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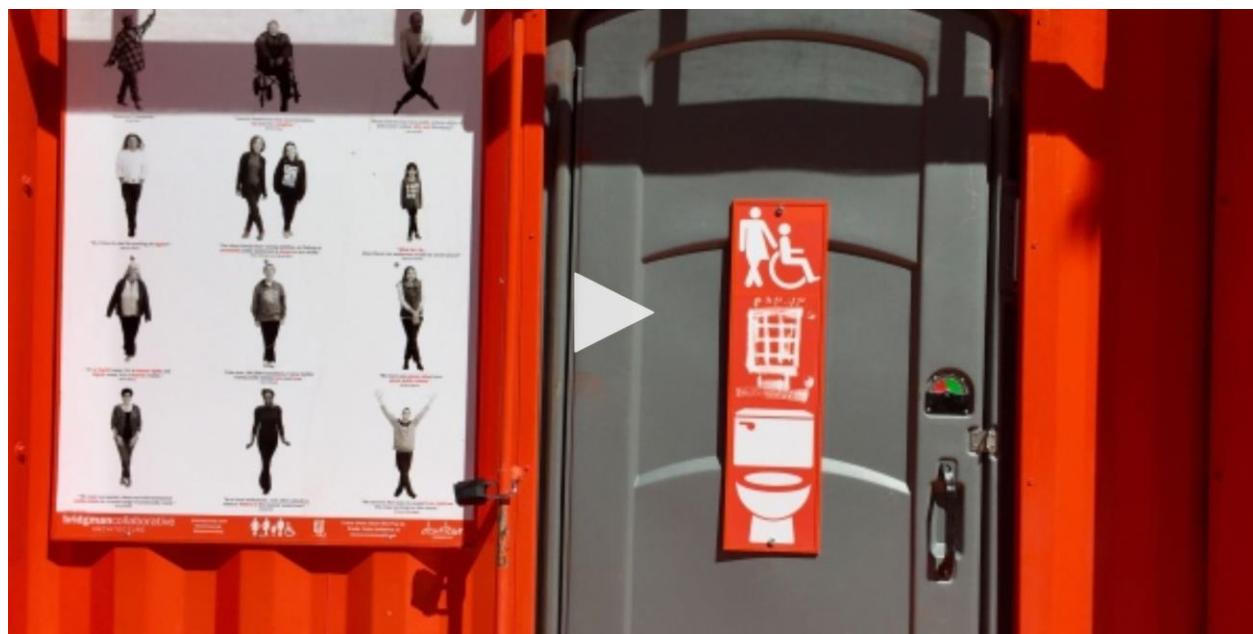
More places to go to the bathroom downtown may be on the horizon

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Published Friday, November 1, 2019 5:01PM CST Last Updated Friday, November 1, 2019 5:44PM CST



WINNIPEG -- More access to public washrooms may be on the way in downtown Winnipeg,

The standing policy committee passed a motion for a verbal report on a public washrooms strategy to be presented within 30 days.

This move comes after calls from the Downtown Winnipeg Biz to resurrect and update ‘A Place to Go,’ a draft strategy originally reported in 2010 on ways Winnipeg could ensure public bathrooms are available downtown.

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It hopes the city will take a multifaceted approach to the issue.

"We can't just provide one toilet in one location of downtown and expect that to solve all our problems," said Melanie Andrushko of Downtown Biz, who spoke with the committee Friday. "The layering of continuing a pop-up toilet, but also adding the public-private partnership is just helping us to cover more of our bases."

Wins Bridgman, one of the people behind the pop-up toilets that have appeared on downtown streets during the past two summers, also spoke at city hall.

Bridgman says having more washrooms available downtown wouldn't just help keep things cleaner, it would help bring more people to the area.

"I work at Higgins and Main. And there a lot of people who do not have public washrooms. So it is a matter of dignity as well as, for the rest of the city, a matter of economic growth," Bridgman said.

Several options were presented, including keeping up the pop-up toilets, installing permanent public washrooms, and a public-private partnership program that would see businesses opening up their already established toilets to the public.

Coun. Sherri Rollins says the pop-up toilets and a partnership program seem like 'low hanging fruit.'

"There are two pragmatic solutions to provide Winnipeggers with more places to go and that's what I didn't want to lose sight of today," Rollins said. "You can have a brilliant washroom strategy, or you can just do those pragmatic things to make sure Winnipeggers have places to go to the bathroom downtown."

The report on a public washrooms strategy will be presented within 30 days.