# Green Action Centre

Green Action Centre Celebrating Forty Years 1985 — 2025

# **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR & BOARD PRESIDENT NOTE**

In 2024-2025, Green Action Centre marked a very special milestone – 40 years of helping Manitobans live green and live well. To celebrate our legacy, we gathered at the Forks to mark our anniversary, to recognize the many individuals that have contributed to our story, and to reflect on our ongoing impact as an organization. Beyond this, the year was significant for Green Action Centre for a number of reasons: we welcomed eight new staff members, four new volunteers to the Board of Directors, and we began the implementation of our strategic plan that will continue the storied efforts of past Manitobans.

In our ongoing mission to promote greener and better living by sharing practical solutions and advocating for change, our focus this year was to build capacity for the organization. And building capacity is what we did: We created new core positions including Director of Operations, Human Resources Administrator, and Communications Coordinator; we stabilized our funding sources; we increased our office space to expand our operations, and most importantly, we are consolidating a staff structure with talented and passionate individuals.

While we move forward, we have to remind ourselves why Green Action Centre exists. A good friend of the organization once shared with us the following: Environmental NGOs fill gaps until institutions are able or willing to do so. As Green Action Centre continues to fight climate change, and its impact on the most vulnerable, let us share some examples of this needed work. This past fall, Compost Winnipeg partnered with the City of Winnipeg to collect residential organic waste at 15 designated depots. This stop-gap measure is anticipated to continue until a city-wide curbside composting system is put into place in 2030. We also diverted 26 semi-trailer loads of waste from winter road Indigenous communities. Our Newcomer Sustainability Skill Building Program initiated in 2021 continues to grow, as do the users of GoManitoba - Green Action Centre's ride matching tool - that tripled in less than 10 months!

As well, we continued our important work in advocacy, engaging with decision-makers on how to adopt or amend policies that address critical issues to improve the well-being of communities. We would like to highlight the delegations we sent to the City of Winnipeg on several sustainable transportation items. We also participated in engagement sessions as part of the development of Manitoba Hydro's 2025 Integrated Resource Plan. Lastly, Green Action Centre being a leader on the Manitoba's Climate Action Team, released two reports: Agriculture Solutions, and Connecting Communities: Strengthening Public Transportation Options.

With recent multi-year funding agreements, like the one established with The Winnipeg Foundation, we can continue growing and to create greater community and province wide environmental impact. Even amidst turbulent times in our world, we feel hopeful that we can carry on our mission to provide vital programs that impact our communities for the better. Our deepest thanks to everyone who is part of the Green Action Centre family for your dedication and passion towards protecting Mother Earth.



David Klein **Board President** 





### **Your Green Living Hub**

**MISSION:** We promote green and better living by sharing practical solutions and advocating for change

**VISION:** All Manitobans living green, living well

### **OUR VALUES**

WE ACT ON FACTS | We rely on research, evidence and best practices to create meaningful change.

**WE MAKE CHANGE HAPPEN** | We respond to issues and encourage others to take action.

WE ARE PASSIONATE ABOUT WHAT WE DO | We love our work; we walk the talk and lead by example.

**WE DO WHAT WE SAY** We are dependable and responsible; you can count on us to get the job done.

### **OUR WORK**

We deliver community programming, tools and education on sustainable transportation, waste reduction, and green living.

#### Green Action Centre programs include:

- Workplace Commuter Options
- Jackfrost Challenge & Commuter Challenge
- Active and Safe Routes to School
- Composting & Food Waste Reduction
- Green Infrastructure Projects
- Sustainability Projects
- First Nations Waste Minimization
- Compost Winnipeg, a Social Enterprise of Green Action Centre
- Climate Action Team, a coalition of environmental organizations





WE INVITE EVERYONE | We collaborate with others and welcome all Manitobans to join the conversation about positive green solutions.

**WE BREAK DOWN BARRIERS** | We work together to help people overcome challenges. We recognize that change isn't easy, but we will help you get there.

**WE ARE HOPEFUL** | We are optimistic that with a positive message and by working together, humans can live in harmony with the Earth.

