

**main street
project**

our stories

2016-2017

*Holding Communities,
Building Stability*

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Funders & Partners

Winnipeg Regional Health Authority
Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living
Province of Manitoba
Manitoba Housing
City of Winnipeg
City of Winnipeg Police Service
The Winnipeg Foundation
United Way
City of Winnipeg Fire Paramedic Service
CentreVenture Development Corporation
Winnipeg Housing Rehabilitation Corporation
Downtown Winnipeg BIZ

MAIN STREET PROJECT
2nd floor - 661 Main Street
Winnipeg, MB R3B 1E3
P: 204-982-8229
F: 204-943-9474
E: admin@mainstreetproject.ca

DESIGN/ PHOTOGRAPHY:
Bounce Design

COVER PHOTOGRAPHY:
Red Moon Media

WRITING:
Susan Peters

PRINTING:
City Press

thank you

our stories

Main Street Project is about people. People who have come before, people who are here now and people who will come in the future, these are our stories...

Main Street Project (MSP) Integrated Care

Even though some view us as a homeless shelter, Main Street Project feeds all kinds of needs — from body and mind to shelter and long-term care. We help hold communities by supporting addictions, chronic and acute illness, housing and mental health issues. By addressing these principles in each person's journey, we remain committed to contributing to the overall quality of life and highest standards of care for those who access our resources on a short term or ongoing basis.

MSP Integrated Support Streams

Supportive
and
Transitional
Housing

Emergency
Shelter and
Social Service
Support

Addictions
Support and
Integrated
Services

Vision

Every individual has a safe place to be and the right to self-determination.

Mission

Main Street Project provides shelter and access to services that meet the day-to-day needs of all people who are homeless or under-housed, including those with chronic addictions and related health issues.

Guiding Principles

Utilizing best practices and providing evidence-informed services, MSP is person-centered and respects people's choices.

With an approach that reflects housing first, harm reduction, and trauma informed, MSP meets people where they are, without judgement.

MSP works in collaboration with other stakeholders to ensure that people's needs are met by a continuum of service providers.

Chair's Message

Main Street Project's vision is to ensure that:

“Every individual has a safe place to be and the right to self-determination.”

Holding a unique position within our community, Main Street Project (MSP) provides shelter and access to services for the homeless, addicted, and those suffering mental and physical health issues.

Over the past year, our organization has honoured our funders' belief in our vision. Extensive revision to our strategic plan provides the structure within which we will achieve our three key goals and objectives:

1. Provide quality services that meet basic needs including shelter, food and clothing
2. Enhance Coordination with external organizations and access to holistic care
3. Establish and maintain a healthy and stable organization

As a member of the Manitoba Association of Community Health Centres (MACH), we strive to achieve 'Collective Impact' through collaborative relationships with the WRHA and within our network of community health agencies (CHAs). We are fully aware of the challenges our partners face considering recommendations stemming from the Peachy report and the pressure which our healthcare partners are under in the face of provincial funding restructuring. As a Board, we continue to believe that we have a lead role to play in providing solutions to extremely complex human challenges. Over the past year, our initiatives have included:

- **RUNWAY TO CHANGE:** Explored private funding sources and built brand equity through the Runway to Change fashion show at the Fort Garry Hotel.
- **FOUNDATION FUND ESTABLISHMENT:** Established our Foundation through the support of The Winnipeg Foundation.

- **FOOD BANK:** Established our food bank through collaboration with Winnipeg Harvest and Lighthouse Mission.
- **HEALTHCARE/MEDICAL OVERSIGHT:** Enhanced medical oversight at admission screening to meet the growing methamphetamine and fentanyl epidemic by strengthening our relationship with the Winnipeg Paramedic Service.
- **WINTER VAN PATROL:** Provided a 'Van Patrol' during the coldest winter weeks along side our partners at Downtown Winnipeg Biz.

For nearly 50 years MSP has provided daily 24/7 shelter through our spectrum of programming including Protective Care (IPDA), Shelter, Crisis & Detoxification, Breakaway, Riverpoint, Bell Hotel, Main Stay, Outreach Mentor and Van Patrol. We have been there for our clients and our community in the past and will continue to be there for them in the future.



Cam Baldwin, Board Chair

Executive Director's Message

Main Street's *Forward Motion*...

