in the *Calls to Action* from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* and the *Calls for Justice* of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. The Act provides government accountability for establishing and maintaining mutually respectful relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples to build trust, affirm historical agreements, address healing and create a more equitable and inclusive society.

This report is based on the actions taken by the Manitoba government between April 1, 2024 and March 31, 2025. The Manitoba Indigenous Reconciliation Secretariat summarizes these actions in this, the tenth Path to Reconciliation Annual Progress Report.

Since October 2023, Manitoba has committed to renewing relationships with Indigenous Nations by taking a government-to-government approach to advancing shared priorities. Land, Culture, Language, and People are four components that make up a Nation. Manitoba has been working to strengthen and support work under these pillars to reinforce Indigenous Nationhood, creating an environment for meaningful government-to-government relationships grounded in mutual respect and partnership. The content in this report is organized according to these four pillars.

Land is central to Indigenous identity, sovereignty, and well-being. In 2024/25, Manitoba worked in partnership with Indigenous governments to support food security, participate in natural resource and economic development initiatives, and environmental protection. The department of Business, Mining, Trade and Job Creation made significant progress towards implementation of the new [critical minerals strategy](#) with the support and participation of Indigenous Nations by establishing a mutually agreed-to consultation process for mineral sector projects, including finalizing a new consultation protocol with Northlands Dënesųtiné First Nation. Additionally, work is continuing to advance the return

of jurisdiction over land to Indigenous Nations. As a significant portion of Manitoba's Indigenous population lives in the north, this section also includes efforts to connect the north and improve services in northern communities. Highlights include making record investments in the Arctic Gateway Group to advance economic reconciliation and connect northern Manitoba and advancing the proposed Indigenous-led Seal River Watershed Indigenous Protected Area.

Culture is the heart of Indigenous resilience, expression, and community strength. In 2024/25, Manitoba supported Indigenous-led cultural revitalization through investments in public art, heritage preservation, and community wellness. Initiatives such as the establishment of the Orange Shirt Day Fund and supports for local cultural programming helped honour Indigenous histories and create spaces for healing and celebration. Other initiatives under the Culture pillar also include work in the departments of Justice and Families to Indigenize colonial systems such as policing and child welfare by developing strong relationships with Indigenous leadership and communities, and collaborating to transfer jurisdictional responsibility back to the nations, communities, and families. These efforts reflect the province's commitment to strengthening Indigenous cultural identities and intergenerational connection.

Language is a living expression of Indigenous worldviews, knowledge systems, and identity. In 2024/25, Manitoba Indigenous Reconciliation Secretariat established the Language office to preserve and promote Manitoba's Indigenous Languages, and [introduced a program to translate Hansard into Indigenous languages](#), increasing the amount of written content available and helping to ensure these languages are never lost. Manitoba is also working to expand Indigenous language programming in schools and public services. Progress reported in this section reflects Manitoba's commitment to normalizing the use of Indigenous languages in daily life and strengthening language transmission for future generations.

People are the foundation of strong, self-determined communities and the driving force behind reconciliation. In 2024/25, Manitoba invested in the health, education, and economic empowerment of Indigenous peoples through targeted programs and partnerships. This includes a strategy and record investments to address the MMIWG2S+ crisis in Manitoba, searching the landfill, and initiatives to close the gaps in areas such as health care, education, and access to housing and employment. These efforts aim to create opportunities, reduce barriers, and support Indigenous self-determination across all areas of life.

The actions outlined in this report mark a continued shift toward a more collaborative and accountable approach to reconciliation centred on Indigenous voices. Guided by the values of understanding, respect, engagement and action, the Province is working to build One Manitoba, where reconciliation is not only a principle, but a practice.

A Note on Terminology

In the context of this report, ‘Indigenous nations’ and ‘Indigenous peoples’ are inclusive terms for the original nations and peoples of North America and their descendants, which include: Anishinaabeg, Anisininewuk, Dakota Oyate, Denesuline and Nehethowuk, Métis, and Inuit. The term, ‘Indigenous’ has come to replace ‘Aboriginal’ in recent years, but some pre-existing programs still use the term ‘Aboriginal’ in their naming conventions. The term, ‘Aboriginal’ is also still used in some legal contexts, referring to people with specific legal rights under s.35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*. The reference to ‘Indigenous nations’ and ‘Indigenous peoples’ is an inclusive term, but many recognize and acknowledge the unique histories, languages, cultural practices and spiritual beliefs of the distinct nations and peoples.

The *Constitution Act, 1982* recognizes three groups of Aboriginal peoples: Indian, Métis and Inuit. The term First Nation came into common usage in the 1970s to replace the term ‘Indian’, which many find offensive due to its incorrect origin and connections to discriminatory and colonial policies under the *Indian Act*. The term First Nations refers to a variety of Nations each with distinct languages, cultures, and practices. In Manitoba, these include the Anishinaabeg, Anisininewuk, Dakota Oyate, Denesuline and Nehethowuk Nations.

Anishinaabeg: People of the Anishinaabeg language family who identify with Odawa, Ojibwe/Ojibway/Saulteaux and Chippewa. In Manitoba, reserve lands within the Anishinaabeg Nation are mainly located south of the 53rd parallel.

Anisininewuk: People whose language and culture come from mixed Ojibwe and Cree traditions, but are generally considered a distinct nation from either of their parent groups. In Manitoba, reserve lands belonging to Anisininewuk Nation are located in the Island Lake Region.

Dakota Oyate: People of the same language family who identify with Assiniboine, Dakota, Lakota and Nakoda. In Manitoba, reserve lands belonging to Dakota Oyate Nation are located in southern Manitoba.

Denesuline: People of the Athapaskan language family who identify with distinct groups of Dene. In Manitoba, reserve lands belonging to Denesuline Nation are located mainly in northern Manitoba.

Nehethowuk: People of the Algonquian language family who identify with Cree dialects. In Manitoba, reserve lands belonging to Nehethowuk Nation are spread across Manitoba, mainly between the 51st and 58th parallel.

Métis: A person who self-identifies as Métis, is of historic Métis Nation Ancestry, is distinct from other Aboriginal Peoples, and is accepted by the Métis Nation. This definition was adopted by the Métis Nation in 2002. In 2003, the Supreme Court Decision in *R. v. Powley* referenced this definition and affirmed that the term Métis does not refer to all individuals of mixed Aboriginal and European ancestry. Throughout this document, the term Métis refers specifically to the Red River Métis, a distinct Nation governed by the Manitoba Métis Federation and defined by a common history, ancestry, identity, culture, and social and kinship relationships. The distinct language of the Red River Métis is Michif.

Inuit: Are the Indigenous people of the Canadian Arctic, or Inuit Nunangat (Nunavut, Northwest Territories, Northern Quebec and Northern Labrador). The word Inuit means ‘the people’ and the word Inuk is the singular term for Inuit. Inuktitut is one of the Inuit languages.

Message from the Premier and Minister Responsible for Indigenous Reconciliation



In last year's message, I pledged to leading a whole-of-government approach to address deep-rooted inequalities between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples —grounded in a commitment to build strong, respectful relationships with Indigenous Nations. This promise was anchored in the recognition of Indigenous leaders as leaders of Nations. Over the past year, I have honoured that commitment by continuing our work with Anishinaabeg, Anisininewuk, Dakota Oyate, Denesuline and Nehethowuk Nations, Inuit and Red River Métis to advance key priorities, and develop new initiatives to improve the quality of life for all.

In the past year, I have worked closely with Indigenous Nations and communities to advance shared priorities together. We are working to return child and family services to Indigenous Nations and expanded services for children on reserve. We are working to bring Indigenous languages back to the classroom so they can be passed on to future generations. We are working to address long-standing gaps in health and social services, and we are committed to ensuring that economic development in this province includes Indigenous peoples. Manitoba is made stronger when all peoples are healthy, thriving and able to pursue Mino Bimaadiziwin (the good life).

Thanks to the joint efforts of the Manitoba government and Indigenous leadership, several important milestones have been reached this past year. The successful search of the Prairie Green Landfill for remains of Morgan Harris and Mercedes Myran demonstrated that Manitoba is committed to taking firm action to ensuring this province is safer for Indigenous women, girls and Two-Spirit people. Thanks to the dedicated collaboration between the Manitoba government, families, Indigenous leadership, and other partners, the compassionate search of the Prairie Green Landfill resulted in the remains of Morgan and Mercedes being brought home to their families. We are now committed to search the Brady Landfill for the remains of Ashlee Shingoose.

On March 31, 2025, as people across Canada observed Indigenous Languages Day, I was pleased to announce the creation of two Indigenous Language Protector positions. These staff are tasked with translating the Hansard to Anishinaabemowin, the language of the

Anishinaabe people. In addition to increasing access to government proceedings for Anishinaabe speakers, the language protectors will also support language revitalization by expanding the Anishinaabemowin vocabulary. Manitoba will also explore translating Hansard to other Indigenous languages in the future.

Additionally, our government provided \$20 million in capital funding to the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (NCTR) to support the construction of a permanent home, in the heart of Treaty One Territory. For over a decade, NCTR has been a leading voice educating Canadians on the truths of residential school system and charting a path towards reconciliation and healing; these funds will support NCTR as they advance their important work.

Reconciliation is not a destination; it is a journey we must walk together. I am proud of the steps we have taken together as a province, and I look forward to continuing this work in partnership with Anishinaabeg, Anisininewuk, Dakota Oyate, Denesuline, Nehethowuk, Red River Métis, and Inuit leadership across Manitoba.

Together, we are building a stronger, more just province for everyone.