### 2025-2029 STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

- 1 Evaluate and refine our programs and policy efforts to ensure collective green impact
- 2 | Purposefully cultivate equity, diversity, inclusion, Indigenization, and accessibility (EDIIA) across all levels of the organization
- **3** | Enhance organizational capacity and stability within the staff and volunteer team
- **4** | Strengthen financial sustainability through reliable and consistent funding sources

# HIGHLIGHTS

- In February, Green Action Centre celebrated our 40th anniversary with past and present staff, GAC members, volunteers, specials guests and board members for an evening of reflection on all we have accomplished over the last four decades, and shared inspiration for the future.
- Green Action Centre, in collaboration with the West End Resource Centre, Manitoba Eco-Network, Trees Winnipeg, Green Drop Tree Care, and Greenway School staff, led a two-year project funded by Green Communities Canada. The 51 trees planted at Greenway School will establish the Greenway School Community Forest, contributing to ongoing efforts to naturalize the property, increase biodiversity, and support land-based learning in an environment for people to live, learn, and play.
- Green Action Centre and Efficiency Manitoba's Generation E initiative partnered to conduct a school audit with students and teachers at College Pierre Elliott Trudeau. Green Action Centre guided the group in conducting a school waste audit, and

Generation E led the school's energy review. With the guidance of GAC staff, students summarized the data into a report assessing the school's eco-footprint.

- The First Nations Waste Minimization team completed their most successful backhaul season yet. The 2024/2025 season was the sixth year of removing waste materials from winter road communities. In total, 26 semi-trailer loads of material were removed from 7 participating First Nations.
- Our social media reach increased by 560% over last year and 4.5K new visitors checked out our new website launched in January 2025.
- GAC hosted the 'Arrested Mobility' event with podcaster Charles T. Brown, who spoke on the harm impacting vulnerable communities caused by the inequities in our transportation system. Attendees included city councillors, urban planners, non-profit organizations, and the general public.









# **POLICY HIGHLIGHTS**

Green Action Centre remained active on policy issues throughout the past year, with support and contributions from various program staff, other partnering community groups and Peter Miller, who has represented Green Action Centre in interventions and meetings with Manitoba Hydro and Efficiency Manitoba since 2002.

Efficiency Manitoba. Their Energy Efficiency Advisory Group (EEAG) meets directly with senior management. EM programs reflect stakeholder input as well as new direction from Manitoba's Affordable Energy Plan to

meet net zero GHG targets by 2050 by making the transition affordable. EM is rolling out a new Affordable Home Energy Program that adds heat pumps to other

energy efficiency measures. They offer generous incentives to provide a low or no-cost heat pump installation.

#### Manitoba Hydro's Integrated Resource Plan

(IRP). An IRP is a systematic study of MH's options for responding to a changing energy landscape. Economic development and electrification of heating and transportation are likely to double electricity demand over the next two decades. New supply must provide both enough energy to meet all users' needs over the year and enough capacity to meet peak demand on the coldest night of the year. Wind and solar can supply more energy, but they can't be depended on to meet peak demand when power is most needed. For that reason, demand reduction from geothermal heat pump installations instead of electrical resistance heat is increasingly valuable to MH.

**Challenges.** Green Action Centre's advocacy

contributed to the creation of Efficiency Manitoba in the first place and to the evolution of policies to prioritize climate targets and effective means to meet them. Efficiency, demand reduction, and electrification of transportation, heating, and industry are now widely adopted in principle. EM, financed by MH, has worked hard to address financial barriers to broad adoption of heat pumps for efficient clean heat. However, there are significant delays for installation of a geothermal system, demonstrating that barriers remain. There is a serious capacity shortage in the industry to meet increased demand. We should continue to seek out best practices and innovation elsewhere, while innovating ourselves.

## 2024 - 2025

**Delegation at the City of Winnipeg on several** sustainable transportation items. Green Action Centre spoke against the city moving forward on spending money on plans to widen Kenaston, and spoke in favour of the administration adjusting Assiniboine Avenue and Main Street to make the intersection safer for those walking, biking and driving. The team also spoke in favour of lowering the speed limit on Wellington Crescent from River Ave to Academy. In the end, the city voted to continue to spend money to plan for a widening of Kenaston, although no money was budgeted for this work in 2025. The city did move forward to redesign Assiniboine and Main street, while Wellington Crescent should see improved safety during the summer of 2025.