In its 45-year history, Main Street Project (MSP) has faced many challenges, which more often than not has meant the need to adapt and change. It has been an ongoing commitment to *forward motion* that has enabled the agency to adjust, thereby remaining true to its vision of ensuring every individual has a safe place to be and the right to self-determination. But what is forward motion? For Main Street Project this past year, forward motion has meant looking at what needed to change, gathering people who believed change was possible, and starting to move forward through the introduction of a new five-year strategic plan founded in evidence-based best practices. The process to develop the strategic plan meant remembering that you don't always need a destination to start with. Sometimes, you just have to make forward motion to begin the process, allowing the process to take you where you need to go.

Over the past year, forward motion has also meant facing financial challenges head on, pushing through them to find the opportunities on the other side. In an ever-tightening economy with limited financial resources, MSP found forward motion in the first major renovation of its Martha Street facilities in a decade; the re-introduction of community outreach through the Van Patrol; and a realignment of services to ensure the highest standards in client-centric care and support continued. *"Cleaning the cobwebs, dealing with old business and clearing the desks"* has meant MSP is positioned to maintain the integrity of the work it does while also ensuring financial stability in the years ahead.

Forward motion was also found through a revitalization of community spirit and support for MSP programs through philanthropy and community engagement. MSP was founded in community, and so it was appropriate that much of MSP's forward motion was about a return to those roots.

At the forefront of MSP's forward motion has been its people, the amazing men and women who choose service in the support of others each and every day. In the pages of this report you will find some of their stories. They are thoughtful and courageous. In their commitment to others, the staff, board and volunteers of MSP are representative of what MSP is ultimately all about. In the past, in the present and into the future they have been, they are, and they will always be, the living embodiment of MSP's forward motion...



"Sometimes the biggest gain in productive energy will come from cleaning the cobwebs, dealing with old business, and clearing the desks — cutting loose the constraints that impede forward motion."

Rick Lees, Executive Director

Protective Care

24-hour care for people who need a safe space

With a desire to help people, Trevor Aikman studied counseling at Red River College and applied for a job at Main Street Project (MSP). Trevor has now been working for MSP for three years. “This was a clientele I’d been wanting to work with for a couple of years,” says Trevor, an integrated support worker in Protective Care, which is sometimes likened to an “emergency room” for MSP.

He points out that Protective Care has a partnership with the Winnipeg Fire and Paramedic Service, who provide on-site Agency Supports 24 hours of the day, and a set of criteria that determines if individuals should be sent for assessment at a hospital. Staff members like Trevor monitor individuals through video cameras constantly, perform a wellness check every 15 minutes, and visually assess the individuals every hour. “It’s Protective Care because it’s a safe place to go,” says Trevor. “We make sure everyone is safe and stable when they leave.” Protective Care is usually the entry point to other Main Street Project services.

Sometimes, people only need Protective Care once: “There are some people who get picked up after an exciting Jets game,” says Trevor. Main Street Project resources people and checks how often individuals are coming through Protective Care. For some people, access to sleeping in Shelter is a better alternative than using a cell. Individuals are then provided referrals to housing, substance use support and other Main Street Project programs.

*“We make sure everyone is safe and
stable when they leave.”*

**Trevor Aikman,
Integrated Support Worker**

Only Winnipeg Police Service and Auxiliary Cadets can bring people into Protective Care. Staff are cognizant of the amount of time it takes to do an intake as an individual enters, while police officers wait. “My average wait time was six minutes — how long it takes to book somebody in,” says Trevor. One proud accomplishment for Protective Care is that the wait times for police cars have been greatly reduced over the past year, due to concerted efforts by the Main Street Project.



26,500

*Paramedic consults
(agency wide)*

11,000

*Intakes into
Protective Care*

15-20

*Minutes average
wait time for
police cars*

continuum of care

Rain Gunderson,
Addictions Counsellor –
Women's Detox

980

*Group sessions
offered at both men's
and women's detox*

1250

*Referrals to longer
term treatment
following Main Street
Project detox*

Courage to Detox

Helping with addictions from the front lines to the big picture

Rain Gunderson started working with social services in 2005. “And whenever I got off the phone, calling Main Street Project, I wanted to work here.” She achieved her goal and is now an addictions counsellor at women’s detox, where she’s motivated to help women: “I’ve been clean and sober for 11 years. I feel like this is my way to give back.” Many of the women use meth, many are long-term users, and sometimes their bodies physically need a break from using. Rain describes the Main Street Project’s approach of harm reduction this way: “It’s helping them live safer lives, teaching them, if you’re not ready to stop, here’s how to be safe.”