Miigwech,

Wab Kinew
Premier of Manitoba
Minister of Indigenous Reconciliation
Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs

The Path to Reconciliation Act

The Minister's Requirements Under the Act

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>Progress report</p> <p>5(1) For each fiscal year, the minister responsible for reconciliation must prepare a report about the measures taken by the government to advance reconciliation, including the measures taken to engage Indigenous nations and Indigenous peoples in the reconciliation process and the measures taken to implement the strategy.</p> | <p>Rapport d'étape</p> <p>5(1) Pour chaque exercice, le ministre chargé de la réconciliation établit un rapport sur les mesures prises par le gouvernement pour faire progresser la réconciliation, notamment celles visant la participation des nations et des peuples autochtones au processus et la mise en œuvre de la stratégie.</p> |
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The Four Pillars of Indigenous Nationhood

Historically, Crown governments have not adequately recognized Indigenous Nations as equal partners. Manitoba is working to change this by renewing its relationship with Indigenous Nations through a government-to-government approach that respects and affirms Indigenous nationhood. This includes acknowledging the unique identities, histories, and governance structures of Anishinaabeg, Anisininewuk, Dakota Oyate, Denesuline, Nehethowuk, Inuit, and Métis peoples. Central to this approach is the recognition and support of the four foundational pillars of Indigenous Nationhood: land, culture, language, and people. These pillars are essential for Indigenous Nations to exercise their inherent rights and responsibilities as distinct and self-determining governments.

Land

Land provides and is the root of Indigenous survival. It is a source of wealth but often a flashpoint of conflict and the basis of colonization. All our needs – food, shelter, clothing, culture and spirituality – are taken care of by the land. An understanding of land and our place within it is embedded in Indigenous culture, language, and history. Understanding one's own role and responsibilities in this relationship informs ethics and environmental stewardship.

Recognizing the deep and enduring relationship Indigenous Peoples hold with the land, the Manitoba government is supporting initiatives that promote partnerships with Indigenous Nations on the stewardship of lands and waters, including sustainable resource development. From returning jurisdiction over lands to expanding Indigenous participation in energy efficiency and natural resource projects, these efforts reflect a commitment to restoring balance, supporting self-determination, and building stronger, more connected communities across the province. The following section describes efforts undertaken by Manitoba to advance reconciliation through work related to lands and resources, including a call for wind generating projects for up to 600 MW of power, with Indigenous majority ownership .

SUSTAINABLE STEWARDSHIP OF FOOD RESOURCES

Access to healthy and wholesome foods is necessary to maintain a healthy community. Food security is a significant issue in northern and Indigenous communities in Manitoba due to factors including remoteness and threats to traditional food systems.

In 2024/25, Manitoba led or supported various initiatives to improve food security across Manitoba and support Indigenous participation in the agriculture and agri-food economy.

Manitoba is collaborating with Indigenous and northern communities to improve food security by improving access to healthy and locally produced foods. Highlights from 2024/25 include:

- Working with community-based partners and industry specialists to deliver Northern Healthy Food Initiative (NHFI) programming in 44 northern communities in Northern Manitoba, including education projects in Meadow Portage and Dauphin on the care of bees and chicks in northern climates (Figure 1).
- Creating an Indigenous Engagement Consultant position in the Public Trust and Engagement office in the Department of Agriculture to support Indigenous communities and organizations on their agriculture and food system goals. The consultant was hired in August 2024 and has engaged with nine communities and ten organizations in 2024/25.
- Manitoba Agriculture regularly works with the National Circle of Indigenous Agriculture and Food to expand their role in Manitoba while enhancing food sovereignty and food security in the Manitoba and the prairie region in support of provincial and national goals.

NHFI 2024/25 Highlights

- 39,933 lbs of vegetables and fruits produced*
- 14 beehives maintained*
- 2,000 litres of honey harvested*
- 4,865 lbs of poultry harvested*
- 2,033 individuals served*

*Based on available reporting. Actual count may be higher.

Figure 1 NHFI - 2024/25 Highlights

[The Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership \(S-CAP\)](#) is an agreement between Manitoba and Canada to invest \$221 million from 2023-28 to ensure sustainable development of the agri-food industry through investments across seven priority areas. In 2024/25, S-CAP funding was used to support a variety of initiatives to increase Indigenous

participation and opportunities in Manitoba's agriculture and agri-food economy, including:

- Approving 27 projects under the Indigenous Agriculture and Relationship Development priority area, a total commitment of \$697,000 (including multi-year projects). This priority area supports initiatives, priorities, and innovative partnerships that enhance relationships with Indigenous Peoples and increase Indigenous participation and opportunities in Manitoba's agriculture and agri-food economy.
- Supporting 24 Indigenous-led projects through the Carbon Sequestration and Grasslands Resilience Stream of the Resilient Agricultural Landscapes Program. This funding stream enables Agricultural Crown Land forage lease holders, community pastures, Indigenous primary producers and communities, and primary producers outside of Watershed District boundaries to adopt beneficial on-farm land use and management practices that increase carbon sequestration. A total of \$329,000 was committed to applicants self-identifying as Indigenous, representing 23.7% of total funding in this stream.

PROMOTING INDIGENOUS PARTICIPATION IN ENERGY EFFICIENCY PROJECTS

In 2024/25, the Manitoba government made significant progress towards its commitment to working with Indigenous Nations to lessen the energy burden experienced in their communities and identify ways to reduce barriers to enable higher participation in energy efficiency programming and increase the uptake in Efficiency Manitoba's Indigenous programs. Achievements in this area include:

- Holding the second in-person Indigenous Energy Efficiency Working Group meeting with invitations to all 63 Anishinaabeg, Anisininewuk, Dakota Oyate, Denesuline and Nehethowuk Nations and Tribal Councils. The two-day event is one engagement tool used to understand energy efficiency needs and collaborate to better design and implement programming.
 - There were 95 delegates in attendance with 44 Anishinaabeg, Anisininewuk, Dakota Oyate, Denesuline and Nehethowuk Nations and four Tribal Councils (Interlake Resource Tribal Council, Keewatin Tribal Council, Southeast Resource Development Council, and Swampy Cree Tribal Council) represented.
 - Engagement with Manitoba Métis Federation occurs through a dedicated MMF Energy Efficiency Advocate, and the Inuit Association of Manitoba was engaged separately.

- Providing Energy Efficiency Advocate funding for Sioux Valley Dakota Nation, O-Pipon-Na-Piwin Cree Nation, Dakota Plains Wahpeton First Nation, Skownan First Nation, and York Factory First Nation. A total of \$200,000 was committed in 2024/25 to support the hiring of Energy Efficiency Advocates which will help these communities lower their energy consumption and work towards their sustainability goals.
- Providing over \$3.5 million in energy efficiency incentives for Indigenous-owned homes and businesses on- and off-reserve through Indigenous-specific energy efficiency programs (Table 1).

| Program | Participating Communities | Homes / Businesses | Incentives (\$000s) |
|--|--|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| First Nation Energy Efficiency Program | Barren Lands First Nation, Black River First Nation, Garden Hill First Nation, O-Chi-Chak-Ko-Sipi First Nation, Opaskwayak Cree Nation, Skownan First Nation, Wasagamack First Nation | 151 | 535 |
| Community Heat Pump Program | Peguis First Nation | 22 | 219 |
| Métis Energy Efficiency Offers (excluding retrofits) | Throughout Manitoba | 356 | 2,032 |
| Métis Energy Efficiency Offers (retrofits only) | Throughout Manitoba | 1,767 | |
| Indigenous Small Business | Skownan First Nation, Misipawistik Cree Nation, St. Theresa Point First Nation, York Factory First Nation, Pimicikamak Cree Nation, Tootinaowaziibeeng First Nation, Mosakahiken Cree Nation, Dakota Plains First Nation, Norway House Cree Nation | 206 | 759 |

Table 1 Indigenous Energy Efficiency Programs in Manitoba - 2024/25 Highlights

INDIGENOUS PARTICIPATION IN NATURAL RESOURCE PROJECTS

In November 2024, the Ministries of Natural Resources and Indigenous Futures (NRIF) and Business, Mining, Trade and Job Creation (BMTJC) were established. Mandate letters to NRIF Minister Ian Bushie and BMTJC Minister Jamie Moses identified multiple priorities related to natural resources, including direction to work with Manitoba’s Indigenous Nations to unlock their potential, increase opportunities for Indigenous participation in forestry and mining, and develop an Indigenous Loan Guarantee Program.

Significant progress has been made in 2024/25 towards fulfilling these mandates, in addition to new and ongoing efforts across government to create opportunities for Indigenous partners to benefit from natural resource projects. Key achievements from 2024/25 include:

- Introducing [Manitoba's Affordable Energy Plan](#), which provides a unifying vision for Manitoba's future in clean, affordable energy and includes government-to-government partnerships with Indigenous Nations as a central objective.
 - The Plan includes a commitment for Manitoba Hydro to issue an Expression of Interest for near-term wind generating projects with Indigenous majority ownership for up to 600 MW of power, unlocking economic growth for Indigenous Nations and creating affordable, clean energy for all Manitobans.
 - Participation in the Call for Wind Power will be supported by the Manitoba Indigenous Loan Guarantee Program (MILGP). The development of MILGP was initiated in 2024/25 by NRIF in partnership with the Department of Finance.
 - Initially focused on supporting wind projects, the MILGP will offer up to \$300 million in guarantees. By offering a path to lower interest rates supported by Manitoba's credit rating, MILGP enables Indigenous Nations to better share in the financial benefits of viable renewable wind energy projects.
- Launching the [Securing Our Critical Mineral Future strategy](#) to stand up critical minerals projects faster while respecting the environment and forming strong Indigenous partnerships. This strategy includes commitments to support under-represented groups and address labour market needs for developing strong northern communities. *Securing Our Critical Mineral Future* is a crucial step towards creating good jobs and economic growth in partnership with Indigenous Nations.
- Managing the implementation of the Manitoba-First Nations Mineral Development Protocol to establish mutually agreed-upon consultation processes with Anishinaabeg, Anisininewuk, Dakota Oyate, Denesuline and Nehethowuk Nations for mineral sector projects, including finalizing a new consultation protocol with Northlands Dēnesųtiné First Nation.
- [Signing a memorandum of understanding \(MOU\) with Minegoziibe Anishinabe, Wuskwi Sipihk First Nation, and Sapotaweyak Cree Nation in June 2024](#) to extend Louisiana Pacific's operating licence by five years and keep hundreds of good-paying jobs in the Swan Valley region. The MOU includes the development of a new Forest Management

Plan, and additional measures to protect Aboriginal and Treaty rights. Additionally, \$500,000 was committed to the three Nations for the completion of “Interim Measures” covering the five years during which the Forest Management Plan will be developed.

