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The Promise of Investment in Community-Led Renewal

State of the Inner City Report: 2005

Part I: Policy Considerations

CANADIAN CENTRE FOR POLICY ALTERNATIVES- MANITOBA



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The newly formed Board of Directors of the Centennial Community Improvement Association.
(Photo courtesy the Winnipeg Foundation.)



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Acknowledgements

This is the first part of a two-part State of the Inner City Report and deals with a wide range of public policy issues, particularly housing, employment, and education. Part Two, *A View From the Neighbourhoods*, a close examination of three inner-city neighbourhoods, is published separately. It can be obtained by contacting the CCPA-Manitoba office, or website, at the www.policyalternatives.ca.

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THE UNIVERSITY OF WINNIPEG

The Promise of Investment in Community-Led Renewal

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Part I Policy Considerations

Why a report on the state of the inner city?

This is the first time a *State of the Inner City Report* has been published in Winnipeg. The reasons for publishing these reports are numerous. First, we want to bring to wider public attention the many developments, both negative and positive, taking place in Winnipeg's inner city. By doing so, we wish to prompt a wide-ranging public conversation about the inner city. The more aware the public is, the more likely we all are to benefit from good public policy.

Second, we want to share with each other the knowledge of, and to celebrate, those strategies and interventions that are working well. There are many problems; we will identify some of them in this *Report*. But a great many innovative and effective initiatives have been developed in Winnipeg's inner city. Our hope is that this *Report* will share and celebrate what we are all learning in the difficult but often rewarding struggles in Winnipeg's inner city.

Third, we want to identify gaps in the work that is being done in the inner city. Are there things that should be done but are not now being done? Are there problems that are going unmet and that could benefit from particular interventions?

Most of us working in the inner city believe that solutions have to be holistic, as opposed to being piecemeal. It is our hope that the *State of the Inner City Report* can assist in developing the most effective and holistic strategies for solving problems in the inner city.

Finally, we want to contribute to the making of better public policy in Winnipeg's inner city. We want to be able to assist in enabling a better targeting of public expenditures, by identifying what works well and what does not. The needs are great; but the solutions are being developed right in the inner city. The solutions, for the most part, are community-based solutions. Better public policy is needed to support and strengthen these highly effective 'home-made' solutions, to fill the gaps that are as yet unfilled, and to move us forward in Winnipeg's inner city on a larger and more ambitious scale and in a more effective fashion than has been the case to date.

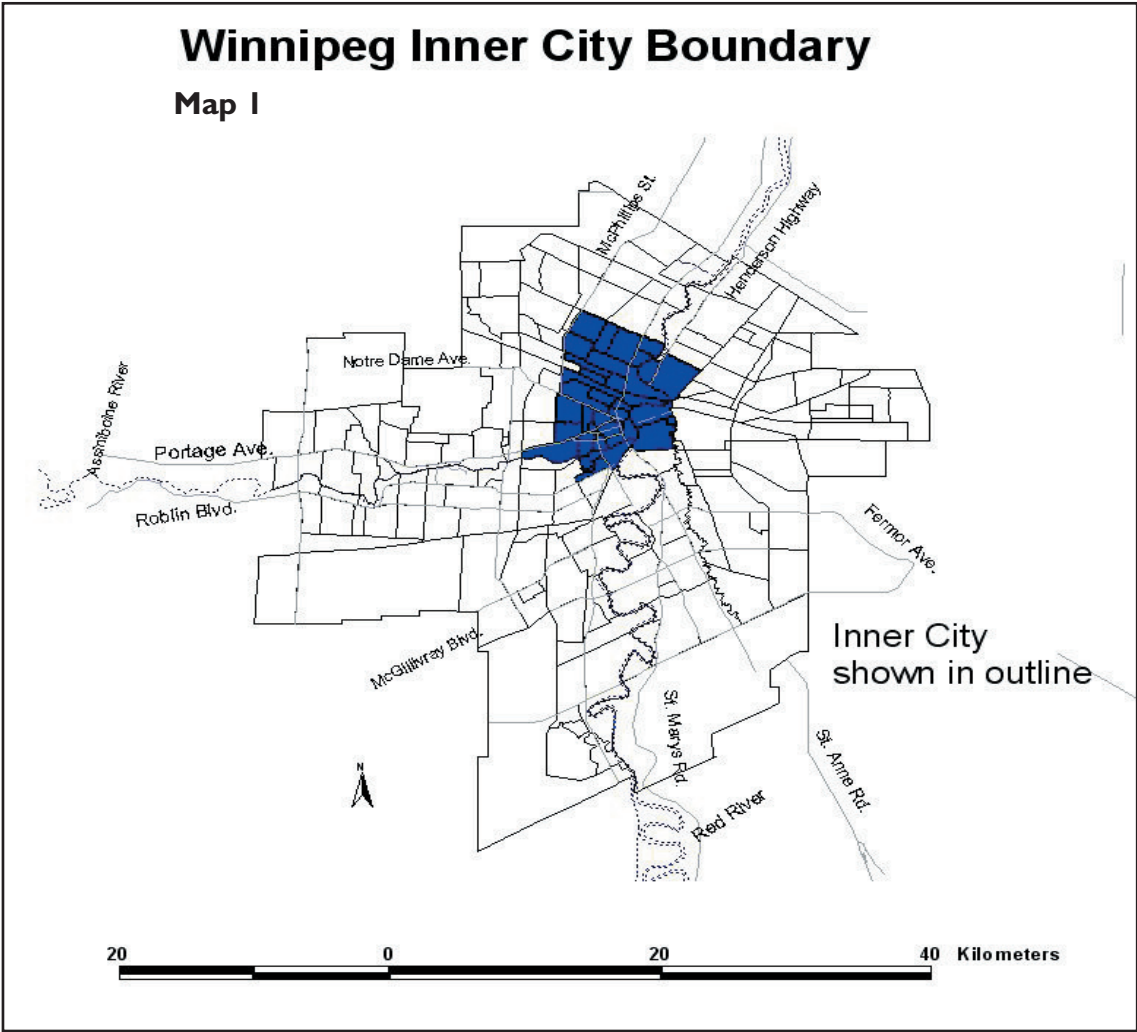
The Inner City

When we refer to the 'inner city' we mean the geographic area originally defined by the 1980s Core Area Initiatives—bounded on the north by Carruthers Ave. west of the Red River and Munroe Ave. east of the Red River; on the west

by McPhillips St., Ingersoll St. and Raglan Road; on the south by McMillan Ave. and Marion St.; and on the east by Raleigh St., the Seine River and Archibald St. (see map below). There are other areas of the city that have inner city characteristics—in fact, they are growing. But we consider it important to focus on the geographic inner city because it is here that we find both a particularly intense concentration of poverty-induced social and economic problems, and also a myriad of innovative, community-based, anti-poverty strategies that deserve greater support and that constitute the basis of a long-term solution to inner city difficulties.

The first section of this report provides a statistical overview of inner-city conditions. These data

show that the inner city is generally worse off, socio-economically, than the rest of Winnipeg, but that some improvements are being made, and there are grounds for cautious optimism. The second section examines three particularly important inner-city issues: housing, employment development and education. We examine each situation as it is now, and show where gains could be made with particular policies and further targeted investment. The third section contains a discussion of the potential presented by community-based organizations. Finally, in the fourth section of this *Report*, we identify what we consider to be the most important steps to be taken in dealing with inner city problems, and we lay out a proposed plan of action.



We want to emphasize that solutions to inner-city problems are available, they have emerged and are emerging out of the hard and creative work of inner-city people themselves, and what is needed now is our collective commitment as a society to pursuing and supporting those solutions consistently and emphatically over an extended period of time. It is our hope that in future issues of the *State of the Inner City Report*, we can describe the many gains that have been made. In this *Report*, we describe many very positive and promising initiatives.

I. A Brief Statistical Overview of Conditions and Changes in Winnipeg's Inner City

An examination of selected demographic and socio-economic indicators reveals that conditions in Winnipeg's inner city are worse than for Winnipeg as a whole. For particular groups of people and particular neighbourhoods, circumstances are *very* bad, but as measured by some indicators, improvements are being made. This suggests that while there continues to be cause for much concern, there may also be grounds for cautious optimism. More importantly there are, we will argue, some significant inner city strengths upon which to build.

A. General Demographic and Socio-Economic Characteristics

At the time of the most recent Census in 2001, Winnipeg's inner city population stood at 119,670 individuals, 19.6% of Winnipeg's total population. Over the past decade, the inner-city population has declined by 7.0%. This is a continuation of a long and troubling trend. Steady population decline makes efforts to increase the vitality and livability of the inner city more difficult.

In addition, inner-city residents pick up and move more often than residents of Winnipeg in general: 55% of inner-city residents changed their address at least once during the period 1996 to 2001, compared with 42% of all Winnipeggers. Trends over the past decade, however, point to declining mobility rates in the inner city.

The 2001 census shows that two-thirds (65%) of inner-city families received the majority of their income from wages and salaries. This rate would climb to 68% if self-employment income

were included. Conversely, 27% of inner-city families received the majority of their income from some form or combination of government transfers, which is almost double the citywide rate of 15.6%.

It is important to note, however, that over the past decade the number of inner-city families who received the majority of their income from government transfers declined by 8.1%; city-wide the number increased by 6.6%. As the data indicate, the reliance on government transfer payments remains a challenge for inner-city families, but is not solely an inner-city issue.