“I think it’s hard for addicts to reach out because they feel judged. But I think it’s courageous,” Rain says. “Sometimes people come here over seven times. I think it’s great that people are trying.” The motivations for men and women to detox can vary, with women often strongly motivated to secure stable housing and get their children back from Child and Family Services. “And a lot of them just don’t want to die,” says Rain.

At one point, Rain was called out to the parking lot in front of the women’s detox centre to help one of their former clients. The woman was skin and bones, noticeably thinner than the last time Rain had seen her, emotional and crying. “We talked it through, and filled in an application, with the tears falling on the page,” says Rain. “I thought, how strong is this person’s will to live, with her children grown and no family nearby, that she came back here to try again.”

For Dr. Nichole Riese, her volunteer role as a board member at Main Street Project overlaps with her responsibilities as the Manitoba Regional Director of the women’s programs at the Addiction Foundation of Manitoba. Dr. Nichole provides training sessions to Main Street Project staff on safe admissions for detox. For individuals who are very medically unwell, it’s safer to detox at a hospital. But if patients don’t have a history of seizures, a community detox setting like the Main Street Project is a safe option.

Dr. Nichole is open to staff calling her if they have questions: “The patients may be embarrassed to tell the doctor how many benzos a day they’re taking, but they might tell the staff.” As a board member at Main Street Project, Dr. Nichole also helps with governance. The organization has case managers, who will help create plans for individuals and help people flow through the three support streams. “It’s like having a family doctor. It’s continuity of care. The programs are like specialists, and the caseworker is like the generalist,” says Dr. Nichole.



*“The programs are
like specialists, and
the caseworker is
like the generalist.”*

**Dr. Nichole Riese,
AFM Physician & MSP Board Member**

Driving Change

Street van patrol and food bank show entrepreneurship

“How in today’s world can people be left to freeze to death?” recalls Christopher Dvorak, an employee of Main Street Project for the past year and a half who immediately volunteered to patrol the streets in December 2016. In response to a need specific to homelessness and extreme weather conditions, MSP brought back the overnight Van Patrol. Fortunately, private donors and the United Way quickly stepped in to fund the van for the winter.

Christopher drove the van from 11:30 p.m. to 8:00 a.m., handing out toques, warm clothing, hot coffee and harm reduction supplies, or giving people a ride to a warmer location. The van also provided wellness checks to those who chose not to take the ride. People on the street respond positively to the Main Street Project van because it’s seen as a helpful, friendly presence. In partnership with the Downtown Winnipeg Biz and CHAT Team, Christopher drove the van for six weeks in the winter. Twice he found people who were unresponsive, unable to wake up in the deep cold: “Those two people were sleeping in bus shelters, their vitals were low, and they didn’t give any kind of movement.” Christopher called paramedics — possibly preventing two deaths due to hypothermia.

As an integrated support worker at Main Street Project, Christopher says that while he drove the van, his friends sometimes asked: “Aren’t you scared of those people?” He answered: “Those people, you mean human beings? Yeah, I tried to change some minds about that.” Christopher would like to see the van run in hot weather, too, handing out water bottles to prevent dehydration.

Another innovative project at Main Street Project is the food bank, which took over the former space of Main Meats at 661 Main St. With food donated by Winnipeg Harvest, the food bank is set up as a grocery store that allows registered individuals to select food from what’s available. “They like the idea of going there to shop,” says Kerri Smith, a team lead who works with long-term residents at the Bell Hotel. “It’s more dignified.”



Kerri Smith, Team Lead at the Bell

At Main Street Project, there are two residential housing options for individuals, both of them following a Housing First philosophy. First, the Mainstay Residence is designed as short-term housing for individuals who are in transition, such as leaving the hospital, looking to move from the Shelter and/or a detox program, providing a safe place to stay while individuals can continue to work on goals. In partnership with the Canadian Mental Health Association, the Bell Hotel offers long-term housing for individuals who may have previously been homeless or might find it difficult to rent an apartment because they’ve been evicted previously. The Bell is now in its sixth successful year of operation.

14

Bell residents registered for Main Street Project’s new food bank in the first month, 25 in the second month, then 39 in the third month. By partnering with Lighthouse Mission, the total is now 65 weekly food bank users.