#### Manitoba's Climate Action Team (CAT).

Key policy activities from our very active year included:

- Releasing five reports Road to Resilience Agriculture Solutions; Connecting Communities: Strengthening Public Transportation Options; Community Action Plans for Brandon and Altona; and a Green Audit Report for Sioux Valley Dakota Nation.
- Engaging the public through tabling at 14 events attended by over 3,800 Manitobans, e.g. Earth Month Kickoff Party, Rally for a Sustainable Future, and Seniors for Climate Event.
- Meeting with Hon. Tracy Schmidt and Hon. Mike Moyes as respective ministers of Environment and Climate Change, Hon. Glen Simard Minister of Municipal and Northern Relations and several government representatives and other decision makers.
- Launching the "Send Premier Kinew a Postcard" campaign: 'Manitobans want protection from health and economic costs of frequent extreme weather events. If our government writes emissions reduction targets into legislation, Manitoba can be part of the solution. Our lives and the lives of future generations depend on this decisive action'.

# **COMPOST & WASTE REDUCTION**

# SUSTAINABILITY PROJECTS









- We developed a new DIY workshop in which participants learn to make rugs out of fabric scraps as a way to divert textile waste from the landfill. This has become our most well-attended workshop offered at the Winnipeg Libraries.
- GAC conducted a waste audit of Red River College's Notre Dame campus examining the college's recycling program, the compostable waste generated, and waste types produced by the skilled trades labs. With this information, the college can evaluate steps to eventually becoming a zero waste campus. Another waste audit will take place at the RRC Exchange District campus in September 2025.
- We reached 1400 Manitobans through our presentations and events, offering education about waste reduction, backyard composting, and vermicomposting to schools, workplaces, and the wider community.
- GAC was contracted to oversee on-site waste management and sorting to maximize diversion rates for the 2024 Manitoba Marathon. These efforts helped to ensure best practices were followed on race day as they work towards their long-standing annual goal of diverting 85% of race day waste from landfills. This work highlights the importance of active waste management in achieving sustainability targets at large-scale events.

• After the launch of GAC's successful pilot project in • Green audits were conducted for Folklorama's 2021, the Newcomer Sustainability Skills Building head office, the United Church of Canada, and Project, GAC was able to continue this project the Art Gallery of Southwestern Manitoba, which in 2024-25 through funding provided by the covered multiple operational areas: building and Winnipeg Foundation and the federal Sustainable energy, water, food, green infrastructure, waste, Development Goals Funding Program. To date, and transportation. The audits provided snapshots we have worked with three newcomer-serving of current practices and areas for improvement. organizations, the Canadian Muslim Women's These findings were presented to the newly formed Earth Teams, who created tangible goals for their Institute, Elmwood Community Resource Centre, and Mosaic Newcomer Family Resource Network. respective organizations, which were presented in a GAC offered workshops on how to dress for winter, final report. how to use Winnipeg's recycling system, reduce • A survey was conducted of the Folklorama Pavilions and reuse, and tips on using public transit and to assess current infrastructure, waste management, active transportation systems safely and effectively. and sustainable practices during the 2024 festival. Eleven workshops have been delivered to a total of The survey aimed to understand how sustainability 194 newcomers. This has been a highly successful was being implemented throughout each Pavilion project and will continue to run in the 2025-26 and help Folklorama understand where to focus its year. sustainability efforts.

"The information [Green Action Centre] provided was excellent—clear, engaging, and easy for students to understand. It helped them see how they could make a real difference with the ideas [they] presented. While we haven't yet started the composting program at our school, we are seriously considering it as part of next year's leadership initiative. The presentation left students energized and excited; they could clearly envision themselves composting and taking action within their own community." - Niahm Skelton, Laidlaw School

"Working with the Green Action Center on the waste audit project was an incredibly rewarding experience for my students and me. The hands-on approach not only engaged the students deeply but also taught them valuable skills in data collection, analysis, and report writing. The Green Action Center's expertise and guidance empowered the students to understand the story of trash, the importance of sustainability and how to communicate their findings. It instilled in the student a sense of responsibility and active citizenship towards creating a more sustainable community while fostering environmental awareness and practical learning. I hope more schools get to participate in this project because it is so valuable!" - Teacher, College Pierre Elliot Trudeau "We have hosted Green Action Center for a variety of workshops over the years with very positive feedback from the public. The programs are always very interesting, and the facilitator is organized and knowledgeable. Customers and staff appreciate the focus on practical ways to support the environment."