- Beginning consultation with Indigenous Nations that have expressed interest in renewing timber dues revenue sharing agreements.
- Partnering with Indigenous communities to plant over 70,000 seedlings and potted stock as part of the 2 Billion Trees program. In 2024/25, participating communities included Norway House Cree Nation, Sagkeeng First Nation, Pinaymootang First Nation, Sioux Valley Dakota Nation, Peguis First Nation, Brokenhead Ojibway Nation, and Swan Lake First Nation.
- Providing funding to the Manitoba Chamber of Commerce to support the Manitoba Mineral Development Fund. This fund is a provincial fund that supports strategic projects aimed at advancing mineral exploration and development within Manitoba, with a specific focus on initiatives fostering increased Indigenous participation and promoting sustainable economic growth throughout the province’s mineral supply chain. In November 2024, a new intake of up to \$2 million through the Fund was announced to further stimulate exploration and economic activity across the province.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

The Manitoba government has committed to protecting 30% of Manitoba’s diverse landscapes by 2030. In addition to increasing environmental sustainability, this commitment creates an opportunity to strengthen relationships with Indigenous Nations and communities by partnering on initiatives to advance shared conservation goals. Key achievements in this area from 2024/25 include:

- Signing an MOU with Parks Canada and the Seal River Watershed Alliance (SRWA) – a partnership between Sayisi Dene First Nation, Northlands Denesuline First Nation, Barren Lands First Nation and O-Pipon-Na-Piwin Cree Nation working to create the Seal River Watershed Indigenous Protected Area in northern Manitoba – respecting an assessment of the feasibility of establishing a protected area in the Seal River Watershed. The parties completed a report in February 2025, concluding that the establishment of a protected area or areas in the Seal River Watershed is feasible.
- Partnering with Indigenous communities on long-term management and remediation of orphaned and abandoned mine sites (OAMs) and contaminated sites, resulting in

direct award contracts, advancing Treaty Land Entitlement, and potential expansion of partnerships to include Indigenous-led water monitoring and sampling. In 2024-25, fourteen Indigenous communities were engaged on the long-term management and remediation of OAMs and contaminated sites, including:

- Engaging Manto Sipi First Nation and God's Lake First Nation in the development of remedial options, as well as site visits to repair a shaft cap on Elk Island in the God's Lake area.
- Beginning quarterly meetings with MMF to discuss remediation work.
- Engaging with Bunibonabee Cree Nation, on site visits and final inspections at Johnson Knee Lake, which was crucial to the project's success.
- Engaging with Fox Lake Cree Nation, Sayisi Dene First Nation on environmental site assessment and remedial options analysis at Churchill Rocket Range.

The Manitoba government is also committed to collaborating with Indigenous communities to protect and restore aquatic ecosystems, support Indigenous-led water stewardship, and ensure Indigenous voices and knowledge are central to water management decisions. Initiatives include:

- Working with Indigenous Nations and communities on the upper Nelson River and lower Churchill/Burntwood/Nelson Rivers to discuss the ongoing expansion of the Coordinated Aquatics Monitoring Program to other areas including shoreline erosion, shoreline wetland issues (such as traditional plants, medicines and waterfowl) and monitoring of terrestrial and riverbank components and shoreline health with the inclusion of Indigenous community participation and Indigenous traditional knowledge. These meetings resulted in the establishment of two regional monitoring committees.
- Forming an Indigenous Standing Committee for the East Interlake Watershed District to ensure Indigenous voices are represented in decision-making processes of watershed district programming, and to foster long-term partnerships with Indigenous communities. Objectives are to integrate Indigenous knowledge and perspectives into watershed management, and to guide and approve projects and programs. Members of Fisher River Cree Nation and Peguis First Nation sit on the Standing Committee.

RETURNING JURISDICTION OVER LANDS TO INDIGENOUS NATIONS

Both *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UNDRIP) and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) *Calls to Action* call for recognizing and respecting Indigenous Peoples' rights to their land, including land return and self-

governance. Manitoba has committed to taking action to affirm these rights and principles, including efforts to expedite Treaty Land Entitlement (TLE). Initiatives in this area from 2024/25 include:

- [Signing an MOU with the Manitoba Métis Federation](#) in July 2024 and establishing a joint collaborative working group to facilitate discussions and progress on issues of common concern with respect of the historic community of Ste. Madeleine and the Spy Hill Community Pastures (Figure 2). The MOU is a step towards righting a historic wrong.

Ste. Madeleine - Background

Ste. Madeleine was settled by Red River Métis Citizens and families in the late 18th and early 19th century. In 1939, 250 citizens were driven out of the area by the federal government and their homes were burnt to create community pastures. These pastures were operated by Canada until 2013 when they were dissolved and transferred to Manitoba.

Figure 2 Ste. Madelaine Background

- Continuing to advance Additions to Reserve (ATR) by implementing signed Treaty Land Entitlement Agreements, including:
 - Transferring 80.14 acres to Canada to be converted to reserve for Norway House Cree Nation and Brokenhead Ojibway Nation.
 - Providing \$62,057 to support York Factory First Nation in designating their fee simple compensation lands as reserve lands, as committed to in the 1995 York Factory First Nation Comprehensive Implementation Agreement.
 - Progressing ATR discussions and process steps for Black River First Nation, Buffalo Point First Nation, Bunibonibee Cree Nation, Fox Lake Cree Nation, Manto Sipi Cree Nation, Mathias Colomb First Nation, Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation, Northlands First Nation, Opaskwayak Cree Nation, Peguis First Nation, Rolling River First Nation, Sapotaweyak Cree Nation, St. Theresa Point First Nation, War Lake First Nation, and Wuskwi Sipiik First Nation.
- Continuing to work to expedite TLE, including:
 - Strategic projects to address longstanding issues on TLE lands such as conducting an enforcement process to remove an unregistered and dilapidated cabin located on a Norway House Cree Nation TLE selection.
 - Providing funding to conduct outstanding survey requirements on a TLE selection for Norway House Cree Nation.

INDIGENOUS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

In the 2024 Speech from the Throne, Manitoba committed to advancing economic reconciliation by increasing economic participation and opportunities for Indigenous Manitobans. In pursuit of this, Manitoba partnered with Indigenous Nations to unlock new opportunities for Indigenous business owners, entrepreneurs and organizations to participate in Manitoba's economy. This includes creating an accessible pathway to establishing Urban Indigenous Development Zones. Highlights from 2024/25 include:

- Entering a partnership with urban reserves experts from Manitoba USKE, the Tulo Centre of Indigenous Economics, the First Nations Infrastructure Institute, the First Nations Tax Commission, and the First Nations Lands Advisory Board to lead the Manitoba Urban Reserves Project. The board will develop tools for Anishinaabeg, Anisininewuk, Dakota Oyate, Denesuline and Nehethowuk Nations and provide recommendations for the Manitoba government for supporting economic development through better and faster urban reserves.
 - In January 2025, Minister Bushie notified the Chiefs of all 63 Anishinaabeg, Anisininewuk, Dakota Oyate, Denesuline and Nehethowuk Nations in Manitoba and Shoal Lake 40 First Nation of the Urban Reserves Project and committed to engaging them in its development.
- Committing \$4 million in funding for several Indigenous-led economic development projects through the Indigenous Economic Development Fund. Priority areas of the fund are workforce development, education and training for youth capacity building and governance, urban reserves, renewable resource development, building cultural and/or creative industry infrastructure, and food sovereignty. Funding includes support for Treaty One Nation's Wiitahnookiinitaw Tahshkayzing Entrepreneurship Centre and the Naawi-Oodena Workforce Initiative.
- Providing \$25,000 to sponsor up to 120 youth to participate in the [2024 Vision Quest Conference and Trade Show](#). The grant supported youth participation at the conference and invested in Indigenous economic growth and development in the province. This initiative was funded through the Indigenous Reconciliation Initiatives Fund (IRIF) (Figure 3).

Indigenous Reconciliation Initiatives Fund (IRIF)

This grant program supports relationship-building projects that strengthen Indigenous nationhood. In 2024/25, IRIF funded 26 new and ongoing projects supporting Indigenous Reconciliation, totalling \$3.8 million.

Figure 3 IRIF Funding 2024/25

- Supporting *Wehwehneh Bahgahkinahgohn*, the redevelopment of the historic downtown Winnipeg Hudson’s Bay Company building, led by Southern Chiefs’ Organization (SCO). In 2024/25 Manitoba collaborated with SCO and The Winnipeg Foundation to support accessing the \$25 million from the Bay Building Fund.

In 2024/25, Manitoba leveraged industry partnerships to address barriers to Indigenous employment, create opportunities for good jobs for Indigenous Manitobans, and support Indigenous business owners and entrepreneurs. Examples include:

- Collaborating with service providers to undertake engagements with Indigenous governments and organizations to identify challenges and explore opportunities to reduce barriers for Indigenous Peoples in the skilled trades, as part of the Apprenticeship and Certification System Review.
- Increasing partnerships between industry and Indigenous communities through programming, workshops and engagements as a part of the Sector Council Program, including:
 - Bioscience Association of Manitoba continued to develop meaningful partnerships with Indigenous businesses, including hosting three 4-day Indigenous Reconciliation Pathway Initiative sessions.
 - The Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters conducted Indigenous literacy training and workshops to support employers and individuals looking to increase recruitment and retainment of Indigenous talent.

CONNECTING INDIGENOUS, NORTHERN AND REMOTE COMMUNITIES

A significant portion of the Indigenous population in Manitoba lives in the north. Reconciliation efforts must address the unique challenges faced in northern and remote communities such as limited infrastructure and unequal access to essential services and economic opportunities. As part of its One Manitoba approach, Manitoba is prioritizing the connection of northern communities through strategic infrastructure investments to ensure Manitobans from all over our vast, great province have access to high quality, essential services and economic opportunities, regardless of their location.

