CITY OF winkler
DREAM. BUILD. LIVE.

STRATEGIC PLAN

City of Winkler, Manitoba

DREAM BUILD LIVE



THE WINKLER STORY

The land in south-central Manitoba upon which Winkler sits was the traditional territory of the nomadic Ojibwe-speaking Anishinaabe people, who used it for hunting, fishing, and trapping. European settlement began with the arrival of Russian Mennonites in 1876.

In 1882, settlement expanded when the Canadian Pacific Railway established a siding on land owned by Valentine Winkler, a businessman and politician. This development attracted German, Jewish, and English merchants, and the favorable soil and climate, combined with the farming expertise of these settlers, helped develop one of Manitoba's richest farming regions. Winkler grew as a trade, service, and processing center for the agricultural sector and, after WWII, as a regional retail and industrial hub. It was incorporated as a village in 1906 and as a town in 1954.

Following a period of stagnation in the 1960s, the town's rapid population growth resumed and continued into the 1990s. On April 7, 2002, Winkler was officially granted city status. The manufacturing and industrial sectors have since attracted an entrepreneurial, hard-working, and diverse population. Winkler is now recognized as the second most diverse community in Canada, drawing people from around the world for its job opportunities, business potential, and quality of life.



Today, the tri-region (City of Morden, RM of Stanley, and City of Winkler) collaborates effectively, making strategic investments that ensure the continued expansion of the population and economy, improvements in key quality-of-life factors, and the security of core services and infrastructure. Winkler's Council and Administration have worked diligently to prepare the community for the next 25 years of growth. By investing strategically in infrastructure, including critical projects like wastewater management, Winkler is not only readying itself for a future population increase of 25,000 people but also ensuring that future generations are not burdened with debt.

As Canada looks to enhance productivity, Winkler aims to play a proactive role by attracting technology firms that can support its growing manufacturing industries in innovating, improving productivity, addressing labor shortages, and achieving their full potential. These strategic investments lay the foundation for Winkler's continued economic maturation while maintaining a quality of life that is attractive to families and young professionals alike. Our community and region will serve as a model actively seeking ways to attract new people, foster economic innovation, and secure investments.



VISION:

To enhance and build Winkler into a thriving, innovative, and welcoming community that leads in economic growth, quality of life, sustainability, and technological advancement.

PURPOSE:

To create a sustainable and prosperous future for Winkler by fostering innovation, enhancing quality of life, and building strong partnerships.

OUR VALUES

1. Collaboration:

We believe in working together with our community partners and our neighboring communities to make strategic investments that benefit Winkler and the entire region.

2. Innovation:

We are committed to integrating technology and innovation into our strong manufacturing and industrial base to ensure long-term economic strength.

3. Quality of Life:

We strive to provide an exceptional quality of life that meets the evolving needs of our residents, particularly younger generations.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Goal #1
Transform Winkler into a leading hub for technology and innovation to drive economic growth and productivity.

Strategies:

Attract Technology Firms:
- Support programs to attract technology companies that can enhance the manufacturing sector's productivity.
- Streamline regulatory processes.

Innovation Mall:
- Create a dedicated space for startups and entrepreneurs to collaborate, access resources, and scale their businesses.
- This space will provide coworking areas, mentorship programs, and networking events.

Educational Partnerships:
- Partner with local and regional educational institutions to create programs tailored to the needs of Winkler's industries.
- This could include vocational training, certification programs, and continuing education courses focused on technology and manufacturing.

Assist with Research and Development (R&D) Grants:
- Assist organizations in sourcing R&D grants for local businesses to encourage innovation and the development of new technologies that can improve productivity and competitiveness.

Key Actions:

- Campaign to attract tech firms by highlighting Winkler's advantages and available incentives.
- Develop and promote an Innovation Mall as a premier location for startups.
- Create formal partnerships with universities and technical colleges to align educational programs with industry needs.
- Assist organizations in accessing R&D grant programs to support innovation within existing businesses.

INFRASTRUCTURE & DEVELOPMENT

Goal #2
Ensure Winkler's Infrastructure supports current needs and future growth, while enhancing the quality of life for residents.

Strategies:

Infrastructure Investments:
- Prioritize investments in critical infrastructure such as transportation networks, utilities, and digital infrastructure to support economic and population growth.

Housing Development:
- Encourage diverse housing developments to cater to the needs of different demographics, including affordable housing for young professionals and families.

Enhance Social Gathering Space:
- Invest in aesthetically pleasing spaces to create vibrant, attractive, and pedestrian-friendly areas that encourage local shopping, social collision and community interaction.

Key Actions:

- Invest in master plans to prioritize infrastructure and capital projects.
- Work with developers to create diverse housing options, ensuring affordability and quality.
- Plan and fund new recreational facilities, including parks, sports complexes, and community centers.
- Implement a downtown revitalization plan, including beautification projects, improved walkability, and support for local businesses.

Goal #3
Leverage the unique strengths of the region to create a competitive, cohesive area that attracts investment and fosters sustainable growth.

COLLABORATION

Strategies:

Joint Economic Development Initiatives:
- Collaborate with community partners and neighboring communities to identify and pursue joint economic development projects that benefit the entire region.

Shared Services and Resources:
- Explore opportunities for sharing services and resources across the tri-region to increase efficiency and reduce costs.
- This could include joint infrastructure projects, shared public services, and collaborative marketing efforts.

Advocacy and Representation:
- Work together to advocate for regional interests at the provincial and federal levels, ensuring that the tri-region's needs and priorities are recognized and supported.

Key Actions:

- Establish a tri-regional economic development council to coordinate joint initiatives.
- Identify and implement shared services and resource projects to improve efficiency.
- Create a joint advocacy strategy to represent the tri-region's interests to higher levels of government.

SUMMARY

Winkler is at a pivotal moment in its history. With a strategic focus on innovation, collaboration, and quality of life, we are well-positioned to play a proactive role in economic growth and community development.

This strategic plan provides a roadmap for our journey, ensuring that Winkler continues to be a place where people want to **Dream. Build.** and **Live.**