The median inner city family income in 2000 was \$36,411, compared with \$54,724 citywide. While inner-city incomes remain below those citywide, the gap is narrowing. Inner-city median family incomes, as a proportion of median family incomes in Winnipeg, climbed from 61.2% in 1990, to 66.5% in 2000. Adjusted for inflation and represented in constant 2000 dollars, real median inner-city family income increased by 7.0% between 1990 and 2000, while declining by just under 1% city-wide.

Census data show that inner-city unemployment rates fell from 14.8% in 1991 to 9.0% in 2001. Over the past decade the number of employed adults in the inner city increased by almost 6.0%. This improvement is even more significant given that the number of working age adults in the inner city fell by 5.0% over the same period. Despite these improvements, the incidence of unemployment continues to be higher in the inner city than in the city as a whole. The

inner city has approximately 20% of Winnipeg's working age population, yet 29% of Winnipeg's unemployed.

The percentage of inner-city adults employed or actively seeking employment, called the 'labour-force participation rate,' climbed from 60.0% in 1991, to 63.0% in 2001. This is a positive development. The labour-force participation rate for Winnipeg as a whole is still higher than for the inner city, at 68%, but unlike the case in the inner city, it did not improve from 1991 to 2001.

Despite the promising inner-city unemployment and labour-force participation rate trends employment alone is not enough, as evidenced by the still large numbers of working poor. Employment gains have to be coupled with jobs that pay a living wage if we are to see real improvement

and renewal, not just for inner-city residents but also for all Winnipeggers. This speaks to the importance of the minimum wage, which is still not close to being a living wage.

Slowly, given the time and effort required, improvements in educational attainment in the inner city are emerging. According to the 2001 census, 38.5% of adults (15 years of age and over) in the inner city had less than a high-school education, down significantly from 49% ten years earlier. And the number of inner-city residents who hold a university degree has grown by almost 23% over the same period, to more than 13,500 individuals in 2001.

While these gains are important, it remains the case that the inner city continues to be home to an over-concentration of residents who do not com-

Table 1

Labour Force Characteristics Both Sexes - 15 years & over, 1991 - 2001

	Population 15 years & over: Inner City (new boundary)			Population 15 years & over: City of Winnipeg		
	1991	1996	2001	1991	1996	2001
Total - Both Sexes	103,435	99,265	97,725	486,825	488,465	493,735
In labour force, both sexes 15 years & over	62,080	58,750	61,585	331,335	325,045	335,995
Employed, both sexes 15 years & over	52,915	50,010	56,035	302,070	298,390	316,755
Unemployed, both sexes 15 years & over	9,165	8,745	5,550	29,260	26,655	19,240
Not in the labour force, both sexes 15 years & over	41,350	40,505	36,140	155,495	163,420	157,745
Unemployment rate, both sexes 15 years & over	14.8%	14.9%	9.0%	8.8%	8.2%	5.7%
Employment to population ratio - 15 years & over	51.2%	50.4%	57.3%	62.0%	61.1%	64.2%
Participation rate, both sexes 15 years & over	60.0%	59.2%	63.0%	68.1%	66.5%	68.1%

Source: Statistics Canada, 1991, 1996 & 2001 Census. Calculations performed by D.W. Lezubski

plete high school. This is attributable, in part, to the disadvantaged socio-economic circumstances of inner-city children. The Manitoba Centre for Health Policy found that in Winnipeg, “kids from low SES (socio-economic status) groups are doing dramatically worse than middle class or high SES kids: both in terms of staying in school, and doing well when there” (Brownell et al, 2004, p. 11). This powerful correlation, between levels of educational attainment, and levels of parental and neighbourhood poverty, is discussed further in Section Three of this document.

The condition of housing also continues to represent a challenge. According to the 2001 Census almost 14% of all homes in the inner city required some form of major repair, up from 12% in 1991. Over this period, the actual number of homes in need of repair climbed by 13%. And yet, the condition of housing is not solely an inner-city issue. Citywide trends over the past decade show

that more and more homes across Winnipeg are in need of major repair. From 1991 to 2001, the overall number of homes in Winnipeg increased 5%, while the number of homes in need of major repair grew by 17.4%.

A comparison of the number of dwellings built and the number demolished in the inner city reveals a worrisome trend. In 2003, 160 dwelling units were built in the inner city, and 126 were demolished. This represented a net gain of 34 units in 2003. However, in 2004, 60 dwelling units were built and 128 were demolished in the inner city, a net loss of 68 dwelling units (City of Winnipeg, Planning, Property and Development Department). At a bare minimum, we need to be building more dwelling units than we are demolishing in the inner city.

Inner-city residents are more likely to be living alone than elsewhere in Winnipeg. According to the 2001 Census, one-person households com-

Table 2

Total Private Dwellings by Condition, 1991 - 2001

Dwellings by Condition: Inner city (new boundary)						
	1991		1996		2001	
Total dwellings	57,615	100.0%	56,840	100.0%	57,220	100.0%
Regular maintenance	35,675	61.9%	34,150	60.1%	32,060	56.0%
Minor repairs	14,960	26.0%	15,675	27.6%	17,285	30.2%
Major repairs	6,970	12.1%	7,005	12.3%	7,880	13.8%
Dwellings by Condition: City of Winnipeg						
	1991		1996		2001	
Total dwellings	240,685	100.0%	246,180	100.0%	252,810	100.0%
Regular maintenance	164,800	68.5%	157,390	63.9%	156,685	62.0%
Minor repairs	55,660	23.1%	66,975	27.2%	72,390	28.6%
Major repairs	20,225	8.4%	21,810	8.9%	23,735	9.4%

Source: Statistics Canada, 1991, 1996 & 2001 Census.

Calculations performed by D.W. Lezubski

prised almost 47% of all households in the inner city, up from 43% ten years earlier. A similar trend is seen citywide, with one-person households accounting for 31% of all households in 2001, up from 28% in 1991. Still, a much higher proportion of inner-city households are one-person households.

Lone-parent families comprise 30% of all inner-city families in 2001, up from 25% in 1991. While the number of lone-parent families in the inner city has grown by 16% over the past decade, lone-parent families are now less likely to live in the inner city than they were ten years ago. In short, the existence of lone-parent families is by no means *just* an inner-city phenomenon. Females account for 83% of all lone-parent families in the inner city, down from 86% in 1991. Indeed, while the number of female-headed lone-parent families in the inner city grew by 12.8% over the past decade, the number of male-headed lone-parent families increased by 39.8%.

The concentration of low income remains a challenge in the inner city. After peaking at 49.9% in 1995, the household poverty rate in the inner city, as measured by the Statistics Canada Low-Income Cutoffs (LICO), fell to 44.1% in 2000. This is an improvement, but the rate continues to be staggeringly high: almost double the citywide rate of 24.7%. Poverty rates climb even higher for specific types of inner-city households—lone-parents, and persons living alone, have poverty rates of 60% and 54% respectively—and for particular neighbourhoods. For example, the household poverty rate in Lord Selkirk Park is an astonishing 87.8%, almost nine in ten, while in Spence and Centennial neighbourhoods approximately two in every three households have incomes below the LICO (See *State of the Inner City Report, Part II: A View From the Neighbourhoods*). More than 25,000 inner-city households had incomes below the LICO in 2000, accounting for 40% of all households in Winnipeg in low income.

There is a history of debate and disagreement

about the LICO as a measurement of low incomes and poverty. To that debate might be added the provincial government's claim that provincial tax credits at the lower end of the income scale have reduced absolute poverty levels, but that these improvements are obscured by the LICO. While this deserves further investigation, LICO numbers suggest an astonishing concentration of low-income people in Winnipeg's inner city.

This brief review of selected demographic, social, and economic characteristics of the inner city provides an introduction to themes discussed throughout the *State of the Inner City Report*. The data support one of our overall themes: improvements are being made in Winnipeg's inner city but more are needed, because major problems still exist.

Food Banks

According to HungerCount 2004, from the Canadian Association of Food Banks, there are 40 food banks in the province of Manitoba. In March, 2004, 42,221 Manitobans used food banks: 19,732 children and 22,489 adults. This is a 10% increase from 2003. Not only are young men and lone mothers with children using the food banks more, but also day-care centres and inner-city schools are appealing to the food banks to help feed children from low-income homes. In fact, the fastest growing segment of the population using the Winnipeg Harvest food bank is people who have jobs. Wage levels and social assistance rates are simply not high enough, with the result that food banks have become a lifeline for many in our community.

It is important, we believe, to focus on the fact that improvements are occurring, despite the very real continuing problems. Ranging from re-development by the Metropolitan government in the late 1960s, to the historic Winnipeg Core Area Initiatives I and II in the 1980s, to the Winnipeg Development Agreement of the early 1990s and now the recently signed Winnipeg Partnership Agreement, Winnipeg's inner city has received considerable attention over the past four decades. Often, reflections on the inner city have dwelt on the glaring social and economic disparities so evident when viewed in the context of Winnipeg overall. Such characterizations, while well meaning, have focused on deficits and have underlined problems in the hopes of attracting attention and resources to the inner city. Looking at the inner city only through this deficit lens, however, neglects the assets and positive attributes embedded in every inner city neighbourhood. Strategies for inner city improvement ought to be built on these assets and positive attributes.

