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[budgetforall.org](http://budgetforall.org)



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Press Conference & Launch of Budget for All Winnipeg**

**COALITION OF WINNIPEGGERS FORMS TO  
FIGHT MAYOR BOWMAN'S AUSTERITY BUDGET**

**Budget for All Winnipeg is a broad coalition of Winnipeg groups, communities and individuals who have joined together in response to the proposed City of Winnipeg budget cuts. We demand a city budget with increased support for life-sustaining services instead of the proposed cuts.**

We will be holding a press-conference at the Kinsmen Sherbrook Pool on Wednesday, January 29, at 10 am, to launch our group and outline our actions and goals. Representatives from the coalition will speak and answer questions.

Mayor Bowman has directed city staff to propose deep and damaging cuts to life-sustaining services in every ward of Winnipeg. These include library and pool reductions and closures, cuts to transit and the environment, and much more.

In the coming weeks Budget for All Winnipeg will be working in every city ward to make everyone aware of the cuts their councillors and mayor would be responsible for. A good place to start is our interactive website, [www.budgetforall.org](http://www.budgetforall.org), built by volunteer labour, which clearly outlines the proposed cuts city-wide and in individual wards.

We've also planned a series of actions together leading up to the tabling of the budget, starting Thursday morning at city hall with a "pool party" to protest cuts to pools, and leading to a city-wide day of action on Saturday, March 14.

Kinsmen Sherbrook Pool is one of the many places slated for closure. This is an institution the city has consistently underfunded but which this community has fought to protect for decades. We are inspired by their example and grateful for their hospitality.

Please follow us on Instagram & Twitter [@budgetforallwpg](https://twitter.com/budgetforallwpg), Facebook [@Budget For All - Winnipeg](https://www.facebook.com/BudgetForAll-Winnipeg), and visit our website, [budgetforall.org](http://budgetforall.org), where you can find more information on these cuts and how to fight them.

Below you will find quotes we have gathered from some of the Winnipeg groups and residents determined to fight for a Budget for All.

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“In my work and life I meet seniors who would be cut off from the world and whose health would suffer without access to the transit, swimming facilities, and library services that they use throughout every week. I meet children and parents walking to the Kinsmen Sherbrook Pool because swimming is the local thing they can do together. In a time that’s been named a crisis in Winnipeg, cutting the fabric of community by reducing access to and availability of transit, public recreation and library space not only goes against studies and proven strategy for dealing with community crisis, but borders on cruel.”

—**Reverend Gwen McAllister, Rector of St. Matthew’s Anglican Church**

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“Friends of Sherbrook Pool is committed to keeping the Kinsmen Sherbrook Pool’s many important services available to all citizens of Winnipeg, especially those who live nearby, and those who cannot access aquatic programming at other facilities. As such, we oppose any budget cut that would reduce service at the Kinsmen Sherbrook Pool, and call on our elected officials to do more to find creative ways to limit or avoid all of the proposed cuts currently being considered.”

—**Friends of Sherbrook Pool**

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“A city is not just the buildings and services, it is the people who live there. Cutting city services means changing people’s lives who depend on those services. We must invest in — and not cut — public transit. Winnipeg needs a frequent service network in order to grow ridership and ensure equitable access to transportation across the city. The first step is funding the 22 proposed frequent service routes included in the City’s Transit Master Plan.”

— **Kyle Owens, Vice-chair of Functional Transit Winnipeg**

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“City Hall needs to put the brake on these proposed cuts to transit and instead invest in putting Winnipeg Transit back on track. Our transit system is already over capacity, and Winnipeg residents frankly deserve better from our city.”

—**Romeo Ignacio, president of the Amalgamated Transit Union 1505.**

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“Transit and other cuts will especially impact those who need services the most. Budget cuts should not be placed on the backs of the most vulnerable in our city. Investment in public services is critical for the inclusion of our most vulnerable populations.”

—**Carlos Sosa, disability advocate**

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“We cannot address the climate crisis without public investments from all levels of government. Substantial public investments in life sustaining services could allow Winnipeg to become a leader among municipalities in fighting climate change.”

— **Brendan Devlin, Manitoba Energy Justice Coalition**

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“QUEER SK8 WPG is a grassroots collective formed in response to the lack of resources and accessible space for marginalized skaters. As skaters, queers and indigenous alike, we hold a close relationship with the spaces we occupy and know how it feels to be denied those spaces. Queer Sk8 cannot support implementation of the proposed 2020 budget, as austerity cuts will further deny our communities safe public spaces.”