Building One Manitoba requires full participation of Indigenous Manitobans in the development of a diverse economy and leverages our wealth of critical minerals, strong hydro grids and skilled workforce. Initiatives in this area include:

- [Increasing funding for Manitoba’s winter road system](#) to reinstate the winter road connecting St. Theresa Point First Nation with Berens River First Nation. Manitoba and Indigenous Services Canada partnered on a \$1.8 million investment to complete the construction and maintenance.
- Committing to a new airport on Wasagamack First Nation. In 2024/25, Manitoba invested \$7.8 million towards the construction of the road connecting Wasagamack to the airport site. Manitoba has requested federal funds to support the airport and access road which will offset costs associated with this high priority project.
- Working with Indigenous Nations to address road safety issues including the improvements to roads, intersections, and active transportation features, including:
 - Twinning PTH 10 adjacent to Waywayseecappo Development Corporation gas bar;
 - Constructing intersection improvement on PTH 45 at the Waywayseecappo community access;
 - Twinning PTH 59 through Brokenhead Ojibway Nation;
 - Speed limit reduction through Brokenhead Ojibway Nation on PTH 59 and intersection improvements at PTH 59 / Bison Drive; and
 - Speed limit reduction and sign enhancements through Roseau River Anishinabe First Nation.
- Providing a \$30 million contribution to the Arctic Gateway Group to revitalize the Port of Churchill and Hudson Bay Railway to unlock its potential for international trade and strengthen the position of Churchill and Centreport as transportation and supply chain hubs (Figure 4).

About the Arctic Gateway Group (AGG)

AGG is an Indigenous and community owned Manitoba company whose partnership comprises of 41 Indigenous and bayside community owners. Its community-ownership model represents ongoing economic reconciliation.

The 2024 construction season set new records of investment and progress for AGG, including 2.3 million feet of spot surfacing, 119,965 new railway ties, three major crossing rehabilitations (including a double track crossing in Churchill Port), 11 new switch upgrades, and the unloading of over 1,600 cars of ballast.

In August 2024, AGG successfully shipped 10,000 tonnes of zinc concentrate, which was delivered from the Port of Churchill to Europe. This marked the first critical minerals shipment from the Port of Churchill in over twenty years.

Figure 4 About the Arctic Gateway Group

as child welfare, education and policing, these efforts help strengthen connections within and across communities.

The following section describes efforts undertaken by Manitoba to advance reconciliation through culturally based initiatives and supports for Indigenous Nations to exercise self-determination over education, child welfare, and justice systems.

FIRST INAUGURAL ORANGE SHIRT DAY

In 2024, Orange Shirt Day was recognized as a statutory holiday for the first time in Manitoba's history. To mark this milestone, the Manitoba government launched the new [Orange Shirt Day Fund](#), a grant program designed to support events and activities that encourage Manitobans to reflect on the impacts of the residential school system. This investment aligns with the TRC's *Calls to Action*, specifically Call to



Figure 6 Winnipeg Inner City Missions Inc. Orange Shirt Day Event

Action 80, which calls for the establishment of a statutory holiday in honour of Survivors, their families and communities-and to ensure public commemoration of the history and legacy of residential schools remains a vital component in the reconciliation process.

In 2024/25, Manitoba provided \$800,000 to 67 projects throughout Manitoba through the newly established Orange Shirt Day Fund. The fund provided a one-time grant for projects and initiatives that advance truth and reconciliation by raising awareness around Orange Shirt Day and creating opportunities for all Manitobans to come together in observation, reflection and commemoration (Figures 6, 7). This initiative was funded through the IRIF.



Figure 7 Life's Journey Inc. Orange Shirt Day

In addition to the Orange Shirt Day Fund, Manitoba also supported other initiatives to honour and commemorate Indigenous Peoples in Manitoba, some of which have been supported through the IRIF, include:

- Providing funding to support the annual Keeping the Fires Burning held by Ka Ni Kanichihk Inc. to celebrate and honour Indigenous Grandmothers and Grandfathers who have made significant contributions to the advancement of Indigenous Peoples.
- Providing funding to support the MMF event in Selkirk to celebrate National Indigenous Peoples Day.
- Providing funding to the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (NCTR) to continue the national conversation about the residential school system and its legacy on current and future generations. An in-person event was held in Winnipeg on September 18, 2024, and featured Premier Kinew as a keynote speaker.
- Providing additional funding to the Assiniboia Residential School Legacy Group to support a reunion and gala for Survivors and intergenerational Survivors of the Assiniboia Residential School on September 29, 2024.
- Providing additional funding to support Wa-Say Healing Centre to support the annual Survivors March and Orange Shirt Day Powwow, Winnipeg's largest September 30 event.
- Providing funding to Ka Ni Kanichihk to host an event in partnership with [Boys with Braids MB](#) to celebrate Indigenous culture and heritage, and learn about the value of braided hair.
- Committing \$20 million to support NCTR in establishing a permanent space at the University of Manitoba to provide a safe home for all statements, documents, and other materials and sacred items gathered by the TRC. This investment reflects a commitment to preserving Indigenous histories for future generations, including the truth of residential schools.

CHILD WELFARE

In Budget 2024, Manitoba committed to transferring jurisdiction of CFS to Indigenous governments and communities, where it belongs. Manitoba made progress on this commitment in the following ways:

- Signing a [historic relationship agreement](#) in May 2024 with Anishinaabeg, Dakota Oyate, and Nehethowuk Chiefs across the province committing to the transfer of jurisdiction over child welfare to Anishinaabeg, Anisininewuk, Dakota Oyate, Denesuline and Nehethowuk Nations. This historic agreement sets out a shared commitment to work together to advance Indigenous jurisdiction over child and family services. By the end of the 2024/25 year, 48 per cent of the Anishinaabeg, Anisininewuk, Dakota Oyate, Denesuline and Nehethowuk Nations have signed on to the Relationship Declaration, marking a significant milestone in Families' Minister Nahanni Fontaine's work towards fulfilling her ministry's mandate to collaborate with Indigenous governments and communities to transfer responsibility of child welfare back to the nations and families where it belongs.
- “Every child in Manitoba should have supports to thrive and we know the current child welfare system needs to do better. First Nations are best placed to care for their own children and today's declaration is an important step forward as we work collaboratively to return responsibility for child welfare.”

- Honourable Nahanni Fontaine,
Minister of Families
- [Amending *The Child and Family Services Act* to include four new agreement types](#): family support, kinship care, customary care and voluntary care agreements. \$10.5 million in new funding has been allocated to Indigenous agencies to support the implementation and unique needs of customary and kinship care, keeping more children at home and further supporting the transition to Indigenous jurisdiction. There are currently 13 kinship/customary care agreements in the CFS system.
 - Proclaiming amendments to The CFS Act related to Bill 38 – *An Act Respecting Child and Family Services (Indigenous Jurisdiction and other Amendments)* as of November 7, 2024. Amendments include a declaration of principles and new requirements for government to facilitate the transition to Indigenous service providers for Indigenous children and families.
 - Transitional funding of \$1.76 million was provided to Brokenhead Ojibway Nation to support preparations to resume jurisdiction.

- Two new provincial CFS agencies were mandated and funded to serve Waywayseecappo CFS and Makoose C. Gamik Inc. (Long Plain First Nation) and case transfers are complete.
- Increasing support to Indigenous CFS service delivery. In 2025, \$2.45 million was provided to Indigenous CFS authorities to support implementation of national standards including placement priorities for Indigenous children in the ongoing move toward Indigenous jurisdiction over child and family services.
- [Investing \\$3.59 million to support a 10 per cent increase to basic maintenance rates for children in care](#) (the minimum amount payable to a foster parent to support a child in care through a Child and Family Services agency), including children in foster homes, and those under kinship and customary care agreements. Prior to this, basic maintenance rates have not been increased since October 2012.
- Creating a new Reconciliation Specialist Position within the Child Protection Branch of the Department of Families to support navigation of available services for Indigenous persons including 60s Scoop Survivors.
- Increasing support to Indigenous Authorities to support case transfers to align with Indigenous governance. Capacity funding of \$3.35 million was provided for case transfers to proactively prepare for Indigenous governing bodies exercising jurisdiction.
- Working with Inuit organizations to facilitate the transfer of Inuit cases to the General Authority to ensure Inuit children receive culturally appropriate services.
- Committing to support the MMF's Bridge to Justice Fund through verification of records through the Child Protection Branch and CFS Authorities. The Bridge to Justice Fund is a \$2.0 million project announced by the MMF in October 2024 to provide compensation to Red River Métis citizens who were taken into care by a Manitoba CFS agency between January 1, 1951, to December 31, 1991.

INDIGENIZING EDUCATION

Manitoba has committed to incorporating Indigenous perspectives and worldviews into the education system, including specific commitments to integrate Indigenous perspectives into the early learning curriculum framework and enable on-reserve residents to vote and stand as candidates in school division elections. Over the past year, Manitoba reached

multiple milestones towards incorporating Indigenous perspectives into early learning and K-12 education, including:

- Introducing Bill 16, *The Municipal Councils and School Boards Elections Amendment and Public Schools Amendment Act*.
 - This bill affirms the rights of every Manitoban, including those living on reserve, to have the ability to vote and register as candidates in school board elections in their local school division or school district, which not only strengthens our democracy but also takes us further along the path of truth and reconciliation.

Treaty Education responds to the TRC Call to Action to develop age-appropriate curriculum on Treaties (62i) and to create educational resources on Indigenous peoples in Canadian history. Treaty Education supports the department's mandate to ensure that public schools are safe places where every child matters. Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning enhanced Treaty Education by:

- Strengthening the "[Treaty Education for All: Manitoba's Plan for Kindergarten to grade 12 Treaty Education](#)" initiative to ensure understanding of the original spirit and intent of the treaties and Treaty relationships as we walk on a shared journey of truth and reconciliation. The initiative requires all teachers and school staff in provincially funded schools receive Manitoba Treaty Education Training by December 31, 2025. In 2024/25, annual funding for this initiative was increased from \$250,000 to \$350,000 to support school divisions working to meet the training deadline.
- The Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning has been mandated to make public schools and childcare centres safe places where Every Child Matters and every child is set up for success. Manitoba has been delivering on this commitment with initiatives that support equity for Indigenous children in the classroom and childcare centres. Progress in 2024/25 includes:
 - Introducing Bill 20, *The Community Child Care Standards Amendment and Education Administration Amendment Act*, which will require the Minister to establish an Anishinaabeg, Anisininewuk, Dakota Oyate, Denesuline and Nehethowuk Nations, Métis and Inuit early learning and childcare policy framework to support positive outcomes children in licensed childcare facilities.
 - Continuing Manitoba's ongoing partnership with Ka Ni Kanichihk's Restoring the Sacred Program, an Indigenous knowledge-based program that supports Indigenous students

from rural and northern communities to travel to Winnipeg to complete their high school education. The program supported 28 participants, seven mentors and delivered 30 culturally relevant programs.