\$26,000

*In private donations
given for van patrol*

\$20,000

*Donated by United Way
for van patrol*

innovation + outreach

*“Those people, you mean human beings?
Yeah, I tried to change some minds about that.”*

Christopher Dvorak, Integrated Support Worker



Nelson Gzebowski,
MSP Community Member

community

Meet the Community

At the end of August, I'll have been living at the Bell for six years. I like the people, I like the staff, I like the security I get living here. To me it's become family. I cook for myself; I like pasta, and some meat products like veal. Here I have friends who I see on a continuous basis. We go to the Jets and Bombers games. Favourite player? I like 'em all.

On May 13, I had a coronary heart attack. The staff saw the distress I was in, and they got the paramedics here, and they took me to the hospital.

Previously, I lived in a high-rise in North Kildonan. When I hit bottom, I lived at the Booth Centre. I lived at a rooming house, which I would never go back to. Here there's security; I always know there's staff around if I need them.

Nelson Gzebowski lives in a studio apartment at the Bell Hotel.

Food Services Averages

54,000

Full meals provided in residential settings

30,000

Modified meals (soup and shelter meals)

3,000

Bag lunches for those who work/register

One 8' x 11'
Kitchen produces all meals

60,000 lbs. +
Food donated by Winnipeg Harvest

Philanthropy

Ride for Refuge
raised

\$7,599

The Runway to Change
raised

\$18,529

Continuum of Care

891

Men's detox
admissions

786

Women's detox
admissions to
reduce harm caused
by substance use
and move toward
recovery

465,000

Average unique
program
contacts with
individuals
agency wide

results

NEVER LOOK
DOWN ON ANYBODY
UNLESS YOU'RE
HELPING...
THEM UP

philanthropy

Phil Goss,
Peer Advocate

Philanthropy
contributed over
\$125,000
to the works of
Main Street Project

Role Models

Fashion show changes minds on a runway with a difference

Cameras flashed at the Fort Garry Hotel on Feb 2, 2017, as models strutted the catwalk for a fashion show with a difference: the *Runway to Change*. One of the volunteer models was Phil Goss, now the peer advocate, charged with advocating for individuals at Main Street Project. “We speak the same language,” says Phil. “I was an individual here 30 years ago.” While traveling from Vancouver to Winnipeg, Phil ended up stopping off in Winnipeg, looking for help with a heroin addiction, and he found care at Main Street Project. Modeling in a fashion show was an all-new experience for Phil, though.

Organized by Ashley Tokaruk and Madelaine Lapointe, two creative communications students at Red River College, the show featured five former and current residents of Main Street Project. Besides dressing their dapper best, the five men had their life stories projected on a screen behind them. “People were cheering and giving me high fives,” says Phil. “It was pretty spectacular to be there as an advocate for homeless people. I got to share the Main Street Project with people who might not have known about it.”

Another model in the show was Andy Meekis, a resident at Bell. “I was so nervous, I just about tripped. My legs were kind of shaky,” says Andy. Since then, he’s been interviewed about his turn on the

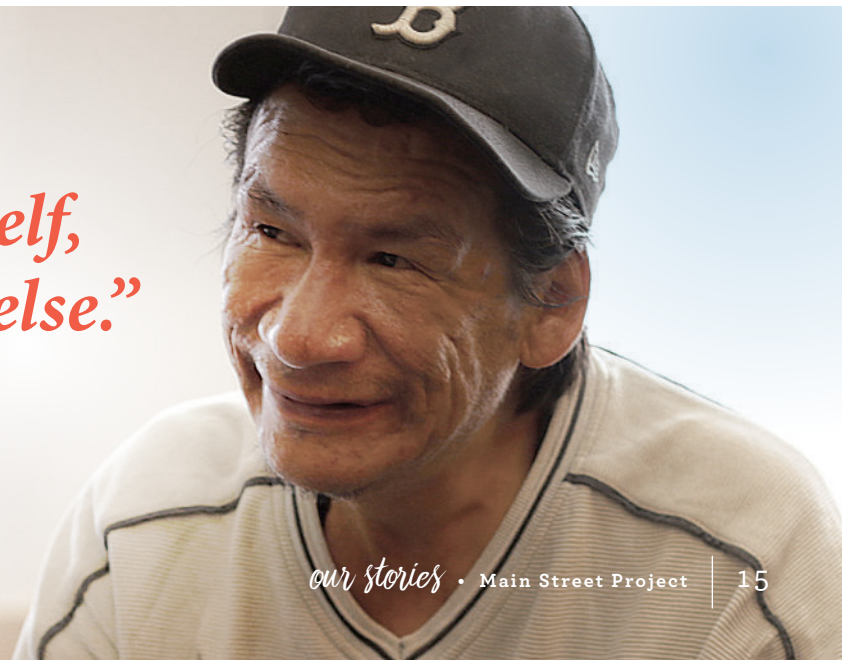
runway by news crews from CTV, Global and CBC — the show brought a bounty of positive publicity, along with collecting socks, underwear, toques, mittens and 200 pounds of coffee. Andy lives at the Bell Hotel. He loves that he can prepare his own food in the kitchenette of his studio apartment, and take a bath whenever he wants in his own private bathroom. “We made a lot of donations from the show,” says Andy. “I didn’t do it for myself, I did it for everyone else.” Like the other models, Andy kept his custom-fitted suit from Eph Apparel.

