

Regional Plan – Plan20-50

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why should I care about the Winnipeg Metropolitan Region (WMR)?

No matter where we live, we share the same challenges and want the same things.

We want good jobs, we want to grow old in our own communities, we want the water we drink to be clean, we want our kids to stay here, and we want our grandchildren to be raised here.

Now, imagine if we could have that – together.

The mayors and reeves of 18 municipalities in the capital region want that too, so for 26 years, they've been trying to figure out how to work together as the Winnipeg Metropolitan Region. In the last six years, they've met with over 500 people and 100 organizations to create Plan20-50 so that we can work together to make life better for our children and grandchildren.

2. Who created the WMR? Is it a private business or a government department?

The Government of Manitoba created the Winnipeg Metropolitan Region (WMR) as a statutory corporation under provincial legislation – The Planning Act. Its board of directors includes mayors and reeves from 18 cities, towns, and rural municipalities, along with four provincial government appointees, two of which are representatives from the Manitoba Métis Federation and Treaty One. The Province asked the WMR Board to develop a regional plan to help everyone work together for the benefit of the region where 65 per cent of Manitoba's population lives. This plan is called Plan20-50.

3. Why do we need Plan20-50?

There are many reasons, but one of the big ones is that cities, towns and municipalities are losing money planning the way we are right now. This is wasting taxpayers' dollars. For example, companies who are looking to expand or create new businesses are overlooking the region because we don't have a plan to work together across our municipalities. When that happens, good companies with good paying jobs instead go to Edmonton, Calgary, Quebec and Halifax, who all have regional plans.

Those were jobs that we could have had. Those were jobs that our kids could have had. But because we were not ready to compete, companies chose another city. When that happens, there's a chance our children will leave to follow those jobs and opportunities.

The regional plan is 135 pages and filled with many reasons why it's important for us to work together. Get a copy of Plan20-50 at 20to50.ca.

4. Does my local mayor/reeve and council still have authority on what goes on in my community?

Absolutely.

Now they have a better way to talk with your neighbouring municipality about common challenges, so they can work together, save money and stretch tax dollars further.

5. Does Plan20-50 tell me what I can and can't do in my own yard and with my house?

No.

Plan20-50 is where we can all talk about getting ready for better housing together.

Plan20-50 does not force you to add more houses to your lot, force you to stop using your well or prevent you from using your roads. But it does ask us all to imagine how we can plan for a better future – so that our children and grandchildren will want to stay in Manitoba.

Imagine that you have a house in your rural community on a large lot. You're reaching your seventies or eighties, and the yard has become too much to care for. You want to downsize and stay in the community, but there are no condos, apartments or seniors housing built in your rural community because we've not planned for them. So, you have to move away if you want to downsize. We know that housing is a big problem right now, and it's only going to get harder. We also know that there is a lot of federal government funding for housing right now, but because we are not planning together, we're not getting that money. Plan20-50 is where we can all talk about getting ready for better housing together.

6. Is this plan about creating 15-minute cities?

No.

As municipalities start to build more housing – because we know we're going to need that – Plan20-50 imagines neighbourhoods where we can get to important places like stores, parks, and schools more easily. This won't limit where or how people get around. Instead, it's about making sure that what you need the most is close by, making life easier and more convenient.

7. What does priority access to roads mean? Will people not be able to drive their own car to Winnipeg anymore? Are people going to be forced to take public transit into Winnipeg?

"Priority access" is a term used in transportation planning that is typically applied to highways and is in no way meant to limit how people get around. People will still be able to drive in their cars wherever they want, whenever they want to. The plan encourages public transit, for those who want to use transit, but nobody will be forced to take the bus.

8. Does Plan20-50 try to take away access to my private well?

No. Plan20-50 does not ban private water wells. Rather, the plan has a goal to protect the groundwater supply by sealing un-used wells.

9. Who has reviewed and provided input into Plan20-50?

Over the last six years, the staff and board have met with over 500 individuals and over 100 organizations who represent thousands of Manitobans in the 18 municipalities. They are people who represent farmers, builders, truckers, voters, taxpayers, homeowners, small business owners and more.

10. How does Plan20-50 affect farming and farmers?

We have farmers on our board and the WMR has been talking with groups like Keystone Agriculture Producers that represents thousands of farmers in Manitoba. We all know that farmers are stewards of the land. They grow crops and raise cattle, sheep, hogs, chickens – and their own families – on the land. They are businesspeople who are long term planners and Plan20-50 is a long-term plan. Farmers share the same challenges and want to keep the land and water healthy for their children and grandchildren.

11. What does the environment have to do with Plan20-50?

Plenty.

Remember how the flood of 1997 was supposed to be the Flood of the Century? And then, a couple years later, it happened again. Well, we're going to see more flooding.

Plan20-50 is a way for us to plan to better protect homes, businesses, and farms, and figure out how to manage floods – together. We're all connected by the Red, Assiniboine, and Seine Rivers, and all the creeks that flow through our properties. So together, we need to plan how to manage flood waters, drinking water, wastewater and the water we use for fun and fishing. This is just one example of how we can work together under Plan20-50.

We hope this provides clarity and answers some of your questions.

Learn more at winnipegmetroregion.ca and contact our offices at info@wmregion.ca or at **1-204-989-2048**.