II. Housing, Employment Development and Education in Winnipeg's Inner City

Three issues are particularly important in the process of inner city revitalization: housing, employment and education. In the second section of this Report we examine each in turn, by describing what exists, identifying some gaps, and suggesting improvements.

A. Housing

Winnipeg's inner-city housing stock is aging, and a large proportion of it is in need of repair. This is a problem and an opportunity.

It is a problem because inadequate housing not only erodes peoples' quality of life, and often their self-esteem and self-confidence, but also contributes to neighbourhood instability. People are forced to move frequently in search of better, more adequate housing. This adversely affects children's educational opportunities, and makes it more dif-

ficult for people to become involved in their communities. Better housing can stabilize inner-city neighbourhoods, and increased neighbourhood stability is a precondition for community involvement and community development.

Winnipeg's aging inner-city housing stock is an opportunity because housing renovation, and the construction of in-fill housing, can create jobs. Hiring locally and purchasing locally are fundamental principles of community economic development. A housing strategy that hires and trains neighbourhood people and purchases supplies from neighbourhood businesses, creates opportunities and builds capacity. This is particularly the case when the housing renovation is done by community-based organizations.

Market forces have not proved effective in

Table 3

Welfare Incomes by Category of Recipient in Constant Dollars, 1992-2004

Manitoba	Peak Year	Peak Amount	2004 Amount	Dollar Change from Peak to 2004	% change from Peak to 2004
Single Employable	1992	\$8605	\$5,572	-\$3,033	-54.4%
Person with a Disability	1992	\$10,935	\$8,337	-\$2,598	-31.2%
Single Parent, One Child	1992	\$13,230	\$9,636	-\$3,594	-37.3%
Couple, Two Children	1992	\$22,105	\$14,151	-\$7,954	-56.2%

Source: Welfare Incomes 2004, National Council of Welfare

providing low-income housing, and particularly in providing low-income rental housing. This has been the case right across the country. Governments, therefore, have an important role to play in inner-city housing. Governments can create the programs and the funding needed for the promotion of inner-city housing strategies. Unfortunately, governments largely abandoned their housing responsibilities in the early 1990s, and have only in recent years begun to re-enter this important inner-city policy area.

The results, to date, are mixed. On the one hand, important gains have been made in some parts of the inner city, thanks largely to new government programs and increased government funding, and the work of community-based housing organizations. On the other hand, government programs have focused largely on home-ownership strategies. While they have brought significant improvements to some inner-city neighbourhoods (see *State of the Inner City Report, Part II, A View From the Neighbourhoods*), the programs are limited in the number of inner-city households they can help. Many inner-city people have incomes so low that they are likely never to be homeowners. They need good quality, low-income rental housing.

Because market forces do not produce good quality, low-income rental housing, the solution to inner-city housing problems is social housing—housing that has a long-term subsidy attached to it. There

is a need also for more creative housing programs: programs that facilitate the production, by community-based housing organizations, of low-income rental housing designed for the particular needs of inner-city residents. Some small but interesting and potentially important low-income rental initiatives are currently underway in Winnipeg’s inner city, but they are on a very small scale. More such programs and funding are necessary if the need for housing is to be met, and if the community economic development opportunities created by our aging inner-city housing stock are to be realized.

SUPPLY AND DEMAND

The provision of housing for low-income, inner-city households is a complicated issue that needs to be examined from two sides—supply and demand. On the supply side, there is generally not enough housing, especially decent and affordable low-income rental housing, to meet the need. This shortage has been accentuated by the net loss of 68 dwelling units in the inner city in 2004. On the demand side, incomes are so low that many cannot afford adequate housing.

When one considers the demand side, one sees that according to the 2001 Census, over 44% of inner-city households in Winnipeg live in poverty, (that is have incomes below the Statistics Canada Low Income Cut Offs (LICO)). In Spence and Centennial neighbourhoods, two-thirds of house-

Table 4

Winnipeg Median Market Rents, 1994 - 2004

	Bachelor	1 bedroom	2 bedroom	3 bedroom
October 1994	330	445	562	660
October 1999	337	456	582	677
October 2004	388	519	664	785
% increase 1994 - 2004	18%	17%	18%	19%

Source: Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation

Table 5

Rental Allowance Rates for Social-assistance recipients*

Relative to Median Rental Rates, 2004

EIA Recipient	Single parent 2 children ages 10 and 13	Two parents two children ages 4 and 6	Single general assistance adult	Single person with disability
EIA Rent Guideline	\$430	\$471	\$271	\$285
Median Market Rents	2 bdrm \$664 3 bdrm \$785	\$664 \$785	Bachelor \$388 1 bdrm \$519	Bachelor \$388 1 bdrm \$519
Rent Shortfall	\$234 -\$355	\$193-\$314	\$117-\$248	\$103-\$234

Source: Province of Manitoba

* Rates including heat, water, electricity

Table 6

Welfare Income by Household

	Basic EIA	Additional Benefit	Federal Child Tax Benefits (including supplement)	Federal GST	Monthly	% of total income for market rents
Single Employable	\$5,572			\$220	\$483	79-100% plus
Single with Disability	\$7,377	\$960		\$240	\$715	54- 73%
Single Parent one child	\$9,636		\$2,911	\$556	\$1092	60%
Couple two children	\$14,151		\$5,139	\$672	\$1664	47%

Source: National Council of Welfare: Welfare Incomes 2004

Table 7

Rent as percentage of Household Income

	Rent less that 25% of total income	Rent greater than 30% of total income
Centennial	(49%)	(40%)
Spence	(40%)	(47%)
Lord Selkirk Park	(42%)	(29%)
Inner- City	(52%)	(35%)
Non-Inner City	(46%)	(41%)

Source: Statistics Canada, 2001 Census

holds have incomes below the LICO; in Lord Selkirk Park this is the case for almost nine in ten households; for many of these households, their incomes are far below the poverty line.

Some of these families are on welfare. Welfare incomes declined dramatically during the 1990s and have increased only marginally since 2000. Manitoba welfare rates peaked between 1990 and 1992 at between 46% and 67% of the poverty line, depending on the category of the recipient. In 2004 welfare incomes ranged from 28% to 53% of the poverty line, well below the 1992 peak. In constant dollars, welfare incomes have dropped considerably since 1992, as shown in Table 3.

This is particularly pertinent to the inner city, because approximately 28%—more than one in four—of inner-city households receive income assistance, compared with 10% of non-inner-city households (Carter, Janzen and McGregor, 2004).

What is more, a large proportion of inner-city welfare recipients' incomes is being drained right out of the inner city, and does not contribute to community revitalization. Approximately 58% of welfare recipients live in the inner city, more than half of these in private accommodations, with the result that, by a conservative estimate, \$3.5 million per year goes to private sector landlords, \$2.3 million of that to private-sector landlords owning property in the inner city. At least some of these are slum landlords, and most of these landlords do not live in the inner city.

COST OF HOUSING

While social-assistance incomes in the inner city have declined, rents and the cost of purchasing a home have increased. This is in part due to very low vacancy rates: in 2004, there was a 1% vacancy rate for rental housing in Winnipeg. Such very low vacancy rates are evidence of a supply shortage, which pushes up rent levels. Average market rents for the inner city and Winnipeg generally have increased from 1994 to 2004 by approximately 18% (See Table 4).

While rental rates continue to rise, the Manitoba Employment and Income Assistance (EIA) rental allowance has not been adjusted since 1993. These rates are 25%-35% lower than those in Saskatchewan, a province with a comparable economy. As shown in Table 5, Manitoba EIA rates would need to increase by about 50% to be in line with median market rents. The inadequate rental allowance has far-reaching implications for individuals and the broader community. Private-sector landlords often keep rents at welfare rates, but then do little to maintain buildings. This results in a further decline in the quality of our housing stock. But the Manitoba government refuses to increase housing allowances, claiming that increases will simply go into landlords' pockets, and that there is no guarantee that landlords will reinvest the increased revenue in their properties. The result has been the ever-declining real value of shelter allowances, which means that recipients have to take from their already meagre food and clothing allowance to pay the rent.

The National Child Benefit (NCB) has helped to put more money into the pockets of families since 1998, and the Province of Manitoba's elimination of the National Child Benefit Supplement claw-back from welfare families has further increased the household incomes of families with children. But any gains that families have made with the additional resources provided by the NCB, are lost as welfare incomes continue to erode. As shown in Table 6, even when National Child Benefits are included, families on EIA will pay well over 45% of their total income for a median market rent unit. A generally accepted indicator of core housing need is when households are paying more than 30% of their income on rent.

Table 6 shows that a single person's total social-assistance budget does not cover the cost of a one-bedroom or even a bachelor apartment. The option for singles is often limited to rooming houses and the problems associated with this form of housing are well documented (Distasio,

Dudley, Maunder, 2002). What is more, in some neighbourhoods such as West Broadway, rooming houses are disappearing as a result of community revitalization efforts. As housing improves, the cost of housing increases and rooming houses are converted into single-family or duplex units, making matters worse for the lowest-income inner-city residents. Table 7 shows that in 2001, even in inner-city neighbourhoods where rents were lower, a high proportion of households were paying more than 30% of their income on rent.

The provincial government does have some subsidies available for private market units. However, those programs are limited. Low-income households other than those on EIA can access the Manitoba government's Shelter Allowance for Family Renters (SAFFR) and the Shelter Allowance for Elderly Renters (SAFER) programs.

But the maximum monthly allowance and the income ceiling have not been adjusted for several years. In recognition of this problem, the 2005 provincial budget announced the development of an integrated shelter allowance. But the program is yet to be developed.