RECONCILIATION IN THE JUSTICE SYSTEM

Manitoba is committed to ensuring Indigenous peoples are safe in their community and in the justice system by promoting Indigenous policing and Indigenous models of justice and increasing access to culturally relevant programming for Indigenous people interacting with the Justice system.

In Budget 2024, Manitoba committed to funding for the First Nations and Inuit Policing Program that provides federal and provincial funding for policing and public safety for Anishinaabeg, Anisininewuk, Dakota Oyate, Denesuline and Nehethowuk Nations, a direct response to Call for Justice #5.4: “...to transform Indigenous policing into an exercise in self-governance and self-determination and ensure that funding is equitable with other non-Indigenous police services in Canada”. To follow through on this commitment, Manitoba has done the following:

- Providing \$11.1M to support the expansion of the Manitoba First Nations Police Service (MFNPS), including the expansion of MFNPS into Brokenhead Ojibway Nation and Gambler First Nation. This investment also supports an increase in front-line staffing, and the development of several units, including a Criminal Investigations Unit, a Community Support Unit, and a new Court Records Unit.
- Expanding The First Nation Safety Officer (FNSO) Program to include Dauphin River and Waywayseecappo First Nations, bringing the total number of participating communities in Manitoba to 44. Additional safety officers were trained to join FNSO programs in their respective communities (Table 2). The FNSO program consists of two training levels:
 - **Level I** training prepares officers to conduct community patrols, enforce bylaws, support police services through non-emergency duties, and promote public safety through visibility and engagement.
 - **Level II** builds upon Level I by expanding operational readiness. Officers receive advanced scenario training, learn to manage more complex public safety duties, and are exposed to crisis intervention strategies, community leadership skills, and multi-agency coordination.

| Fiscal Year | Level I | Level II |
|-------------|---------|----------|
| 2022–2023 | 53 | 0 |
| 2023–2024 | 231 | 25 |
| 2024–2025 | 115 | 33 |

Table 2 First Nations Safety Officers Trained

Manitoba Justice is mandated to work closely with communities, Elders and law enforcement to provide culturally appropriate supports and pathways to restorative justice to help Manitobans turn their lives around:

- Working collaboratively with Manto Sipi Cree Nation, MKO, federal prosecutions services and the RCMP to establish a restorative justice pathway in the Manto Sipi by-law enforcement pilot project.

PROMOTING CULTURAL COMPETENCY IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE

The Manitoba government recognizes the need for a workplace which cultivates respect, accessibility, cultural safety, and inclusivity. This includes requiring Manitoba public servants to build their cultural competency and understand the histories, rights, and lived experiences of Anishinaabeg, Anisininewuk, Dakota Oyate, Denesuline and Nehethowuk, Métis and Inuit peoples in Manitoba. The following initiatives highlight Manitoba’s recent work to improve cultural competency in the public service:

- Offering 34 virtual instructor-led workshops for over 700 public servants on a variety of topics, led by Indigenous service providers to provide employees with the skills and knowledge to engage and collaborate with Indigenous peoples and communities.
- Continuing to require all public servants to complete the online course “Our Shared Journey toward Truth and Reconciliation”. In 2024/25, completion rates within Manitoba’s core public service were 84.4 per cent which represents an increase of 9.4 per cent from the previous fiscal year with an aim to achieve a target of 90 per cent.
- Relocating the [Kwaguilth Totem Pole](#) that stood on the south lawn of the Legislative grounds (Figure 8). The Totem had deteriorated since 1971 when it was gifted to the Province. In the Kwaguilth tradition, it was taken down and placed at a nearby location of honour.



Figure 8 Kwaguilth Totem Pole being laid to rest

SPORT AND RECREATION, ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

In Budget 2024, Manitoba committed to providing a significant increase in funding towards arts and cultural organizations. Manitoba recognizes there is a positive impact on communities when arts, sports, and heritage programs are supported. Manitoba invested in Indigenous sport, art and entertainment in the following ways:

- Committing to develop policies to end racism in sports so that every child knows they have the right to play. In 2024/25, Sport Manitoba provided \$75,000 in funding to the Anti-Racism in Sport Campaign to provide anti-racism training, public awareness campaigns and policy development support for sport organizations.
- Providing \$175,200 to The Manitoba Aboriginal Sports and Recreation Council (MASRC) to support their operations, in addition to \$508,900 provided through Sport Manitoba, under the Canada-Manitoba Bilateral Agreement. MASRC is the Provincial Sport Organization responsible for Indigenous sport development across the province.
- Providing up to \$157,300 in funding to various Indigenous sport development projects through the Canada-Manitoba Bilateral Agreement on Sport Participation. This includes support for the Winnipeg Aboriginal Sport Achievement Centre (WASAC), grassroots Indigenous sport development grants, as well as community-oriented athlete and leadership development projects. In 2024/25 WASAC North completed 501 sessions with 10,582 youth participants.
- Supporting various initiatives to provide skills training, mentorship, and internship opportunities for Indigenous artists and entertainers, including:
 - Creative Manitoba: Urban Art Biz: 35 Indigenous artists attended a seminar about the Canada Council for the Arts ‘Creating, Knowing, Sharing’ grants for artists hosted by Creative Manitoba.
 - Attended by 20 different artists, Manitoba Music hosted an event at WAG-Qaumajuq called Nagamooag Neezochackak, which included a performance showcase, discussion on Indigi-queerness in the music industry and networking gathering.
 - Manitoba Music delivers an Indigenous Music Development Program (IMDP) that includes career consultations, specialized/technical training, management and business skills training. The IMDP steering committee met several times during the year to advise on barriers, challenges, and strategies for success and training ideas for continued success and growth within the Indigenous music community in

Manitoba. Two Indigenous artists also completed a micro-mentorship program during Canada Day celebrations

- On Screen Manitoba and National Screen Institute partnered for the New Indigenous Voices Program Internship, which saw six participants complete the program within the reporting period.

ARCHIVAL DATA & REPATRIATION

While not directed at provincial governments, TRC Calls to Action 69 and 70 emphasize access to archives as a foundational piece of advancing reconciliation. Manitoba is committed to providing access to records documenting Indigenous history and repatriating heritage resources, and in has continued its work in this area over the past year, including:

- Continuing to work on the identification of records relevant to the history and legacy of the residential school system, including indexing some of the Sanatorium Board Mobile Travelling Clinic records.
- Digitizing selected records with Indigenous content including records created at Hudson's Bay Company posts. Archives completed the digitization of half-yearly attendance records from 1915-1966 and provided copies to the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation for documentation related to day schools.
- Working with the Treaty Relations Commission of Manitoba (TRCM) to create a display of archival records for 30 teachers participating in the TRCM Summer Institute.
- Taking steps to fulfil Article 12 of UNDRIP, which calls for the repatriation of ceremonial objects and human remains through fair, transparent and effective mechanisms developed in conjunction with Indigenous peoples concerned. In 2024/25, Manitoba entered into a stewardship agreement with the Canadian Museum for Human Rights (CMHR) to return heritage resources that were removed from the CMHR site as part of heritage mitigation prior to construction and held in the province's artifacts storage facility. Over 50% of the 300,000 heritage objects removed were returned to the CMHR site in 2024/25. The stewardship agreement and repatriation process are guided by CMHR's Council of Elders.

Throughout 2024/25, Manitoba invested in events and initiatives that celebrate Indigenous culture and history. Manitoba is continuing to develop new ways to support artists and athletes, strengthen cultural competency, and work with Indigenous Knowledge Keepers,

arts and cultural organizations. Manitoba also recognizes the importance of advancing significant initiatives such as child welfare, education, justice and community supports in culturally appropriate ways. Manitoba will continue to support Indigenous cultural initiatives across the province and incorporate culturally appropriate practice and care into services that touch the lives of Manitobans.

Language

Language is not only a tool of communication, but also the way Indigenous people preserve the rich culture, unique customs, and the worldviews embodied in their intellectual traditions. Language is one of the ways in which Indigenous people protect, preserve, and promote our rich cultures, customs, worldviews, and histories. Indigenous languages are the voices of the land; they give context to where we exist in the world. Language revitalization is essential to the support of cultural identity for Indigenous people, and for meaningful advancement of reconciliation throughout the province.

On April 9, 2024, Premier Wab Kinew made a statement in the Manitoba Legislature in Anishinaabemowin. This historic moment symbolizes a renewed respect for Indigenous identity and the central role of language in reconciliation. The following section describes several efforts undertaken by Manitoba to advance reconciliation through school- and community-based programming and other initiatives:

INDIGENOUS LANGUAGE REVITALIZATION

The TRC's Calls to Action 13 through 17 call on governments to acknowledge, preserve, revitalize and reclaim Indigenous languages. Manitoba recognizes language as a central aspect of Indigenous Nationhood.

In December 2024, the Manitoba Indigenous Reconciliation Secretariat opened the Language Office. This emerging unit is focused on building and maintaining relationships within the Indigenous language revitalization space to establish substantive partnerships and language initiatives at all levels. Early achievements in Indigenous language revitalization include:

- Providing support for the world premiere of the Anishinaabemowin (Ojibwe) version of *Star Wars: A New Hope* (Anangong Miigaading) on August 8, 2024, bringing together multigenerational Anishinaabemowin speakers to serve as advisors and performers. This initiative was funded through IRIF.

- Announcing a first-of-its-kind [Indigenous languages translation project](#), translating the official proceedings of the Manitoba Legislature into Anishinaabemowin. Expansion of this project to include additional Indigenous languages is planned.
- Including traditional community name signs and Indigenous artwork in roadway improvement projects, such as the reconstruction of the Burntwood River Bridge in Thompson (Figure 9).



