

Alive with opportunity

Winnipeg boasts the lowest business costs of any city in Western Canada - and it's also lower than every US city examined, says Economic Development Winnipeg Inc

Central North American city offers much to companies on the move

Business owner? Investor? Entrepreneur? Winnipeg's growth potential is infinite, and Economic Development Winnipeg is your advocate. Business moves quickly, and timing is everything. We'll connect you with the right public- and private-sector partners to accelerate your success and show you why Winnipeg is your most strategic location. Results-focused and ready to help, we're here for you.

Winnipeg is currently enjoying one of the most exciting chapters in its 142-year history. Its economy is one of Canada's best-performing, its population and workforce are growing as new Manitobans arrive from other regions of the country - and other countries - in pursuit of new opportunities, and a record number of major developments are taking place citywide. So what's driving Winnipeg's renaissance? Multiple factors are responsible, and economists expect this welcome convergence to generate sustained growth for many years.

Winnipeg has a very competitive and convincing value proposition. Of all municipalities analyzed in KPMG's *Competitive Alternatives* (2014) report, Winnipeg boasts the lowest business costs of any city in Western Canada - and it's also lower than every US city examined. This advantage is principally derived from competitive labour, land and utility costs, but the index also measures all major cost items (including taxes and construction).

Manitoba is a hydroelectric province, with over 99 per cent of its electricity generated via this virtually carbon-free process. Manitoba Hydro, a provincial Crown corporation owned by the Government of Manitoba, has one of the highest overall reliability and customer-satisfaction levels and among the lowest rates in North America. Hydroelectric power is available in abundant supply here, and since hydroelectricity is green, renewable and sustainable, Manitoba's hydro-related advantages will only escalate in the future as the world gravitates toward carbon taxes and other such levies. So whether this kind of electricity is being used to heat/cool facilities or to power machines, Winnipeg firms have a clear advantage when it comes to energy costs.

Winnipeg's economy is built upon a diverse industrial base. With 10 prominent sectors, it's one of Canada's most mixed economies, which offers stability, consistency and predictability for business operations. This is a huge advantage when running a company.

Over 90 per cent of Winnipeg's post-secondary graduates choose to remain here to secure employment. And although the unemployment rate is under six per cent, the city has a below-average job vacancy rate, so employers have less difficulty finding workers compared to most other major centres. Home to several renowned universities and colleges, Winnipeg's labour force is exceptionally well-educated and expertly trained. Moreover, the rate of Manitoba's productivity increase exceeds the national average, as does average job tenure. That means Winnipeg's workforce works hard and is atypically loyal.

Winnipeg's central North American location also offers significant advantages to the business community. The city is situated at the hub of four key transportation and trade gateways reaching across Canada, into the US and Mexico, to Europe and Asia. Further, within a 24-hour drive, Winnipeg's businesses can access a population base exceeding 100 million.

City firms can tap vital transportation assets and infrastructure, given Winnipeg's strength as a multimodal transportation and logistics hub. Several of Canada's largest transport companies are headquartered here, which can col-

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lectively provide over 1,000 rigs for hire at any given time. Winnipeg is also one of only two Canadian cities served by three Class 1 rail carriers (Canadian National Railway, Canadian Pacific Railway and Burlington Northern Sante Fe), yielding unmatched choice, service and cost-competitiveness. And Winnipeg boasts a new, award-winning and worldclass airport, which operates 24/7 and processes among the highest percentage of dedicated air cargo flights of any Canadian airport.

All of the above is leveraged by CentrePort Canada (CPC), the only trimodal inland port in the country to provide foreign trade zone benefits. With collaborative funding and support from the federal, provincial and municipal governments, CPC comprises 20,000 acres of land in the northwest quadrant of Winnipeg earmarked for industrial development—to be serviced by a planned common-use rail facility—which also features tax increment financing options.

In a recent survey of presidents and CEOs of Winnipeg's leading companies, when compared to other places worked, respondents felt that Winnipeg has one of the most supportive business communities. It was further revealed that this scenario was considered a definitive competitive advantage for companies operating here. Tellingly, this level of support doesn't just involve local businesses helping each other. Not-for-profit agencies, academia and government also actively work together to further Winnipeg's business interests. A number of compelling financial-support programs are available to businesses already based here (or to those choosing to relocate/expand here from elsewhere). For instance, Manitoba is one of the best jurisdictions in the world when it comes to providing research and development incentives.

Winnipeg is a great place to live. In its most recent ranking to this effect, *Moneysense* magazine reported that Winnipeg placed in the top 10 per cent of the best Canadian cities to live, largely due to the fact that all the amenities people look for in a home community are available, accessible and affordable here. Although compelling opportunities exist in all 10 key sectors, Winnipeg's unique value proposition makes the city particularly well-suited to ad-



vanced manufacturing operations (including value-added assembly plants), research/development and test operations, corporate support and back-office entities (including customer support hubs), and data centres.

If you're exploring the potential for expansion, relocation or development, contact Economic Development Winnipeg and get its full support working for your business. ■

Economic Development Winnipeg (EDW) is Winnipeg's lead economic development agency. EDW is a not-for-profit organization that facilitates investment attraction, capacity building and tourism development, and it directs all marketing- and research-related initiatives toward these ends. Comprehensive competitive analyses and collaborative stakeholder engagement make EDW uniquely qualified to evaluate potential investment opportunities within core industries and to define future growth and mobilize development. EDW also supports sector, community and social development, and promotes Winnipeg's diverse economy and exceptional quality of life.

Your primary contact at EDW is Greg Dandewich, who can be reached via email at greg@economicdevelopmentwinnipeg.com or by phone at +1 204 954 1997. And be sure to visit www.economicdevelopmentwinnipeg.com for an award-winning presentation of Winnipeg's many business advantages.