The increasing discrepancy between market rents and low incomes is a concern for inner-city housing groups. Those interviewed agreed that the market-intervention model currently favoured by all three levels of government would not address the needs of very low-income households.

While current mechanisms have been important for revitalization efforts, it has become increasingly obvious that a social-housing framework is essential.

This does not mean that there is a desire to return to the old model of public housing that

Table 8

MHRC-Owned Housing (Inner City)

Neighbourhoods	Elderly/ Single	Family	Mixed	Hostel	Shelter	Undefined
Centennial	174	222	0	0	0	0
Daniel McIntyre	170	132	0	0	0	0
Dufferin	121	146	0	0	0	0
Lord Selkirk Park	246	184	0	0	31	0
North Point Douglas	0	76	0	0	0	0
North Portage	264	151	189	1	0	0
Spence	122	189	52	1	0	0
St Johns	0	40	0	0	0	0
St Matthews	0	70	0	0	0	0
West Alexander	0	164	0	0	0	0
West Alexander	0	208	70	0	1	21
William Whyte	269	142	0	0	0	17
Total:	1366	1725	311	2	32	38
Grand Total:	3474					

ghettoizes and stigmatizes (See the *State of the Inner City Report, Part II*). Preferable models include increased government subsidies for low-income households and a greater emphasis on community ownership. Government could also greatly improve public-housing delivery by creating meaningful partnerships with community organizations in the planning, design and maintenance of public housing.

There is a significant need for maintenance and improvement of the Manitoba Housing Authority (MHA) portfolio (this portfolio is described later in this report). This presents an opportunity to train and employ local residents, including individuals living in MHA housing, while at the same time effecting significant savings in energy costs. This could go a long way toward changing the relationship that MHA currently has with the community and it provides an excellent opportunity for the province to make use of its Community Economic Development Lens. (This lens is a tool developed by the Manitoba government to guide departments in developing policies and programs in line with community economic development principles.) There continues to be merit in, and need for, public housing, but it needs to be more responsive to the unique needs of communities.

THE HOME-OWNERSHIP SOLUTION

Government intervention since 1999 has emphasized home ownership as a means of revitalizing communities and providing stability for low-income households. While there is some merit in this approach, it is also seriously flawed unless it is seen as one component of a comprehensive approach. Very poor families on EIA and those living on minimum wage simply do not have the means to become homeowners.

The North End Housing Project (NEHP) has found this to be the case. Many of the families that qualified for the five-year, rent-to-own program have not been able to purchase their homes due to insufficient income and an inability to obtain a mortgage. While the NEHP continues to pur-

chase and renovate, it has realized that the biggest need is for low-cost rental units. The absence of long-term government subsidies for low-income renters is limiting its ability to meet this need. While NEHP rents homes at fairly low rates, they are not affordable to very poor families. One interviewee stated that the most critical policy issue for the North End is income. "Housing has to be geared to income...there is a need for larger supplements for social-assistance recipients and people making minimum wage. I think the government knows that this is needed. It is political will and money that is needed." Housing groups are also very aware that housing needs continue to go unmet. But NEHP and others are limited to working within the parameters of inadequate housing programs.

Homeownership has never been an option for very low-income households, but it is now becoming less feasible for even lower mid-income households. The average price of a home in Winnipeg increased slightly between 1994 and 1999, from \$84,812 to \$86,614, but jumped to \$121,925 by 2004. This represents a 44% increase from 1994. This 'hot' housing market, while it benefits some, puts home ownership even further out of the reach of many, perhaps most, in the inner city.

STATE OF RENTAL SUPPLY: PUBLIC AND PRIVATE

A big part of the problem is on the supply side. There is a shortage of rental housing as the vacancy rate remains at an historic low of approximately 1%. Much of Winnipeg's rental stock—both public and private—is also very old. Winnipeg has the highest proportion of dwellings in need of major repair—close to 10%, which is well above the average of approximately 7% (Carter, January 2005). The majority of units in need of repair are located in the inner city.

Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation (MHRC) is the Crown corporation responsible for public housing in Manitoba. MHRC is responsible for approximately 34,000 housing units in Manitoba, of which it owns 17,900 units (Of-

office of the Auditor, 2004). Its portfolio includes units that were formerly owned by the federal government but transferred to the province as part of the 1998 Social Housing Agreement. There are approximately 8,050 units in Winnipeg, and 2,935 of these—more than one-third—are in the inner city.

The Manitoba Housing Authority (MHA) operates as the property manager for 13,100 MHRC owned units, 8,050 of which are in Winnipeg. MHA receives policy direction and funding from MHRC.

In addition, there are 953 public housing units managed by urban Aboriginal organizations in Winnipeg, mostly in the inner city. The Winnipeg Housing and Rehabilitation Corporation (WHRC), a non-profit developer and property manager operating at arms-length from the City of Winnipeg, owns another 700. Most of the WHRC units have rents geared to income. WHRC focuses its efforts in the inner city, and the majority of recent activity has been rent-to-own and rehabilitation for direct sale. There are currently 125 households on the WHRC waiting list.

Table 9

Winnipeg Waiting List for MHA-Managed Units 1995-2003

Year	Total Units	Waiting Lists
1995	7,585	1,078
1996	7,575	1,208
1997	7,616	1,265
1998	7,618	1,103
1999	7,662	905
2000	7,611	2,242
2001	7,585	2,527
2002	8,004	2,816
2003	8,002	3,130
2004	8,002	4,500

Source: Office of the Auditor General, 2004.

The waiting list for Manitoba public housing in 2004 was more than four times larger than in 1995. The Manitoba Urban Native Housing Association says that there are currently 4,000 families with approximately 15,000 children on waiting lists for their housing. After revising the way it measures waiting lists, Manitoba reports a total of 2877 households waiting for units province-wide. Waiting time depends on the level of priority. For example, families escaping domestic violence would be placed highest on the wait list. But the conclusion to be drawn from Table 9 is that there is simply not enough housing available for low-income households in Winnipeg.

The public housing stock is old and in need of repair. The Manitoba Housing Authority estimates a need for \$83.9 million over 5 years to adequately repair the aging portfolio. According to the Provincial Auditor: “MHA does not have sufficient funding available to be able to meet its mandate to maintain and improve the quality of its existing housing stock and to provide an effective housing service to qualified Manitobans” (Manitoba, 2004). We saw that this is the case in our interviews with Manitoba Housing tenants in Centennial neighbourhood, who provided to us long lists of problems with the housing stock, and with the repair and maintenance services, provided by Manitoba Housing (See *State of the Inner City Report, Part II: A View From the Neighbourhoods*).

Winnipeg’s rental supply is insufficient in both number and condition. It is worst in the inner city, because that is where the housing stock is oldest and most in need of repair. It is also where households are poorest and most vulnerable to slum landlords.

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO THE HOUSING CRISIS

In 1993, the federal government stopped all new social housing activity. Unlike the governments of Quebec and British Columbia, which continued to allocate resources to social housing development, the Manitoba government chose to

follow the federal government's lead. The long-term implications of this decision are now clear: it aggravated the supply problem. Governments became re-engaged in 1999, but their efforts have been directed primarily at increasing and rehabilitating the private-market supply.

Since 2000, the Winnipeg Housing and Homelessness Initiative (WHHI) partnership has committed over \$35 million to the repair, rehabilitation or construction of over 2643 units and 137 rooms or rooms/beds in Winnipeg.

Through the WHHI, government programs such as the federal-provincial Affordable Housing Initiative and the Provincial Neighbourhood Housing Assistance Program are providing grants to private-for-profit developers, community-housing organizations and non-profits to scale up housing activity. As of March 31, 2005, Manitoba's Neighbourhood Housing Assistance Program has contributed to the repair, rehabilitation or construction of 1139 units in neighbourhoods designated under Neighbourhoods Alive!, most of which are in Winnipeg's inner city. The Federal/Provincial Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Programs (RRAP) have also contributed to the rehabilitation of inner city units. But RRAP is a province-wide program and would need to be greatly expanded to meet the need.

The program that has been most promoted by the federal and provincial governments as the answer to the housing problem is the Affordable Housing Initiative (AHI). However, the first phase of the AHI was less than successful in addressing housing needs for very low-income households. Much of the focus of the AHI was on homeownership; very little has gone toward low-cost rental housing. Households earning up to \$46,000 per year qualify for the purchase of houses built or rehabilitated with AHI funds. These are not poor families. There was also a rental component of the AHI, but it has been of little help for very low-income households, as it has primarily resulted in the development of units renting at the median

Pocket Housing

Sometime in 2006, a building with 8 'pocket suites' will be built on Maryland St. Because some of the rooming houses to be built are in our neighbourhood, the Spence Neighbourhood Association was involved giving support and encouragement to SAM Management in order to make these 'pocket suites' a reality.

A pocket suite will be a little bit bigger than a traditional room in a rooming house. It will be large enough to hold all the furniture that is usually in a rooming house. The tenant will be able to have a bed, a dresser, and perhaps some other things. The biggest change, however, will be the bathroom and kitchen.

The suite will have a kitchenette: a sink, a small bar fridge and maybe a microwave or hot plate (that has not been finalized). Each suite will also have its own bathroom. This is different than traditional rooming houses that are actually old homes split into many suites. Tenants usually have to share a common bathroom and a common kitchen, which may not always be ideally secure. These pocket suites however will be self-contained, like an apartment block, only smaller.