Figure 9 Indigenous Artwork on the Burntwood River Bridge

INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES IN SCHOOL

In the 2024 Throne Speech, Manitoba committed to bringing Indigenous languages back to the classroom. Over the past year, progress towards fulfilling this commitment includes:

- Introducing Bill 18, *The Public Schools Amendment Act*, on March 6, 2025. Bill 18 will enable the advancement of Indigenous languages immersion programming in K-12 education. This bill amends *The Public Schools Act* to allow for languages other than English and French to be the language of instruction for more than 50% of the school day.
- Starting the development of an Indigenous languages strategy to ensure opportunities for Indigenous languages learning in Manitoba K-12 schools. This work is underway in collaboration with Advanced Education and Training and the education sector.
- Indigenous Excellence in Education started the development of an Indigenous Languages Curriculum Framework and a Land-Based Learning Curriculum Framework in partnership with Indigenous rights holders, education stakeholders, and school divisions. The curriculum framework for Indigenous languages for K-12 schools will align closely with UNDRIP principles as Indigenous languages are central to the

preservation of culture, worldviews, vision, expression of self-determination, and Indigenous identity.

- Engaging with Indigenous rights holders, school divisions, educational institutions and stakeholders, and community to collaboratively develop strategy that will include a focus on the recruitment and retention of Indigenous languages teachers to support the teaching of Indigenous languages in the classroom.

FUNDING INDIGENOUS LANGUAGE PROGRAMMING

Manitoba provided over \$250,000 in funding towards Indigenous languages initiatives in 2024/25, including:

- \$120,000 to the University of Winnipeg’s Teaching Indigenous Languages for Vitality Program
- \$32,500 to Misipawistik Cree Nation to support their language programming at family camps
- \$32,100 to SCO to support Anishinaabemowin language camps in Sandy Bay Ojibway Nation and Ebb and Flow First Nation.
- \$25,000 to Norway House Cree Nation to support their Summer Cree Language Program.
- \$70,000 to the University College of the North to support the annual Manitoba Aboriginal Languages Strategy Symposium.
- \$8,044 to Zoongizi Ode Inc. to support the delivery of the Ininimotan Language Table at St. John’s Library in Winnipeg.

These efforts reflect Manitoba’s commitment to honouring and revitalizing Indigenous cultures as a foundation for reconciliation and overall well-being. By embedding Indigenous languages across Manitoba, the province is helping to support identity and connection for Indigenous Peoples.

People

People are at the heart of reconciliation; initiatives described within this Nationhood pillar are focused on ensuring that people in Manitoba have equal opportunity to live a good life. This includes working to eliminate gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Manitobans in areas such as justice, health, education, and child welfare. Manitoba is taking a people-centered approach to address issues that disproportionately affect Indigenous peoples in Manitoba. These actions are supported by a commitment to Indigenous recruitment, retention, and procurement in the public service—ensuring that systems reflect and respond to the communities they serve. The following section describes efforts undertaken by Manitoba to bring a good life within reach.

MANITOBA MÉTIS FEDERATION JOINT CABINET MEETING

On July 18, 2024, Manitoba affirmed the commitment to a government-to-government relationship with the MMF by holding a historic joint cabinet meeting between the two governments. Manitoba’s cabinet ministers met with MMF cabinet ministers to discuss shared priorities related to health, housing, education, land, and others (Figure 10).



Figure 10 Manitoba and MMF Joint Cabinet Meeting

MMIWG2S+ SUPPORTS AND SUPPORTS FOR PEOPLE EXPERIENCING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Budget 2024 contained a commitment to investing \$20 million to support the implementation of a new MMIWG2S+ Strategy, prioritizing making our province safer for Indigenous women, girls and Two-Spirit people. In November 2024, Manitoba Families Minister Fontaine announced that a key milestone of this commitment was reached with the release of the [Mino'Ayaawag Ikwewag: All Women Doing Well Provincial MMIWG2S+ Strategy](#). This strategy includes funding for a special advisor, culturally appropriate programs and services, safe spaces, and public awareness campaigns. This strategy reflects a whole-of-government commitment to prioritizing the safety, protection, and

empowerment of Indigenous women, girls, Two-Spirit, and gender-diverse people. Progress during this fiscal year includes:

- Establishing [a new \\$15 million endowment fund](#) managed by The Winnipeg Foundation to initiate a grant program that will support MMIWG2S+ families. This fund is the foundational component for the *Mino’Ayaawag Ikwewag Provincial Strategy* and is in alignment with the Calls for Justice to provide continual and accessible healing programs and support for families and survivors of MMIWG2S+. The endowment fund is anticipated to generate more than \$650,000 per year and will be used to provide grants to families and communities affected by MMIWG2S+.
- Partnering with the matriarch-led and community-based organization Giganawenimaanaanig to establish a province-wide alerting mechanism for when women, girls, 2Spirit and gender-diverse relatives go missing. The Red Dress Alert pilot project is informed and guided by a collective of MMIWG2S+ family members, elders and community advocates. The goal is to deliver annual grants to MMIWG2S+ families and communities to help with healing and empowerment and to launch a Red Dress Alert Pilot by 2026/27.
- Investing \$12.5 million in combatting gender-based violence through an equal partnership with the Government of Canada to support organizations that provide programs and services to survivors of Gender-Based Violence and work towards violence prevention. In 2024/25, several Indigenous-led projects and organizations were funded through this partnership, including:
 - Clan Mother’s Healing Village
 - Giganawenimaanaanig
 - Blue Thunderbird Family Care
 - Aboriginal Health and Wellness
 - Brandon Women’s Resource Centre – Empowered Traditions Program
 - Tina’s Safe Haven
 - Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata’s EmpowerMen Program
 - Ka Ni Kanichihk’s Walking with our Relatives Program
- Providing \$300,000 to support the [Moose Hide Campaign](#) which is an Indigenous-led grassroots movement that engages men and boys and supports communities to respond to gender-based and intimate partner violence.

HEALTH

Manitoba is committed to working in partnership with Indigenous leadership and communities to transform the delivery of health services. The province is supporting innovative, community-led approaches that reflect the unique needs, values, and strengths of Indigenous Peoples. This shared vision is guiding the development of culturally safe, accessible, and sustainable health care solutions that improve outcomes and advance reconciliation in meaningful ways. Progress in 2024/25 includes:

- Expanding eligibility for Children’s disABILITY Services (CDS) to include Anishinaabeg, Anisininewuk, Dakota Oyate, Denesuline and Nehethowuk children with disabilities who live on reserve. Through this work, the CDS program is demonstrating its commitment to reconciliation with Anishinaabeg, Anisininewuk, Dakota Oyate, Denesuline and Nehethowuk peoples and equitable service delivery for all Manitoban children with disabilities and their families. In addition, Manitoba has implemented a voluntary Indigenous self-identification form for individuals supported by CDS and Community Living disability Services. This will inform the development of more culturally safe and appropriate services for Indigenous people and their families.
- Launching a renewed [Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder \(FASD\) Strategy](#) (2024- 2029). Highlights that respond to TRC Call to Action 33, which calls for culturally appropriate FASD preventative programs developed in collaboration with Indigenous Peoples, include:
 - The \$172,000 increase for the InSight Mentoring Program, which provides three years of mentorship to help pregnant people stop or reduce alcohol use during pregnancy. The additional funding will support expanded Indigenous cultural programming at all program sites in Winnipeg, Portage la Prairie, Dauphin, The Pas, Flin Flon and Thompson. This investment will also enable the Aboriginal Health and Wellness Centre in Winnipeg to support an additional 15 families and offer Indigenous cultural and spiritual support services for participants.
 - Prioritization of Indigenous-led service provision. The Manitoba government is seeking to strengthen relationships with Indigenous partners and ensure meaningful involvement in decision-making to enhance and increase Indigenous-led FASD prevention and support services. This includes regular engagement with the FASD Strategy Elders Circle, a group of Indigenous Elders, Knowledge Keepers and grandparents who provide guidance to the work of the FASD strategy.

Manitoba recognizes the importance of providing access to mental health supports and delivering help to Indigenous Manitobans struggling with mental health and addictions. Manitoba's Budget 2024 committed \$1.85 million towards implementing a province-wide Suicide Prevention Strategy, with a focus on Indigenous and 2SLGBTQIA+ youth and an Advisory Group of Indigenous rights holders and organizations, youth, the 2SLGBTQ+ community and health system. Manitoba made progress on this commitment in the following ways:

- Contracting an Indigenous consulting firm to facilitate engagement sessions to ensure Red River Métis, Inuit, Anishinaabeg, Anisininewuk, Dakota Oyate, Denesuline and Nehethowuk perspectives and practices, are considered in Strategy development. In 2025, engagement sessions will take place with 17 Manitoba communities, including 10 First Nations.
- Continuing to expand the Indigenous Youth Mentorship Program (IYMP) (Figure 11). In 2024/25, IYMP expanded to eleven additional schools and community sites in Winnipeg. Progress was also made towards expanding IYMP to additional northern, remote, and First Nations communities by signing agreements and working with communities towards launching or re-establishing programming.

About the Indigenous Youth Mentorship Program

Indigenous Youth Mentorship Program (IYMP) is delivered in schools and community partner sites across Manitoba. IYMP is based on Indigenous education and positive youth development models that address holistic health outcomes and align with Indigenous approaches to life promotion. Annual funding to IYMP was increased to \$610,000 in 2023/24 as part of the development of a provincial Suicide Prevention Strategy.

This funding increase will allow IYMP to expand to 24 new sites across Manitoba between 2023/24 and 2026/27, with a target to add five northern and rural sites and three urban sites each year.

Figure 11 About the Indigenous Youth Mentorship Program

- Partnering with Shared Health and Aboriginal Health and Wellness Centre of Winnipeg Inc. to establish Manitoba's first Indigenous-led Supervised Consumption Site (SCS) in Downtown Winnipeg. The SCS is in the premobilization phase of program design.

- Providing \$1.34 million in ongoing funding to Keewatinohk Inniniw Minoayawin Inc. (KIM) to support the Minoayawin Mobile Outreach Program, launched by KIM in September 2024, to provide community-based mobile withdrawal management services for individuals living in Thompson through on-site visits. This initiative aligns with the goal of non-medical or minimally medical approaches to addressing problematic substance use. The program is expected to serve 400 people annually.