—**QUEER SK8 WPG**

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“Our libraries are the last free public spaces where we can work together to learn, socialize and care for one another. The recent securitization of Millennium Library is a frightening example of how the decades-long underfunding of Libraries can threaten to destroy an irreplaceable and accessible public space. We need to stop this austerity budget and make a Winnipeg for everyone.”

—**Sarah Broad, Millennium for All**

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“Many Winnipeg artists rely on the vital support of the Winnipeg Arts Council, which does so much with their meager and constantly threatened funding from the city, but Winnipeg artists, most of whom make an extremely precarious living, also require a just and livable city. Public transit and accessible libraries, for example, are two essential services I would not be able to make my work without.”

—**John K. Samson, singer-songwriter**

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“As a pastor in a suburban Mennonite congregation in Winnipeg, I am deeply concerned about the cuts to public services being proposed in this year’s budget. My commitment to the ministry of Christ, a ministry that calls me to speak out against all forms of oppression and violence, makes it impossible for me to support such life-threatening and shameful budgetary maneuvers.”

—**Pastor Jeff Friesen**

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“Winnipeg is spending more on policing than ever before, and violence only seems to increase. We oppose all cuts to community services that actually strengthen our communities and relationships, proactively prevent crises, and contribute to a real vision of justice.”

—**Owen Toews, Bar None**

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“Closing libraries and recreation facilities in low income communities disproportionately impacts low income people’s health and well-being as they often cannot afford to travel to other facilities, have fewer recreation and cultural opportunities overall and are often the people that benefit most from the social interaction and connections to other city services and residents. We urge the City of Winnipeg to reconsider the proposed cuts to services, particularly those that impact low income peoples’ access to life sustaining services.”

— **Derek Pachal, executive director of the Jubilee Fund**

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“The Young Communist League of Canada-Manitoba fully condemns the proposed cuts to the city budget, and calls instead for an increase in essential social services that will make the city safer and more accessible to those who need it most. A so called ‘budget crisis’ is no excuse, as taxing the wealthy could easily remedy the situation, something city council seems unwilling to do. This is unacceptable, and it is high time for us to stand up and insist the needs of working-class Winnipeggers be put first.”

—**Monique Vermette, Club Organizer, Young Communist League**

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“The Mayor and City Council can choose to invest in city services, fight inequality, mitigate climate change and stagnant economic growth by providing decent public services and infrastructure. In the 2018 Alternative Municipal Budget economists crunched the numbers and found this is possible, if the city is open to more revenue options and reverses the two-decade long freeze on property taxes.”

— **Molly McCracken, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives**

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“The recent finding that one third of prisoners in Canada are Indigenous speaks to how police and incarceration are colonial institutions that do not solve the unique social and political problems faced by Indigenous peoples. By redirecting funds from the police towards life sustaining social services that meet peoples’ needs, the City of Winnipeg can address the root causes of crime and take a meaningful step towards reconciliation.”

**—Buck Doyle, Winnipeg Police Cause Harm**

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“Having been on the receiving end of reductions to its community services in the past, and seeing firsthand the ensuing effects to the neighbourhood, the Glenelm Neighbourhood Association stands firmly opposed to the proposed blanket cuts arising from arbitrarily chosen budget targets. We ask the Mayor and Council to use a data-driven approach to budgeting while striving to achieve the city’s own stated vision, to place its highest priority on quality of life for all its inhabitants.”

**—Michael Durand-Wood, co-chair, Glenelm Neighbourhood Association**

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“These cuts to the city budget will hurt low-wage workers in Winnipeg, who often rely on free or low-cost city services, like libraries and community centres. The city also has to start paying all of their workers a fair wage, and cuts to programs means less money for providing a \$15 minimum wage to all city workers.”

**—Fight for \$15 and Fairness Winnipeg**

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“Snow-cleared sidewalks, reliable transit, affordable recreation, public libraries, and green spaces—these are all integral parts of a city that works for everyone, especially people living on a low income. Transportation and free community spaces, in particular, are crucial for people’s wellbeing and their ability to give back and be part of the community. If you use a walker or are a senior on a fixed income, uncleared sidewalks and increasing bus fare mean missing work, less income, greater social isolation, and declining health. When your budget is stretched, being able to access free internet, programming and services through public libraries and community centres is an act of equity. As our charter says, the city has a role in maintaining the health, safety, and welfare of its inhabitants, and the best way to do this is by investing in vital community services.”