Source: Shirley Haynes, New Pocket Suites Coming, West Central Streets, September/October 2005, p. 11.

market rate.

Both the federal and provincial governments have acknowledged the limitations of the first of the AHI and the design of phase II seems to hold more promise. The focus is intended to shift to rental housing for low-income households. AHI II will see an increase in federal assistance to 50% of capital costs to a maximum of \$75,000 per unit. This is an increase from the \$25,000 maximum per unit under Phase I. The province must match the federal contribution. AHI II could provide an impetus for an increase in the production of low-income rental units, because community-based organizations interested in developing housing for the poor will now have greater access to funds. However, while both the federal and provincial governments have approved the framework for AHI II, the details have yet to be worked out and applications are not yet being accepted.

Still, this form of intervention remains fundamentally flawed. As one community-housing representative stated, “The AHI is still wrong. A social housing framework rather than a market model would have created a more stable environment.”

COMMUNITIES TAKE ACTION

The more interesting story that has emerged since 2000 is the level of community involvement in housing activity. Non-profit community-based organizations (CBOs) have played a critically important role in housing inner-city residents. It is their work that is showing the way forward, and that needs further support.

The Spence Neighbourhood Association (SNA), for example, works with many stakeholders in their community to build and renovate housing. Grants provided through the WHHI have been very important to their success. Provincial and city financial support for housing coordination has also been important. But while the SNA is very happy with the progress being made, and thankful for government support, they are also concerned that those most in need of housing are not being

served. The rental stock continues to be in bad shape, and there is a need to get buildings “in the hands of good landlords.”

For the West Broadway Development Corporation (WBDC), revitalization has been a mixed blessing. They too are thankful for government support. The City began to fund their housing efforts in 1999 and the province came on board in 2000, followed by the federal government through the AHI. Since that time WBDC has been involved in the rehabilitation and development of 263 units worth \$11 million. However, revitalization has come with a cost, as noted by one interviewee. “Gentrification is definitely an issue for West Broadway. It is a neighbourhood in flux and as markets continue to increase, displacement continues...over 1,000 people have left the neighbourhood since 2000...some of those were involved in the early planning and left because they can no longer afford it.” The supply of low-income rental housing, so vital if healthy mixed-income neighbourhoods are to be created, was just not there.

One West Broadway interviewee reflected on the revitalization of the community. “While trying to do something positive they have in effect moved the negatives somewhere else...I think the challenge of the city is not to disrupt too many lives. There are just too many vulnerable people living in crisis...too many Aboriginal people trying to find a home.”

Singles are among those most greatly affected. West Broadway once had 88 rooming houses; now there are 36; soon there will be none. Many of these people are “one door from the street and we haven’t been able to do anything about this.”

Spence and Centennial community activists are hoping that the ‘Pocket Housing’ concept will begin to address this issue. Pocket housing is essentially a scaled-up rooming house. SAM Management acquired funding through CMHC to explore the concept up to the design stage, and gained WHHI and community support for the

concept, with the result that four bi-level infill developments will be built. Each development would house eight individuals in self-contained, 300 square foot units including a bathroom, a kitchenette and a private entrance. Sixteen units are planned for the Spence neighbourhood and 16 for Centennial. Rents will be set at the EIA rate for singles.

The North End Housing Project (NEHP) is a community-based, non-profit organization operating in Winnipeg's North End. It receives core funding from the Manitoba government. NEHP purchases "about to be off-market" housing in the North End (particularly the North Point Douglas and William Whyte neighbourhoods), renovates them and then either sells them directly, or through a 'lease-to-own' approach for home ownership to low-income families. First-time homeowners may qualify for down payment relief, and a 'silent, forgivable' second mortgage enables the price of the house to reflect substantial savings. As well, NEHP is developing new low-income rental units, both single and multi-family.

Over the past five or so years, NEHP has been responsible for the development of over 100 renovated or new single-family housing units in the North End. Another 15 units are expected to be completed this year. NEHP is also sponsoring a new rental project (11-12 units) on Euclid Ave. in Point Douglas as a co-housing project with the North Point Douglas Women's Resource Centre.

There are signs that this activity is contributing to the neighbourhood renewal being experienced in parts of the North End.

But NEHP is experiencing difficulties acquiring buildings as a result of rising costs. They are also finding that many of the families hoping to acquire houses through the rent-to-own program are unable to do so as they don't qualify for mortgages and their incomes are insufficient to cover the ongoing costs of owning a home.

NEHP has community and tenant people on its board, as well as technical or professional mem-

bers, and has strategic alliances with Inner City Renovations, Inc. (ICR) and Ogiijiita Pimatiswin Kinamatwin, both of which are training and employment organizations. Both focus on inner-city residents, primarily Aboriginal. Where possible, purchases are made locally. Hiring and purchasing locally adds to the capacity-building character of housing renovation initiatives. This is a community economic development approach.

Inner City Renovations Inc. is a general contractor that does mainly residential housing and some commercial development. Owned by six non-profit organizations, ICR has mainly done work for North End Housing Project. It has also acted as the general contractor on major commercial projects on Selkirk Ave., including Urban Circle Training Centre, the Murdoch Scribe Centre and the Winnipeg Education Centre. This work is contributing significantly to the important revitalization of Selkirk Ave that is well underway under the leadership of the North End Community Renewal Corporation.

ICR is mandated to provide training and employment for unemployed inner-city residents. The objective is to maintain a dual bottom line to meet both social and financial objectives. The provincial government provides financial support to ICR to hire and train unemployed residents. To date they have done \$3.7 million in business and have injected close to \$2 million into the local economy through wages to local residents.

Ogiijiita Pimatiswin Kinamatwin (OPK) is a four-year old program in Winnipeg's North End that uses an innovative approach to creating employment opportunities for gang members. Ten young men, mostly in their 20s, work with two trained carpenters and a project coordinator in renovating houses in their North End neighbourhoods. They learn the practical skills of housing renovation; they learn about such life skills as financial management; and they learn about and practice their Aboriginal cultures. Many of these young men are finding jobs. Some

are returning to school. None are returning to prison. Many other young men in similar circumstances are coming to OPK and asking for the opportunity to work. OPK is an inspiring example of how community-based housing initiatives can build neighbourhood capacities.

These are just some of the examples of community-based organizations committed to providing a mix of housing options for families in the inner city, and building into their work a community economic development approach. There are other community-based organizations operating from a variety of different models. Some, like the Housing Opportunity Project operating in Spence neighbourhood, are strictly involved in homeownership models. Lazarus Housing is a faith-based organization that renovates houses for sale and apartments for rent. Other organizations have been providing housing options in the inner city for a very long time. Payak Housing Cooperative was established in the 1980s to provide safe low-cost housing for Aboriginal families. SAM Management is a non-profit property manager that has long been committed to low-rent housing in the City of Winnipeg, and their most recent effort to address the housing needs of very poor singles with their 'pocket housing' concept is an example of the kind of innovation that is beginning to emerge.

What is evident from discussions with community groups is that housing is not just about bricks and mortar. While there is a critical need for more and improved units, the long-term benefit of a comprehensive, community economic development approach that ensures participatory planning, training and hiring of local residents, and local purchasing wherever possible, is equally important to the long-term health of inner city communities.

In spite of their laudable efforts to meet housing need, community groups agree that the problem is much bigger than they are able to solve. Government intervention must extend beyond the

level of supply. In addition to the existing private sector measures, social housing—that is housing that has some form of ongoing, long-term subsidy attached—is required to meet the needs of the poorest households.

As noted above, governments should not go back to the large public housing developments of the past. Mixed-income neighbourhoods are the way to go on the supply side, although ways must be found to ensure that creating mixed-income neighbourhoods does not lead to the displacement of the lowest-income residents, as has happened to a considerable extent in, for example, the West Broadway neighbourhood. The public housing model needs to be reformed, not replaced.

On the demand side, the issue is relatively simple. What is needed is an increase in household income. This means that the solution to housing problems will not be complete until measures are taken to increase wages and transfers to low-income families regardless of their income source.

There is also a need for creativity to ensure that more housing is community-owned. This is critical to sustainable community revitalization. Community-based non-profits and co-ops are important ownership models, and government programs ought to be better designed to encourage more development in this area.

Community groups need quicker access to capital in order to purchase units that come available on the market before absentee landlords sweep them up. Governments could have a role here. For example, Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation could use its lending powers to help community-based housing groups compete in the market.

While there is considerable agreement that current government policies continue to require a great deal of work before they will be sufficiently aligned to meet the real needs of communities, there is also some good news. Many of the housing groups speak very highly of the efforts of WHHI staff, particularly the provincial partner.

And everyone is doing the best they can within the parameters made available.

But the most important message that we heard from those interviewed can be summed up through the words of one interviewee. “We need to use the ‘s’ word—social housing.” We now know from experience that the market model simply does not work as a means of meeting the housing needs of low-income people.

B. Employment Development

Rates of unemployment are higher, and rates of labour-force participation are lower, in the inner city than in the non-inner city. This is especially the case for Aboriginal people, and even more for Aboriginal youth. There are large numbers of people in Winnipeg’s inner city who are unemployed; many are not in the active labour force at all.