Another outstanding philanthropy project is *Gifts of Grace*, a group of volunteers who come to Main Street Project on Sunday mornings to serve breakfast and show movies to community members. The dedicated volunteers, who have been doing this for years, return on Thursday evenings to serve a home-cooked community dinner, with the addition of a pizza dinner twice per month, thanks to a partnership with Pizza Hotline.

Ride for Refuge is a family-friendly walking and cycling fundraiser managed by several charities working together. While this was the first year Main Street Project participated, it’s thought that a team of cyclists might be able to receive even more donations next year.

*“I didn’t do it for myself,
I did it for everyone else.”*

**Andy Meekis,
MSP Community Member**



Spiritual Learning

*Inspired to share stories
of residential school survivors*

As an integrated support worker at the Shelter, which offers crisis services and a safe place to stay for anyone who walks in, Wayne Mason is frequently asked about the medicine pouch worn around his neck. Over the past year and a half that he has been working at the Main Street Project, he has given a dozen of the medicine pouches away to individuals. “There’s one guy who keeps losing it, and I keep making him another. When he has it he feels strong and protected,” says Wayne. “I’m trying to tell him that he has it within himself always. Without it, he feels he can’t be strong, and say no to people when he wants to.”

Wayne tries to meet members of the Main Street Project community where they are currently, even if they’re not currently sober, inspired by the example set by his father: “One time my father and I were at a sweat. An intoxicated man was going to come into the sweat, and people said, whoa. My father talked to him and came back and said: he’s going to hang out here by the sacred fire. I always think of that,” Wayne explains. “If we turn them away, we don’t know where they’ll go. If we bring them in, we can help them on the right path.”

Wayne likes to talk to community members about the seven teachings, and performs smudges throughout the agency streams. “There’s a lot of residential school survivors. The reason why I think a lot of our people are in this situation is residential schools, their parents or grandparents were in residential schools.” Now he tries to share what he knows with the Main Street Project community.

What Wayne would like to see for the Main Street Project in the future is more partnerships with healing groups and other organizations. He’d also love to see new culturally specific programs.

*“If we bring them in, we can help
them on the right path.”*

Wayne Mason, Integrated Support Worker



In 2015-16
the shelter put
a temporary
roof over

27,784
heads

12

Caseworkers
have been hired
agency wide

\$104,000

Capital grant
provided a
much-needed
makeover to
74 Martha St.
that saw airy,
light-coloured
paint and new
flooring has
been installed
throughout the
building, plus
a safety gate
and kitchen
renovations.

Higher Education

Working nights while studying days to attain an MSW

Six years ago, Mildrate Matanga started working at Main Street Project, driven by a deep desire to help, she says: “My heart is open. I care for people, and I want to do something to help people.”

While Mildrate has a bachelor’s degree in social work from the University of Manitoba, after a while, she felt a growing desire to gain new skills, learn better how to advocate for her clients, and strengthen her understanding of the issues faced by her clients. She decided to pursue her Master’s degree in social work, going to school full-time for three years while working nights at Main Street Project: “I was lucky if I got three hours of sleep a day.” Her degree included a practicum, where she was able to work and learn with Indigenous women. Mildrate now has a deeper understanding of practices like a sharing circle, and she sees similarities to cultural practices in Zimbabwe, where she was born. “The respect of the elder is a big thing in my culture, too. It’s really amazing to see the similarities, even though Canada and Zimbabwe are not that similar.”