**—Anny Chen, Poverty Awareness & Community Action**

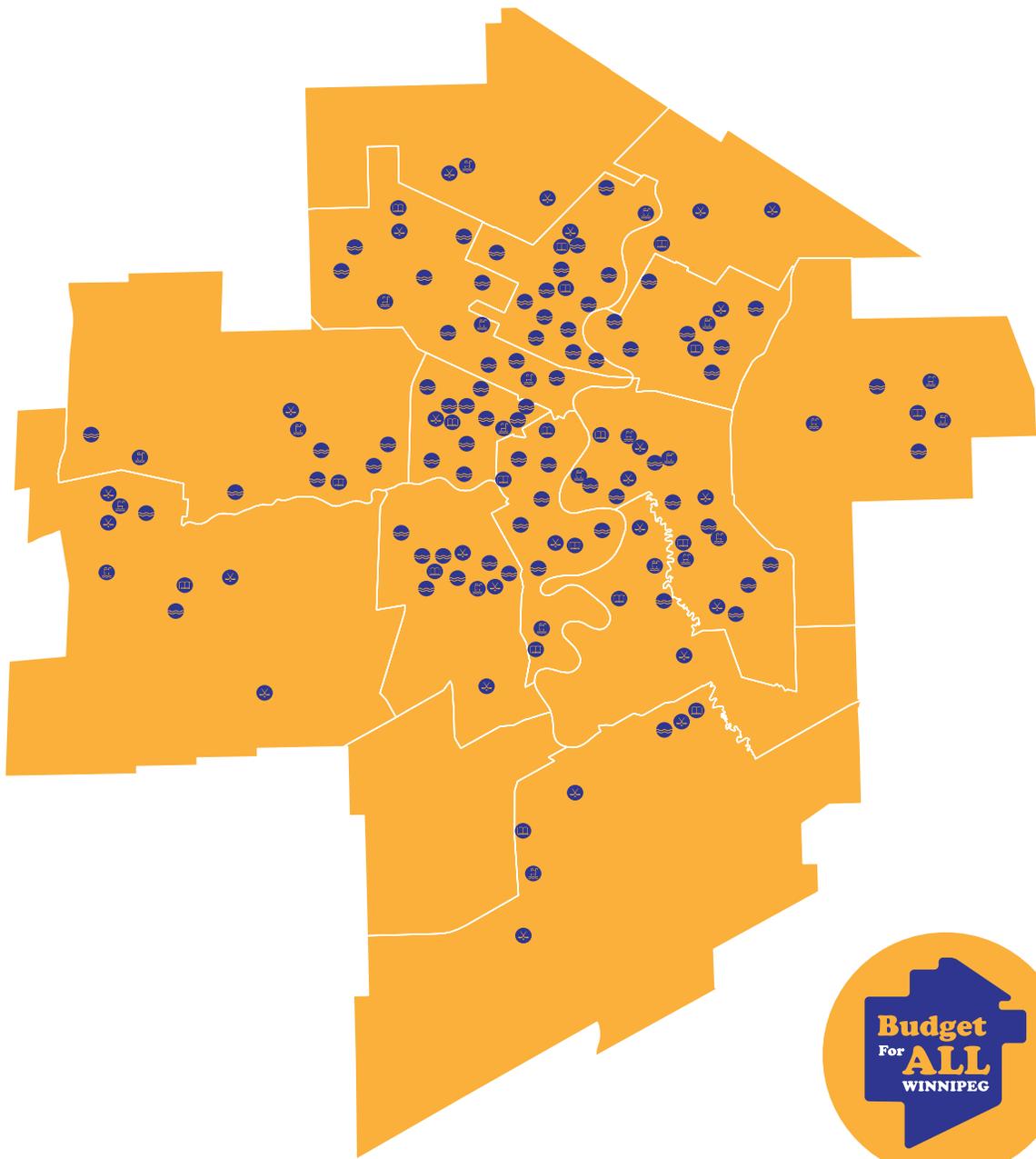
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# Cuts to services





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**We demand a  
city budget for  
everyone, with  
increased support  
for life-sustaining  
services instead of  
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