Employment is important for many reasons. For workers, it generates the income that can support families and build futures, while creating a sense of purpose and self-worth. Mendelson (2004, p.1), for example, has recently written that: “Employment is the cornerstone of participation in modern Canadian society. Employment is not only a source of income, it is also the basis for self-respect and autonomy.” For society at large, shifting people who have not been in the labour force into jobs increases our city’s overall productivity and economic well-being. We believe, for example, that the disconnection between the labour market (paid jobs) and so many inner-city residents, is a major contributor to problems such as poverty, gang activity, and violence. Everyone benefits when more people are employed. This is especially so given the evidence that exists of looming shortages of skilled labour.

But for many in the inner city, numerous barriers stand between them and a good job: low levels of education, lack of work experience, low levels of self-esteem and self-confidence, and lack of suitable childcare arrangements. These barriers

make securing and retaining a decently paid job very difficult. We need to develop and invest in targeted strategies designed specifically to move low-income people from disadvantaged communities into the paid labour force.

Moving low-income inner-city people into well-paid jobs is a central feature of any successful inner-city revitalization strategy. Some good work is being done in Winnipeg’s inner city. Some improvements are possible.

LABOUR SHORTAGES

There is a considerable body of literature that describes an impending shortage of labour, and especially skilled labour. Industrialized nations are facing the same demographic realities: longer life expectancies, falling birth rates, and in Canada and the United States, a large ‘baby boomer’ generation now starting to reach retirement age. With a large part of the labour force about to retire, and a smaller proportion of young people available to replace them, there is a considerable consensus amongst researchers that while a general shortage of labour will not hit Canada, shortages of specific skills will be felt in certain industries and regions.

Winnipeg is a city expected to experience skilled labour shortages. We are a slow-growth city in a province that loses about 1,000 young skilled workers per year to provincial out-migration (Manitoba Intergovernmental Affairs and Trade, 2004), a fact that is contributing to the ‘graying’ age structure: in 2001 about one in six Winnipeggers were 60 years of age or older (City of Winnipeg, 2004). We are going to need more skilled workers.

ABORIGINAL GROWTH AND WINNIPEG’S FUTURE

The population growth that we will experience in Winnipeg will come largely from the Aboriginal community. Winnipeg has the largest urban Aboriginal population in Canada, 55,755, or about 8% of Winnipeg’s population. Approximately one-half of Winnipeg’s Aboriginal community is

resident in the inner city. The Aboriginal population is much younger than the population as a whole, with a median age of 24.7 years in 2001, considerably younger than the median age of Winnipeg's population as a whole, which was 37.1 years (Statistics Canada, 2003). So while Winnipeg's population as a whole begins to age, and skilled labour shortages worsen, Aboriginal people, a large proportion of whom are inner-city residents, will be reaching working age in large and growing numbers. The Manitoba Bureau of Statistics (1997, p. 3) has projected that by 2016, one in every five labour-market participants will be Aboriginal. That is why Mendelson (2004, p. 38) has said that: "The increasing importance of the Aboriginal workforce to Manitoba...cannot be exaggerated. There is likely no single more critical economic factor for [the Prairie] provinces."

Aboriginal children and youth, therefore, represent the economic future of Manitoba and of Winnipeg. It is in our collective interests to find ways of bridging the gap between the paid labour force, and Winnipeg's inner city. We must find ways of bringing people in the inner city, including Aboriginal people, into the paid labour force in much larger numbers than has been the case to date. Disadvantaged inner-city residents represent not only a large proportion of the population suffering the consequences of detachment from the labour market, they are also a pool of potential workers who must, in everybody's interests, be brought into the paid labour market. In Winnipeg's inner city, as in inner cities across Canada and the United States, disadvantaged and marginalized residents exist as large, untapped, and generally ignored sources of potential labour. It is going to be necessary to find ways to tap into such 'non-traditional' sources of labour to fill impending labour shortages.

Bob Giloth (2004, p. 20) of the Annie E. Casey Foundation Jobs Initiative, which is undertaking employment development initiatives in numerous American cities, understands that getting low-in-

come and disadvantaged workers into good jobs is no easy task. He describes the "disconnection between the hardest to employ and the mainstream economy" as two separate worlds. "One world is made up of business culture and expectations that hard work is rewarded. The other world is made up of people who have been marginalized by the mainstream over generations and face the labour market with cynicism, loss of hope and few expectations. Bridging these worlds is an enormous challenge."

EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES THAT WORK

It is a challenge, however, that can be met. A recent detailed study (Loewen, Silver et al, 2005) done here in Winnipeg of the employment development initiatives undertaken by the 'Jobs Initiative' and others in the USA found that employment development strategies that succeed in getting inner-city residents into good jobs, and keeping them in those jobs exhibit three key qualities. They are comprehensive, networked and interventionist.

Comprehensive strategies are those that provide job-seekers with a full array of services, all under one roof, including basic education, specific job-skill training, job-readiness training, job-search and placement assistance, support services, and post-employment supports.

Networked strategies create formalized connections between all the actors in the employment development process: community-based employment development organizations, educational institutions like technical colleges and adult learning centres, governments, unions, and most importantly, employers. Each has an important role to play in getting inner-city residents into the paid labour force, and their efforts are maximized to the extent that they are networked. The active involvement of employers has been found to be particularly significant.

Interventionist strategies alter the structure of the labour market in order to ease the entry of disadvantaged workers. One example might be to

remove the requirement, used by many employers, of hiring only those with grade 12 educations. Many inner-city residents do not have grade 12; many jobs do not really require grade 12 to be done successfully. Altering the labour market by removing this artificial screening device is an example of an interventionist strategy.

Successful employment development strategies also focus on ‘good’ jobs (jobs that pay a living wage, and provide benefits and opportunities for advancement), are employer-driven (so that jobs are waiting at the completion of training), promote ‘cultural competence’ for both employers and employees, and provide post-employment supports to ensure job retention.

All of these characteristics can best be implemented by a ‘labour market intermediary,’ which is a formal body comprised of CBOs, educational institutions, governments, unions, and employers, whose explicit purpose it is to work together to move large numbers of low-income people from disadvantaged communities into good jobs in the paid labour force (Figure 1).

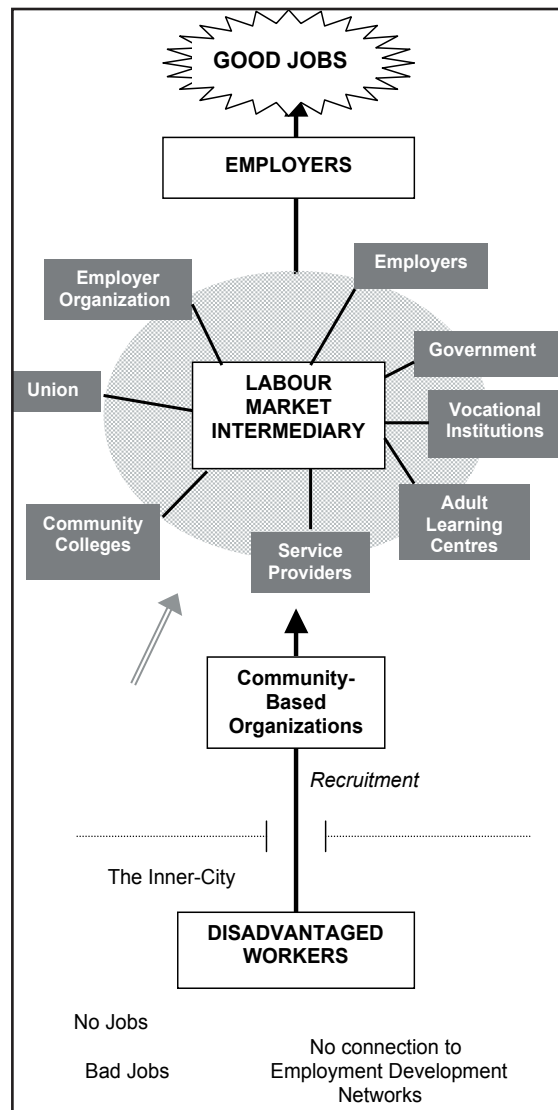
We do not have such a fully developed employment development system here in Winnipeg.

More particularly, we do not have—despite many other strengths—a fully developed labour market intermediary.

Winnipeg is well-served by a large number of employment development organizations that are genuinely community-based: physically located in low-income, inner-city neighbourhoods, very accessible to local residents, and skilled in providing a wide range of pre-employment and employment-related services in ways appropriate to the needs of inner city communities. The task of reaching deep into these neighbourhoods and communities and offering to people the opportunity to begin to move toward employment in a friendly and accessible environment—an environment in which a wide range of services is available—is a strength of Winnipeg’s employment development organizations.

In addition, Winnipeg’s inner city boasts many very innovative employment development strategies. In the *State of the Inner City Report, Part II*, we show the role that can be played by small, community-based organizations like the West Central Women’s Resource Centre, which offers volunteer opportunities to inner city women, giving them the chance to develop skills and confidence that can prepare them for the labour market. The Ojijiita Pimatiswin Kinamatwin project in the North End does a remarkable job of creating skill-building employment opportuni-

Figure 1: Labour-market intermediary



ties for street gang members. In Spence and West Broadway neighbourhoods, at Rossbrook House and other inner city CBOs, small ‘jobs for youth’ initiatives exist, introducing young people at an early age to the idea of paid labour. SEED Winnipeg has sponsored a Social Purchasing Portal, an on-line database that links employment training—working jointly with the North End Community Renewal Corporation’s PATH Centre—to Winnipeg businesses. “The portal is designed for progressive businesses that are committed to strengthening Winnipeg’s inner city while creating employment opportunities for people who face barriers to the workforce” (www.sppwinnipeg.org). In its short history, the portal has 18 supplier partners, 8 purchasing partners and has had 10 job postings. Many more such small, highly innovative employment development projects have emerged in the inner city.