Upgrading her skills and education makes Mildrate part of an ongoing trend at Main Street Project. While staff with good hearts are always welcome, because many individuals face complicated health problems, including mental health and substance use, it’s important that staff also have educational and professional credentials to provide the supports needed. Professional development and standards of training means that staff from the Main Street Project are familiar with partner agencies, able to navigate systems, and can offer professional counseling. More training in mental health issues helps staff to understand how to work with people with different mental health issues, including the difference between de-escalation and engagement.

“My heart is open. I care for people.”

Mildrate Matanga, Caseworker

Mildrate was recently moved into the position of caseworker at Main Street Project. Mildrate sees positive signs from providing every individual with a consistent go-to person: “The client knows, if I have a problem, here’s who I need to talk to.”



professional standards

Vision



Ready to Launch

New 5-year strategic plan turns goals into actions

“A new strategic plan will guide the direction for the Main Street Project for the next five years,” says Shelly Smith, who has been a director on the board for the past three years. “Coming up with the plan is a chance to ask, is this still our mission? Is this still our vision?” explains Shelly, who has a background in working with the boards of non-profit and grassroots organizations.

Current goals for the Main Street Project include organizational, program and financial stability. The new strategic plan covers 2016 to 2021. “Like a dashboard, it’s the indicators that tell us if we’re getting where we set out to go,” says Shelly. As an organization, the Main Street Project is working to build and rebuild community relationships with the many partner organizations that operate in Winnipeg. “We’re saying to funders: let’s get all the funders in the room and talk about what we do,” says Shelly. By reaching out to other organizations, she explains, Main Street Project is trying to “make sure we’re a partner, not working in a silo.”

Professional development is another emphasis for the organization. Ensuring the Main Street Project has enough qualified staff in place in order to deliver the programs remains an ongoing priority, including hiring social workers to fill the important position of caseworkers. “There’s a place for everyone in the organization, roles for every level of education,” says Shelly. “We have staff with high school or less education, and then people who have a university or master’s degree. And some of the regular community members have their own roles, they volunteer to clean up after a meal.”

“Make sure we’re a partner, not working in a silo.”

Shelly Smith, Board Member

For Shelly, volunteering with the board of the Main Street Project is a rewarding experience. “Everybody can end up here, from business people who are lost to addiction, to people who started off in poverty, and because of trauma, colonization and residential schools, the effects are intergenerational.” She describes the organization as incredibly resilient in the face of challenges. It’s a term that describes Main Street Project’s community members as well as the staff, managers and board members.

Staff List

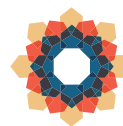
- Rick Lees**
Executive Director
- Joy Valencerina**
Director of Finance
- Viktoria Westgate**
Director of Addictions and Integrated Services
- Lorraine Dean**
Director of Emergency Shelter & Community Supports
- Adrienne Dudek**
Director of Supportive and Transitional Housing
- Pearl Kavanagh-Stoesz**
Human Resource Specialist
- Cindy Titus**
Communications & Fund Development Coordinator
- Lisa Hunt**
Community Engagement & Volunteer Coordinator
- Alan Noakes**
Facilities Coordinator
- Aida Strovcovsky**
Case Management Coordinator
- Patti Nixon**
Program Support Coordinator

Board List

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- Mr. Rod Slaughter**
Vice President and Executive Committee Vice Chairperson
- Mr. Bruce Carney**
Treasurer and Finance Committee Chairperson – Outgoing
- Mr. Vince Warden**
Treasurer and Finance Committee Chairperson – Incoming
- Ms. Shelly Smith**
Secretary and Governance Committee Chairperson
- Mr. Rick Lees**
Executive Director
- Mr. Ryan Sneath**
Winnipeg Paramedic Service Liaison
- Mr. Jim Anderson**
Winnipeg Police Service Liaison
- Ms. Lorie English**
- Dr. Ginette Poulin**
- Dr. Nichole Riese**
- Mr. Bill Shultz**



HOTEL



main street project

2nd floor - 661 Main Street
Winnipeg, MB R3B 1E3
P: 204-982-8229
F: 204-943-9474
E: admin@mainstreetproject.ca

mainstreetproject.ca