Programming Committee, Winnipeg Public Library

# SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION

# **OUR SOCIAL ENTERPRISE**







- Green Action Centre partnered with Green Kids to host Rolling Theater in the Park at Assiniboine Park during Bike Everywhere Month. Over 60 participants joined on their bikes, riding to each theatre station to watch a performance. This included musicians, jugglers and storytellers.
- For the first time, the 2025 Jack Frost Challenge took place over two weeks. Green Action Centre's ride matching tool, GoManitoba, was used as the primary platform for logging trips; this increased GoManitoba's user base by over 700 people!
- Seven new workplaces joined our ride-matching platform, Go Manitoba, almost doubling the number of workplaces signed on as network partners.
- We reached a total of 5,139 students through Bike Everywhere Month, Clean Air Day, Walktober, and the lack Frost Challenge for Kids.
- The BEST program continued in Fall 2024 in three school divisions. Seven Oaks School Division taught the program in 7 schools with a total of 74 classes, St. James School Division taught the program in 3 schools with a total of 74 classes and Louis Riel School Division taught the program in 5 schools.
- 2,618 participants from 152 workplaces signed on to participate in the 2024 Commuter Challenge. The workplace participation rate increased from an average of 9 people per workplace to 17, representing a 90% increase from 2023. This collective impact resulted in 38,201kg of GHG emissions diverted, over a total distance of 206,298 kms.

Compost Winnipeg continued to expand its services with a new truck, new staff, new customers, and an exciting new community-based composting program.

Highlights from the 2024-25 year include:

- Providing free composting services and education for thousands of residents, in partnership with the City of Winnipeg, by setting up 15 community food waste drop off sites. This program provides many benefits, including reducing financial barriers to participate, educating residents, engaging with community, and hiring and training local residents to monitor the program.
- From October 2024 to March 2025, the drop-off program exceeded all expectations and diverted over 135,000 kg of food waste from the landfill.
- We developed an impact measurement dashboard to track our progress and provide updates on our website.

It's encouraging that so many people, businesses and organizations want to work with Compost Winnipeg to reach their environmental goals.

Compost Winnipeg Impact by the Numbers:

Organic waste diverted in 2024/'25: 1,728,600 kg

Organic waste diverted to date since '16: 8,045,500 kg

Total CO2e avoided to date: 7,240,950 kg

"I get to see the overview of my commuting impact in today's ever-changing world." - Commuter Challenge anonymous survey

"It was so fun. I love the idea of starting and stopping. It's good for our minds and our bodies. The musicians were humble, sweet, funny, and very talented. With the state of our climate, I am surprised people aren't lined up for this type of event. Thank you for your action on climate justice"

- Testimonial from an adult participant at our rolling theater in the park event during Bike Everywhere Month 2024.

"The composting program at GlenwoodCC has been amazing! Our community immediately started supporting the program and dropping off food waste . We've been averaging four full bins a week and sometimes more! Compost Winnipeg has done a great job with the execution and support of the program. They made the program so easy to manage, and there is little to no work for the host location. So proud of our community! When we all work together the difference we make is so much better." - Coralie Charbonneau, General Manager, Glenwood Community Centre









### FIRST NATIONS WASTE MINIMIZATION (FNWM)



Our team supports First Nation communities in Manitoba to minimize and divert waste from their community, and enhance the health of the land, air, water, humans, and wildlife.