The multi-faceted strengths of the existing employment development system notwithstanding, improvements are possible. When we measure Winnipeg’s employment development system against the ‘best practices’ model described above, we are able to identify four ways in which the system can be improved:

1. developing a strong, formalized network of all the actors in the employment development system
2. creating somewhat ‘higher capacity’ organizations able to provide, in one organizational setting, a more comprehensive range of employment services
3. establishing connections with employers, such that in many more cases people are not only being trained but also are being channeled directly into jobs
4. developing a more interventionist approach, aimed at maximizing the extent to which jobs, and hiring criteria, are structured with the needs of inner-city residents in mind. These

improvements are best achieved by the creation of a labour market intermediary as depicted in Figure 1.

There is considerable evidence that the Province of Manitoba is moving now to implement some of these recommendations. Their doing so deserves our support, and their progress will be monitored in future *State of the Inner City Reports*.

It perhaps deserves reiteration that bridging large numbers of inner-city residents into the paid labour market is of great importance to all of us, not just those from the inner city who would benefit from being employed. We are about to experience significant skilled labour shortages; we are already experiencing such shortages in some sectors. Failure to produce more skilled workers will adversely affect all of us. As is the case with so much that has to do with the inner city, we are all in this together.

C. Education

Education, like housing and employment development, is of crucial importance for poverty eradication. Education is important for how well people fare throughout their lives in terms of health, self-esteem, employment, income, and overall well-being. It is also an important factor in the quality of life of neighbourhoods.

Given that public education is a universal program in Canada, one would expect that everyone would benefit from it equally, and have the opportunity to succeed. Research has consistently shown that this is not the case.

In many urban centres, including Winnipeg, average levels of educational attainment are lower in areas, like the inner city, where poverty is concentrated. A 2004 report by the Manitoba Centre for Health Policy found that Winnipeg children from low socio-economic groups are faring dramatically worse than middle class and high socio-economic children in terms of staying in school and doing well when they are there. They found that children and youth living in low socio-economic commu-

nities experience lower retention and graduation rates and higher rates of withdrawal from school than their counterparts in higher socio-economic communities. Educational outcomes in Winnipeg show significant gaps between those living in the inner city, and those in the non-inner city. This is particularly the case for Aboriginal people and children and youth living in poverty (Brownell, Roos et al, 2004).

EDUCATION IN WINNIPEG'S INNER CITY

Education has long been a ticket out of poverty for some. However, levels of educational attainment are, on average, lower in the inner city than in the non-inner city. The evidence is overwhelming that educational attainment correlates strongly with the income levels of parents and of neighbourhoods. The children of the poor, and children who grow up in poor neighbourhoods, are less likely to be successful in school. Low levels of education, in turn, are likely to worsen peoples' employment prospects, reduce their earnings potential and prevent them from making the contribution to society that they otherwise would. In short, a vicious circle is created: low socio-economic status correlates with low educational attainment, and low educational attainment correlates with lower levels of employment and incomes. We all benefit if levels of educational

attainment in the inner city are improved.

To do this requires particular kinds of educational strategies, tailored to the needs of inner-city communities. In Winnipeg's inner city there are higher than average proportions of Aboriginal people, and recently arrived immigrants and refugees, than is the case in the non-inner city. Given their historical backgrounds and their current socio-economic circumstances, they would benefit from educational strategies designed specifically for their circumstances. Some progress has been made in this regard; much more is needed.

According to the 2001 Census, almost half (49.7%) of young adults aged 15-24 in the inner city were not attending school—ten percentage points higher than for the same age group in the non-inner city. For Aboriginal young adults in the inner city, the proportion not attending school increased to more than half at 53.4%.

In 2001, approximately 13% of the population 20 years and older in the inner city had a grade nine education or less, which was almost double the proportion in the non-inner city. Graduation rates in the inner city were also lower than of the non-inner city.

Almost one-quarter (24%) of the adult population (20 years and older) in the inner city did not have a high school diploma (Carter, 2003).

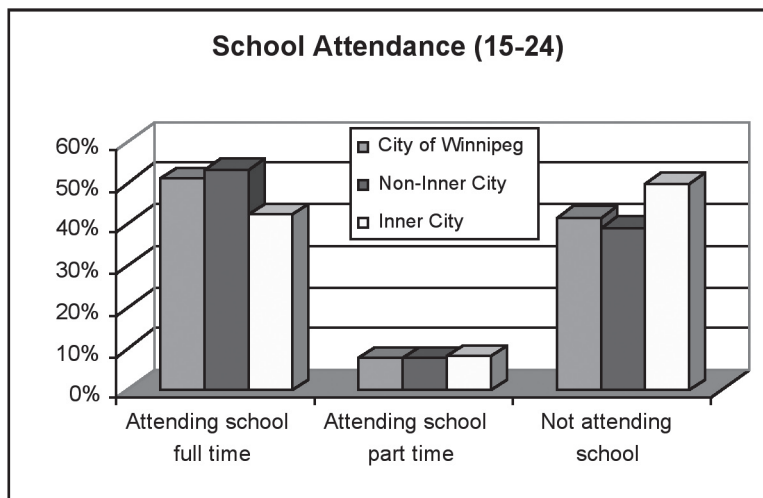


Figure 2

School Attendance, Ages 15-24, Winnipeg, Inner City, and Non-Inner City

With lower rates of high school completion, it is not surprising that adults 20 years of age and over in the inner city were also less likely to have graduated from university. In 2001, only 14.3% of inner city adults aged 20 and older had a Bachelors degree or higher, compared to 19.3% for non-inner-city residents.

While average levels of educational attainment are lower in the inner city than the non-inner city, there have been some strong gains made over time. As Table 10 shows, the proportion of adults whose highest level of education was grade nine or less declined by approximately seven percentage points, from 19% to almost 12% between 1991 and 2001 in the inner city, and the proportion of adults with a university degree increased by approximately three percentage points, from 10.7% to 13.9% over the same period.

Despite these improvements, the gap between Winnipeg’s inner and non-inner city has not decreased significantly. Educational outcomes in the inner city continue to be lower than for the non-inner city. In the inner city, for example,

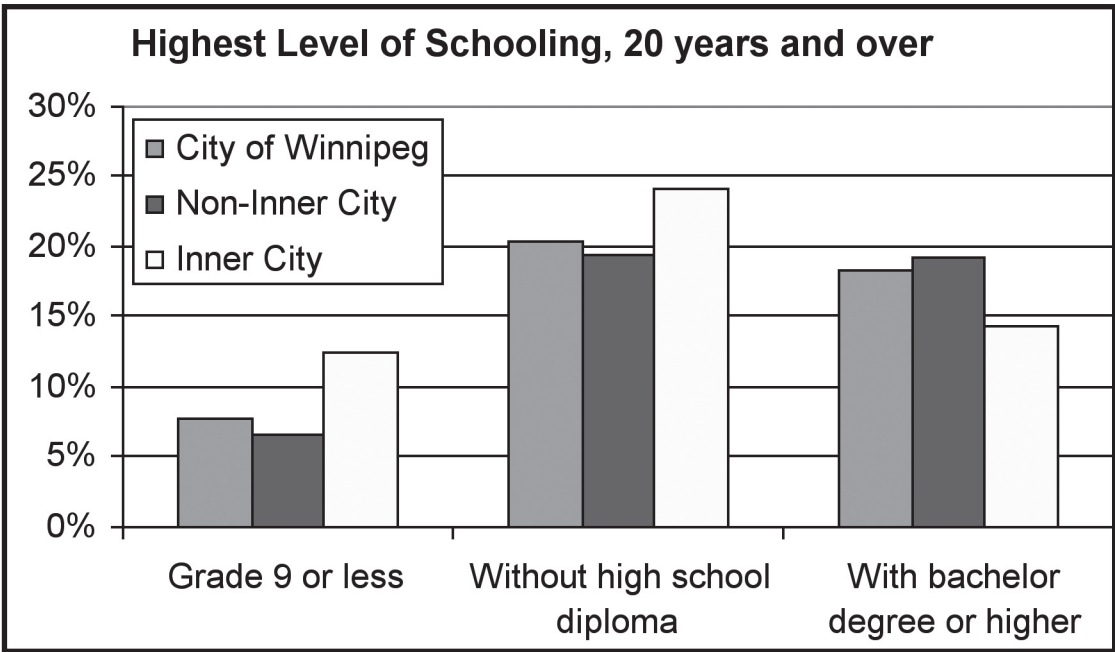
the proportion of the adult population without high school graduation fell from 57% in 1981 to 36% in 2001, while the citywide proportion fell from 48% to 28% (Levin, 2005). Further, Aboriginal peoples continue to have lower levels of educational attainment, on average, than the non-Aboriginal population both in the inner city and the city as a whole. Unless these gaps are addressed, many in the inner city will continue to experience high levels of poverty and difficulty securing employment.