IMPROVING EDUCATION OUTCOMES FOR INDIGENOUS STUDENTS

In Budget 2024, Manitoba committed to increase student bursaries and scholarships for Indigenous students, making it easier for them to pursue higher education, training and a path to a rewarding career. To follow through on this commitment, Manitoba has done the following:

- Adding \$500,000 to the Manitoba Scholarship and Bursary Initiative (MSBI) for the Indigenous Education Awards which are given out by the Business Council of Manitoba. MSBI is a government program matches government dollars to private donations designed to support post-secondary students in Manitoba by partnering with 12 public and private institutions to provide scholarships and bursaries based on merit and financial need. Its core objective is to remove financial barriers to education and promote equitable access to post-secondary opportunities.
 - The Helen Betty Osborne Memorial Fund joined MBSI in 2024. This fund operated by The Winnipeg Foundation, gives scholarships to Indigenous students in Manitoba who are pursuing full-time post-secondary education and specifically recognizing students who are actively working to eliminate barriers such as racism, sexism, violence, and systemic indifference, and who are committed to creating positive change in their communities.
 - Manitoba changed the donation-matching rules for scholarships and bursaries that are solely for Indigenous students. Instead of adding \$1 for every \$2 donated, the government now matches \$1 for \$1.
 - As a result of the additional \$500,000 in funding to MBSI, the Business Council of Manitoba had an increase in the number Indigenous Education awards from 200 in 2023, to 400 awards in 2024 - a 100% increase in the number of awards.
- Partnering with Yellowquill University College to provide degree-granting status to its First Nations Bachelor of Education program, investing in certified teachers specially trained to teach in the distinctive contexts of Anishinaabeg, Anisininewuk, Dakota Oyate, Denesuline and Nehethowuk communities. Degree-granting status will help

address the critical shortage of Indigenous teachers—particularly in northern communities—by supporting Indigenous-led education and affirming Manitoba’s commitment to reconciliation.

- To support this transition, the government provided a one-time \$250,000 administrative grant to help Yellowquill navigate the regulatory and institutional changes required for degree recognition.
- Providing funding to United for Literacy to support the Community Literacy Catalyst program. This program provides year-round weekly learning programs, special events and resource sharing to strengthen a culture of literacy and learning, and complements the formal school system while reflecting the distinct cultures, traditions, languages, priorities and aspirations of each host community.

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AND REMOVING BARRIERS TO ENTER THE WORKFORCE

Investing in the skills development of Indigenous Peoples is essential to building a stronger, more inclusive Manitoba. By removing systemic barriers to education, training, and employment, the province can help unlock the full potential of Indigenous talent and leadership. Supporting Indigenous participation in the workforce not only promotes economic growth and self-determination but advances reconciliation by addressing long-standing inequities. Manitoba’s commitment to this work is a step toward a future where all communities can thrive and contribute meaningfully to the province’s prosperity.

In Budget 2024, Manitoba committed to investing in industry, employment and skills training, and fostering economic reconciliation to create Manitoba jobs for Manitobans. Fulfilling this commitment includes creating opportunities for training and employment for Indigenous peoples in various sectors including:

- Offering an Indigenous Agri-food Mentorship program and Indigenous Workforce Development program in partnership with Food Matters Manitoba, with 150 participants in Indigenous Agri-food Mentorship program and another 34 participants in the Indigenous Workforce Development program.
- Delivering employment and training services to 7,944 Indigenous job seekers, partnering with community-based organizations and Manitoba Jobs and Skills Development Centres. Achievements from 2024/25 include:

- FireSpirit delivered the Aboriginal Youth Internship Program to 30 youth to provide employability programming to grades 11 and 12 students from the Winnipeg and Seine River School Divisions.
 - Northern Manitoba Sector Council delivered Northern industry and community-driven training to employment programs in partnership with stakeholders and Indigenous communities to prepare Northern People for Northern Jobs. NMSC works to support 1,242 northern Manitobans annually, with a large proportion self-identifying as Indigenous.
 - The Job Readiness through Truth to Action project was delivered to 120 youth in Sapotaweyak, Hollow Water, Red Sucker Lake, and St. Theresa Point. Job readiness activities incorporated cultural and Indigenous teachings; job search strategies; workplace etiquette; conflict resolution; health and safety in the workplace; and financial literacy. Each community committed to working with local employers to develop work experience placements in the community.
- Supporting new projects to address labour shortages in the construction sector, advance Indigenous economic reconciliation and expand the workforce through training and job opportunities for marginalized and low-income individuals (Figure 12).

REDUCING POVERTY AND HOMELESSNESS

Indigenous peoples are greatly overrepresented in Manitoba's homeless population. This overrepresentation is a result of the intergenerational legacy of colonial policies such as the residential school system and the Sixties Scoop and the ongoing systemic and individual discrimination faced by Indigenous peoples. As such, addressing poverty and homelessness is critical to advancing truth and reconciliation.

Projects to Address Labour Shortages in the Construction Sector

- BUILD's training program received \$339,130 and engaged with 24 participants.
- SEED Winnipeg's BEST program received \$85,103 and engaged with 25 participants.
- Purpose Construction's Purpose Homes Construction Skills Training Program received \$256,767 and engaged with 10 participants.
- Manitoba Construction Sector Council supported skills development courses in Indigenous Communities with 26 participants receiving training through Water/Wastewater, Job Readiness and Framing skills development courses.

Figure 12 Projects to address labour shortages in construction sector

In Budget 2024, Manitoba committed to improving the lives of Manitobans by developing a new poverty reduction strategy in collaboration with Manitobans, community organizations, people with lived experience of poverty, experts, Indigenous communities and government agencies. A targeted approach will be used to prioritize improving outcomes for three vulnerable groups: babies and children (aged zero to five years old, including the prenatal period), youth aging out of CFS care and seniors. Progress to fulfill this commitment in 2024/25 includes:

- Holding engagements between October and December 2024 to gather feedback from Manitobans across the province to inform a poverty reduction strategy. In addition to broad public engagement, there were eight Indigenous citizens meetings and ten lived experience meetings held at various locations beginning with Thompson and continuing to The Pas, Winnipeg, Brandon, Dauphin, Morden and Arborg. In March 2025, the department released [Poverty Reduction Strategy Renewal - What We Heard](#) on EngageMB to provide a complete summary of the engagements.
- Amending the Assistance Regulation to exempt compensation payments received through Agricultural Benefits claims by Treaty 4 and Treaty 6 Nehethowuk Nations from the calculation of financial resources for applicants and recipients of Employment and Income Assistance and Manitoba Supports for Persons with Disabilities. This amendment reflects Manitoba’s position that Treaty Rights holders are entitled to access the same level of support as non-holders.
- In the 2024 Throne Speech, Manitoba committed to bringing organizations, governments and Indigenous nations together to move people from tents to housing with a new plan to end chronic homelessness over the next seven years. This includes supporting non-profit organizations that help Manitobans fleeing gender-based violence. Led by Manitoba’s Housing, Addictions and Homelessness Minister Bernadette Smith and the Premier’s

“Since our government was elected, we have been working hard to end chronic homelessness in Manitoba. After housing more than 1,200 Manitobans last year, we’re moving forward in our plan. With more than 300 new units of social housing being added by our government and working with our partner organizations, people experiencing homelessness will have wraparound supports, including mental health and addiction supports, so they can transition into a new home, creating a safer community for all Manitobans.”

- Honourable Bernadette Smith,
Minister of Housing, Addictions,
and Homelessness,
January 14, 2025

Senior Advisor on Ending Chronic Homelessness, the Manitoba government took several steps in 2024/25 to advance its approach to addressing this humanitarian crisis. Key achievements include:

- Leading [a delegation to Houston, Texas](#) to learn about the jurisdiction's successful approach to reducing homelessness. The delegation was led by Housing, Addictions and Homelessness Minister Bernadette Smith, and included representatives from the Manitoba Métis Federation and Indigenous-led organizations.
- Launching [Your Way Home: Manitoba's Plan to End Chronic Homelessness](#). The plan includes a short-term plan to address encampments and a long-term strategy to ensure that by 2032, any Manitoban who becomes homeless is rehoused within six weeks. As part of the plan, the Manitoba government will be creating governing councils composed of representatives of Indigenous and municipal governments, the mental health and homelessness sector and people with lived experience. The councils will set priorities for their regions.
- Signing the Unsheltered Homelessness and Encampments Initiative bilateral agreement with the federal government. Under the Your Way Home's encampment action plan and the bilateral agreement, the Manitoba government provided nearly \$1.2 million to Indigenous-led organizations to enhance drop-in services, deliver supportive housing and provide flexible funding to support people experiencing homelessness.
- Committing to a \$20-million fund to increase the social housing supply in Manitoba through proposals from community housing providers to acquire, renovate, or construct new social housing units, and a \$10 million investment in a new partnership program. In 2024/25, funding has been fully committed for 534 social and affordable units, and an additional 80 shelter beds. Units are expected to be ready for occupancy over the next three years.
- Committing \$3.41 million in capital funding for four Indigenous-led projects under the 2024/25 [Housing Starts Here](#) intake, totalling 50 social housing units and 6 affordable units. Housing Starts Here is an improved application process launched in 2024/25 that allows organizations with housing proposals to submit one application applying for multiple programs any time while funding remains available.
- Supporting the opening of a new 24/7 safe space located in Brandon, Manitoba called Franny's Place in partnership with Manitoba Métis Federation and the Brandon

Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation. Manitoba provided the \$500,000 in funding to support the 10-bed transitional home that also offers a 24/7 safe space for women, 2Spirit and gender-diverse relatives at risk of homelessness, addictions and other in need of mental health supports.

- Making enhancements to the Canada Manitoba Housing Benefit (CMHB). In March 2024, the new Survivors of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) stream was introduced to address the needs of those fleeing gender-based violence and is customized to reflect the additional barriers to independence faced by survivors of domestic violence. The benefit is available to renters and homeowners with mortgage costs.
 - Currently there are 289 individuals receiving support under the Gender-Based Violence stream of CMHB.
 - Applicants are referred through one of 33 domestic violence or GBV support organizations. Recipients are eligible for the difference between market rent and their Rent Assist benefit, up to a maximum, depending on shelter size, applicants receive between \$350 and \$805 per month.