- The 2024/25 backhaul represents the sixth year of backhauling materials from winter road communities. In total, 26 semi-trailer loads of material were removed from 7 participating communities.
- In October, the FNWM hosted a 4R recyclingthemed bingo at Swan Lake First Nation's community hall. The event was a big success, with about 40 community members joining us for a night of bingo fun.
- In November, Pathfinders removed a load of 70 mattresses from the Transfer Station at Pine Creek First Nation. These mattresses were transported to Mother Earth Recycling to be properly processed. To date, our team has removed over 200 mattresses from the community!

"Thank you again for everything you and the guys do, not just for Peguis, but for all the native communities. Y'all are absolutely wonderful. I appreciate everything you have done and are still doing." - Waste Coordinator Meetup participant, Oct 2024

"Thanks for all the help your organization does for FN communities." - Waste Coordinator Meetup participant, Oct 2024 Manitoba's Climate Action Team (CAT) is a coalition of environmental organizations in Manitoba working together to envision, investigate, and promote a road to climate resilience in our province. Coalition members include Climate Change Connection, Wilderness Committee – Manitoba Office, Green Action Centre, Manitoba Energy Justice Coalition and Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives – Manitoba Office.

Our vision is to build a collaborative and resilient zero-carbon society that operates within the constraints of nature. Our mission is to provide a framework for individuals, organizations, and communities to communicate and collaborate on a non-partisan, specific, and actionable path that will help Manitoba achieve resilience to climate impacts and move swiftly toward a fossil-fuel free future.

"I am proud to be a volunteer for the Climate Action Team as I am keen to promote climate change action and I enjoy educating people about the 'Road to Resilience ' document. Few people are aware of it and many are very enthusiastic and impressed to learn about it. And I am very pleased to be involved with a coalition in which climate action groups work together for a common goal. I also am very grateful for the support the Climate Action Team has offered to grassroots projects with which I am involved, such as Seniors for Climate MB and Consider Climate, MB. Both the financial support and staff support from Climate Action Team have been invaluable, and have greatly contributed to the success of both projects."

- Jean Clipsham, CAT volunteer





Pine Creek Mattress Removal





"I loved it, got a lot of insight on how waste management should work." - BCN regional training participant, Sep 2024



# **Climate Action Team**

- Building momentum: CAT secured two large multiyear grants that allowed us to create five new staff positions. We also published two large research reports, Road to Resilience: Agricultural Solutions and Connecting Communities: Strengthening Public Transportation Options in Rural Manitoba.
- Trusted voice on climate: CAT is growing our reputation as go-to experts on climate impacts and action in Manitoba, with 35+ media mentions, 2000+ Instagram followers, and a growing presence on other platforms such as BlueSky and LinkedIn.
- Community-led solutions: CAT supported four rural communities (Altona, Brandon, Sioux Valley Dakota Nation, and Swan Lake First Nation) in creating climate action plans and implementing a range of small to mid sized climate resilience projects.

### GREEN ACTION CENTRE **BOARD OF DIRECTORS** 2024 - 2025

### OUR SOCIAL ENTERPRISE **COMPOST WINNIPEG TEAM** 2024 - 2025

#### **Current Board Members:**



Vice President





Jessy Klassen

Secretary



**Brayden Dueck** Treasurer

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Nicola Garrett Director



Elona McGrifford Director



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Alec Soriano Director



Mark Ranson Director



**Current Staff:** 

Amanda Wolfe General Manager



Manisha Netheti Office Coordinator

Cody Finley Maintenance Lead

Karrie Blackburn

Sales + Customer

Service Lead



PHOTO UNAVAILABLE

Oleg Grytsenko Compost Courier

Scott Donald Compost Courier

#### **Former Staff:**



PHOTO UNAVAILABLE



Perry Blackburn Compost Courier













Joel Friesen **Operations Supervisor** 





Garrett LeBlanc Compost Courier



**Tracy Thomas** Accounts Assistant



Max Hrytsenko Compost Courier



Andre Rojas de Santiago

### **GREEN ACTION CENTRE TEAM** 2024 - 2025

# **OUR FUNDERS & SPONSORS**

#### **Current Staff:**



Josep Seras Gubert



Kristen Malec

Director of Operations

Nikole Sawatzky Human Resources Administrator



Maarit Tymchyshyn Marketing & Communications Coordinator

Laura Cameron

Director of Program and

Strategy, CAT



Sustainable Transportation

Program Coordinator

Sarah Reid

Manager, CAT

Program Operation



Workplace Co Options

Mel Marginet



Amy Smith Program Manager, FNWM

Jordan Guiboche mmunity Pathfinde FNWM



Harrison Briand **Cesar Flores** Community Pathfinder FNWM



Community Pathfinder FNWM

Natalia Vaks

Circular Living Team Lead



Alexa Harwood-Jones Compost & Waste Reduction , Program Coordinator



Coordinator

Kirsten Kruse Circular Living Program

Former Staff:



Mohamed Crossman-Serb Community Pathfinder FNWM

Megan Mast

cations Manager CAT

Commu



Nick Portengen Sharee Hochman reen Audits Projec Assistant

Sustainable Transportation

Program Coordinator





Green Action Centre is grateful for the following funders and sponsors, whose contributions supported our work and enhanced our impact in 2024-25. Thank you also to the many unnamed individual donors!

**OPERATIONAL** The Winnipeg Foundation Green Communities Canada

**COMPOSTING & WASTE REDUCTION** City of Winnipeg, Water and Waste Province of Manitoba, Environment and Climate Chan Red River Co-op Eco Canada Employment Program

Service Canada SUSTAINABILITY PROJECTS Province of Manitoba, Environment and Climate Chan The Winnipeg Foundation Eco Canada Employment Program Service Canada

TRANSFORM STREAMS - GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE Green Communities Canada

#### ACTIVE & SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

City of Winnipeg, Public Works Province of Manitoba, Environment and Climate Chang Province of Manitoba, Health, Seniors and Long Term Health Canada The Winnipeg Foundation Manitoba Public Insurance Winnipeg Goldeyes

We collaborate and partner with:

Bike Week Winnipeg / Bike Winnipeg / The WRENCH / Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives / Climate Change Connection / Manitoba Energy Justice Coalition / Wilderness Committee / Manitoba EcoNetwork / Manitoba Association of Regional Recyclers / Manitoba Environmental Industries Association / Sustainable Building Manitoba / CCEDNet / Fort Whyte Alive / Functional Transit Winnipeg / Green Communities Canada / Producer Responsibility Organizations / Winpak / University of Manitoba / Red River College Polytech / RBC Convention Centre / Assiniboine Park Conservancy / Magellan / Assiniboine Credit Union / Red River Co-op / Seven Oaks School Division / Peg City Car Co-op / Green Kids / Trees Winnipeg / West End Resource Centre / Green Drop / Educators for Climate Action / Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce / Winnipeg LGBT Chamber / Transportations Options Network for Seniors / Manitoba League of Persons with Disabilities / The Forks / Elmwood Community Resource Centre / Canadian Muslim Women Institute / Mosaic Newcomer Family Resource Network / Social Planning Council of Winnipeg / Efficiency Manitoba / Generation E / UNAC Winnipeg Branch



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	Assiniboine Credit Union (Bronze Level Sponsor) Access Credit Union (Silver level sponsor) Manitoba Hydro (Bronze Level Sponsor)
ge	JACK FROST CHALLENGE 2025 City of Winnipeg, Public Works Province of Manitoba, Environment and Climate Change
ge Care	OUR SOCIAL ENTERPRISE - COMPOST WINNIPEG City of Winnipeg - Water and Waste
	FIRST NATIONS WASTE MINIMIZATION Indigenous Services Canada Producer Responsibility Organizations Crown Indigenous Relations Northern Affairs Canada
	MANITOBA'S CLIMATE ACTION TEAM The Winnipeg Foundation Environment and Climate Change Canada The McConnell Foundation The Trottier Family Foundation





Green Action Centre is a non-profit, non-governmental organization based in Winnipeg and serving Manitoba. We are a registered charity, governed by an elected community board.

We promote greener living through environmental education and encourage practical green solutions for households, workplaces, schools and communities.

Our primary areas of focus are green commuting, composting and waste reduction, sustainable living, and resource conservation.

Programs and outreach are supported by government and community grants, corporate sponsorships, individual donations, and through our consulting and compost collection services.

#### **Green Action Centre**

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