ENHANCING COMMUNITY SUPPORTS

Manitoba is committed to enhancing community supports to help build resilient, more inclusive communities. Investing in community supports like friendship centres and public safety initiatives can help address the root causes of crime, provide access to culturally informed, community-led programs, and enrich lives by fostering connection, resilience, and opportunities for individuals and families to thrive.

Friendship centres are Indigenous-led, community-based organizations that provide culturally grounded programs and services to support the well-being of Indigenous individuals and families, particularly in urban and off-reserve settings. Support provided to friendship centres in 2024/25 includes:

- Amending the Brandon Friendship Centre's Contribution Agreement to deliver healthy relating programming for Indigenous families navigating separation and divorce. Initial uptake of the program has been high, with regional CFS agencies making referrals to the program.
- Providing \$1.2 million in community development funding to Manitoba Association of Friendship Centres (MAFC) to support eleven Friendship Centres across Manitoba. MAFC achievements in 2024/25 include:

- Supporting parent-child programming through 10 Friendship Centres', focusing on health and development of children aged 5 to 12 years old to enhance educational, social, cultural and recreational engagement with a funding commitment of \$307,500.
- Supporting Ma-Mow-We-Tak Friendship Centre in the delivery of culturally relevant northern youth programs and services in relation to education, employment, and health programs and services including the Baby Think it Over Program, Empathy Belt Program and Northern Youth Council with a total funding commitment of \$54,300.

A top priority of the Manitoba government is to ensure all Manitobans are safe. Manitoba has been working with Indigenous organizations and governments towards improving community safety. Highlights from 2024/25 include:

- [Launching From the Ground Up – Safe and Healthy Communities for ALL](#), an application-based program focusing on the revitalization of high-needs areas throughout Manitoba and on community infrastructure and initiatives to support poverty and crime reduction efforts. This includes strategic partnerships that focus on expanding after school and weekend programs for children and youth in high needs areas of Winnipeg, Brandon and Thompson. The program prioritizes initiatives that advance reconciliation. In 2024/25, 215 community development projects were supported with a total funding commitment of \$11.95 million. Of these, 37 projects were led by self-identified Indigenous organizations or projects focused on identified reconciliation initiatives, representing \$2.5 million of total funding committed.
- Releasing the [Safer Neighbourhoods, Safer Downtowns Public Safety Strategy](#), outlining a province-wide plan to address violent crime, retail theft, and the root causes of crime. The strategy includes dedicated sections on advancing Indigenous justice and reconciliation and ending gender-based violence, and was developed after extensive engagement, including a public safety summit, and direct engagements in Indigenous governments and rights-holder organizations.
- Responding to advocacy from the retail sector and First Nations leadership by passing Bill 39 – *The Long-Bladed Weapon Control Act*. Manitoba Justice established regulations around the sales of machetes and other long-bladed weapons based on engagement with First Nations, giving them additional tools to respond to public safety issues within their communities.

INDIGENOUS RECRUITMENT, RETENTION, AND PROCUREMENT IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE

Budget 2024 includes a commitment to ensuring a public service that is representative of the Manitobans we serve by supporting the recruitment, retention and development of Indigenous employees. Manitoba has made significant progress towards increasing Indigenous representation in the public service, including mechanisms to ensure procurement practices enable the participation of Indigenous businesses. Key initiatives from 2024/25 include:

- Repealing *The Public Sector Construction Projects (Tendering) Act*. The repeal of the Act provides a means for achieving social objectives relating to matters such as employment equity, fair representation, local hiring, skill development, and workplace safety and health. Project labour agreements also provide an avenue to ensure the engagement of Indigenous workers, as was the case with the Burntwood Nelson Agreement, which included preferential hiring provisions for Indigenous and northern workers.
- Reviewing Manitoba’s recruitment process through an Indigenous lens to identify and address systemic barriers, including a review of the Manitoba Job Opportunities Website focusing on terminology, appropriate interview questions, and the creation of culturally safe in-person environments.
- Increasing the percentage of Indigenous employees retained in Manitoba’s core public service. In 2024/25, 94.1% of Indigenous employees within the Manitoba public service stayed in the public service, representing an increase of 1.1% from 2023/24. The target for this measure is 90% or higher.

PRAIRIE GREEN LANDFILL SEARCH

As part of Budget 2024, Manitoba committed \$20 million for the compassionate search of Prairie Green landfill for the remains of Morgan Harris and Mercedes Myran, alongside a monetary commitment from the Federal Government. In May 2022, the remains of Morgan Harris and Mercedes Myran were believed to have been deposited in the Prairie Green Landfill (PGL), which is owned and operated by Waste Connections of Canada. Searching the Landfill was an early commitment by the Manitoba government, and significant progress was made in this area during 2024/25, including:

- Launching [the humanitarian search of the Prairie Green Landfill](#) in 2024 to recover and bring home the remains of Morgan Harris and Mercedes Myran. The province implemented a five-stage approach to conducting the search and worked closely with the families throughout to ensure the families were involved and up to date on search operations (Figure 13).

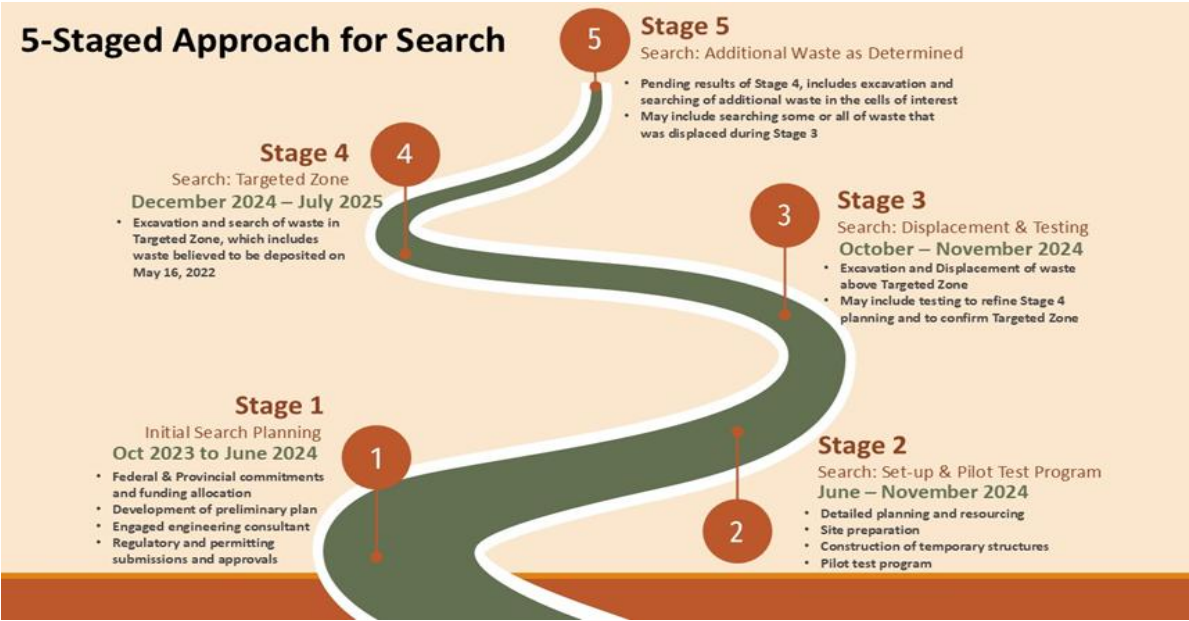


Figure 13 Manitoba's five-stage approach to conducting the search of the Prairie Green Landfill

- The search of PGL was planned in a timely and culturally respectful manner with the families, Elders, Indigenous, federal and municipal governments, and the private PGL ownership (Figure 14). Manitoba also prioritized the safety of the search and creating a framework to provide regular updates to families, Indigenous leaders, authorities and the public.
- Providing funding for the affected families to have additional supports throughout the trial and the search of the landfill.



Figure 14 Ceremony with Family, Prairie Green Landfill, June 2024

- Providing funding to Giganawenimaanaanig to support a community feast to honour the work being done by landfill searchers.
- By March 2025, [remains of Morgan Harris and Mercedes Myran had been identified and recovered](#) When Manitobans go missing, we go looking.

BRADY ROAD LANDFILL SEARCH

On March 26, 2025, the Winnipeg Police Service announced that Mashkode Bizhi'ikwe (Buffalo Woman) had been identified as Ashlee Shingoose, and is believed to be in the Brady Road Landfill. At a [press conference](#) with municipal, provincial and Indigenous leadership, Premier Kinew committed to searching the Brady Road Resource Management Facility for Ashlee's remains, in collaboration with the Shingoose family, Indigenous leadership, the City of Winnipeg, and the Winnipeg Police Service. Significant work to follow through on this commitment is planned for 2025/26.

Looking Forward

In 2024/25, Manitoba made significant progress in advancing reconciliation by working in partnership with Indigenous governments, organizations, and communities. Guided by the Nationhood pillars of Land, Culture, Language, and People, the province supported a wide range of initiatives that reflect Indigenous priorities and leadership. These included expanding access to culturally relevant education and health care, strengthening community safety and well-being, addressing the MMIWG2S+ crisis, supporting Indigenous economic development, and promoting the revitalization of languages and cultural practices. Together, these efforts reflect a whole-of-government approach to reconciliation that centres Indigenous voices and works to close long-standing gaps in opportunity and outcomes.

Looking ahead, Manitoba is building on this foundation with new and ongoing investments that will further advance reconciliation. Budget 2025 includes investments to expand Indigenous language programming in schools and government services and enhance community-based safety and wellness initiatives. The province is also investing in Indigenous-led housing and homelessness strategies, supporting Indigenous participation in natural resource development, and increasing Indigenous representation in the public service through targeted recruitment and procurement initiatives. These commitments reflect Manitoba's continued focus on building respectful partnerships and creating a more inclusive, equitable, and sustainable future for all.

Together, we can shape a future where reconciliation is not just a goal, but a lived reality for all Manitobans.

Miigwech, Marsi, Mahsi cho, Wopida, Ekosani, Nakurmiik, Qujannamiik, Merci, Thank you.