ABORIGINAL REPRESENTATION WITHIN THE SCHOOL SYSTEM

In order for traditionally marginalized groups to be included in, and to excel in, the education system, it is necessary for it to be reflective of and responsive to the ethnic and cultural diversity in the inner city. This needs to happen at a variety of levels: in student recruitment at the university level, in teacher preparation and university courses, in hiring practices at the school level, and in leadership positions, such as the Board of Trustees.

Education in the inner city falls primarily within

Figure 3
Highest Level of Educational Attainment, 20 Years and Over, Winnipeg, Inner City, and Non-Inner City



the jurisdiction of the Winnipeg School Division. The WSD, Manitoba's largest, is home to nearly half (49%) of all Aboriginal families with children under 18 in Winnipeg. These families account for approximately 25% of all families with children in the division (Winnipeg School Division, 2004-05). While a significant proportion of the student population in the WSD is Aboriginal (in some schools the majority of students are Aboriginal), there continues to be an under-representation of Aboriginal people employed within the school system and in leadership positions where the direction is set.

Very few Aboriginal people have filled the role of school trustee in Winnipeg, even though Aboriginal leadership at the community level is very strong. According to the Urban Aboriginal Education Coalition, between 1971 and 1998 there were ninety trustees elected, but only two were members of the Aboriginal community (Community Education Development Association, 2005). We need more Aboriginal people on the school board, to have a role in the governance of their children's education.

In 2003/04, it is estimated that 14% of the total staff (5000) in Winnipeg School Division were of Aboriginal descent and almost 14% of the 2355

teachers were of Aboriginal descent (Schubert, August, 24, 2005). There are also 13 Principals and Vice-Principals and two members of the senior administrative group (formerly Principals in the Division) who are of Aboriginal descent (Schubert, September 20, 2005).

The Winnipeg School Division has attempted to recruit Aboriginal teachers and paraprofessionals. Unfortunately, the supply of Aboriginal teachers in Winnipeg and the inner city simply does not meet the demand. Because there is not enough of a focused effort on actively recruiting Aboriginal people into teacher education programs, there are not enough Aboriginal teachers being trained in Manitoba to teach in the inner city.

Manitoba's ACCESS program is intended to improve accessibility of university education for groups who have traditionally been underrepresented, including Aboriginal people. Within Manitoba's 12 ACCESS programs, there are only two teacher education programs: the off campus, inner-city education program at the Winnipeg Education Centre (WEC), and the Brandon University Northern Teacher Education Program (BUNTEP). WEC trains teachers for Winnipeg's inner city. BUNTEP trains teachers primarily for northern, remote, and rural communities in

Table 10

Levels of Educational Attainment, (Adults 15 years of age & over - both sexes), Inner City and City of Winnipeg, 1991-2001.

Level of Schooling	Inner City			City of Winnipeg		
	1991	1996	2001	1991	1996	2001
Grade 9 or less	19%	14.90%	11.90%	10.80%	9.10%	7.30%
University with degree	10.70%	11.90%	13.90%	13.20%	15.10%	16.80%

Source: Statistics Canada, custom 1991, 1996 & 2001 Census data. Calculations performed by Social Planning Council of Winnipeg.

*Using new boundaries for the inner city.

Manitoba and has little impact on the number of teachers in Winnipeg's inner city.

The WEC program does not produce enough graduates to meet the demand. A 2002 study found that while the WEC program is very effective, the annual intake at that time was typically 18 to 20 students, producing only approximately 14 teachers per year: a fraction of the need (Silver, et al., 2002). Of the 377 students enrolled in the program between 1998/99 and 2002/03, there were 48 graduates, although this number is likely to grow. By comparison, in the same period, there were 1,334 students enrolled in the BUNTEP program with a total of 91 graduates. The average graduate per year in the inner-city education program was about half that for the northern and rural program. While the number of Aboriginal teachers in Manitoba has been increasing, few of these have been trained specifically for Winnipeg's inner city.

The Faculty of Education at the University of Manitoba had nearly 1,300 students in its program in 2002, and the University of Winnipeg has approximately 1,400 students. Despite their large student base and capacity to produce Aboriginal teachers, the proportion of Aboriginal students was *very* small (Silver, et al., 2002, p. 43). In 2004/05 there were 87 students who self-identified as Aboriginal in the Faculty of Education at the University of Manitoba out of a total of 1,497 students, which represented 5.8% of all students in the Faculty (Office of Institutional Analysis, 2004). The ratio was similar at the U of W.

More effort needs to be made to improve access to post secondary education for Aboriginal students and to recruit them specifically into the faculties of Education. This will require a significant expansion of Manitoba's ACCESS programs. Recruitment of Aboriginal students in Manitoba's major Faculties of Education could be achieved by committing to an equity policy in terms of incoming students similar to the Faculty of Social Work at the University of Manitoba, which designates one quarter of its spaces each year for students

who are Aboriginal, immigrants, and people living with disabilities (Silver et al., 2002).

NEWCOMERS

A further critical educational issue facing the inner city has to do with the high proportion of immigrant and refugee populations. The inner city has the highest proportion of residents born outside of Canada: 22%, compared to 17% in other areas of the city (Carter, 2003). According to the 2001 Census, 36% of people who immigrated to Winnipeg lived in the inner city, and 49% of immigrants who arrived within the last five years lived in neighbourhoods within the Winnipeg School Division (Winnipeg School Division, 2004-05). The diversity in the inner city poses unique challenges for the education system, as the need for different programs such as English as a Second Language (ESL) and services for families becomes greater. A shortage of ESL programming, for example, is a frequently heard concern in the inner city. So too is the belief held by many in the immigrant and refugee community that schools do not expect their children to graduate or do well, and so do not support such children to the extent and in the ways that are needed. With the growing numbers of immigrants and refugees arriving in Winnipeg, and their propensity to locate in the inner city, these are educational issues that need much more attention.

ADULT LEARNING CENTRES

Adult learning centres and literacy programs are essential for providing access to education for inner-city residents. Many who do not complete high school in their youth find their way back later in life, so programs offered through adult learning centres are critical for increasing the levels of educational attainment and quality of life for people in the inner city. Adult education has an impact not only on the adults enrolled in the program, but also on the children in their care, through improvement of skills, learning practices, and earnings potential (Levin, 2004).

Adult learning centres (ALCs) provide high school credit and upgrading courses tuition-free to adults who wish to either complete their secondary-school education or upgrade their skills for post-secondary education or employment opportunities. Adult learning centres are not-for-profit organizations that work to standards established in provincial legislation. Between July 2004 and June 2005, there were 18 adult learning centres in Winnipeg with 10 (operating 13 sites) in the inner city. The approximate funding amount for adult learning centres in Winnipeg's inner city is \$4,425,100 per year (Kilbrai, Sept. 6, 2005). This is an exceptionally low level of public investment given the success rate of adult learning centres in graduating adults, as shown in Table 11.

In a 2003 study, adult learning centres in Manitoba were found to be effective, particularly for Aboriginal students, in part due to their commitment to a holistic and learner-centered approach to adult education (Silver, et al., 2003). As Table 11 shows, the average percentage of Aboriginal learners in inner-city ALCs was 44%. The study recommended that additional funding be directed to existing ALCs and to expanding the number of Centres operating in Manitoba. This new support

should be coupled with a systematic plan so that new ALCs are created in areas where need is high, such as the inner city.

The success of the ALCs in producing high school graduates—343 in 2004/05 alone (see Table 11)—strongly suggests that the \$4.4 million currently being spent on inner city ALCs should be dramatically increased. Also, linking these ALCs with the labour market intermediaries proposed in the employment development section of this *Report* would be another positive step, because it would improve adult high school graduates' access to the paid labour market. The ALCs are among the community-based initiatives that work well, and it is a theme of this *Report* that inner city problems are best solved by investing in and building on those community-based initiatives that are working well.

CULTURALLY BASED EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Representation involves not only the people within the school system, but also the content of the curriculum. A common concern with education in Winnipeg and the inner city is that there is not enough Aboriginal curriculum being offered to students (of all backgrounds). Willingness and leadership on the part of Aboriginal communities and organizations and responsiveness on the part of the education system has led to some important gains in culturally based education programs.

The situation, however, is contradictory. On the one hand, good things are happening. The Winnipeg School Division, under certain amounts of pressure from the community, and a certain commitment on the part of individuals within the education system, has taken many steps over the years to address inner city and Aboriginal education issues. In the 1980s the position of Superintendent of Inner City Schools was created to enable sharing between schools and a consistent approach to inner-city education (Levin, 2005). The Division also created an Aboriginal Education Department, which provides assistance and resources to Aboriginal consultants and instruc-

Table 11: Adult Learning Centres in Winnipeg's Inner City

Number of learners	2,851
Number of learners who graduated with a high school diploma	343
Number of learners who gained or improved their employment status	102
Number of learners who intend to attend college or university in fall of 2005	171
Number of Aboriginal learners	1,254

Source: Prepared by Heather Kilbrai, Program Consultant for Adult Learning Centres Adult Learning and Literacy, Manitoba Advanced Education and Training

tional staff to develop appropriate programming and supports for the Aboriginal student base. The Winnipeg School Division has two Aboriginal focus schools: Niji Mahkwa (Nursery-Grade 8) and the award-winning Children of the Earth (Senior 1-4). Interviews conducted in selected inner-city neighbourhoods for Part II of the *State of the Inner City Report* revealed that numerous inner city schools—Dufferin and R.B. Russell were mentioned specifically, as were the schools around Lord Selkirk Park, but the same would be the case for many others—are proving very successful in building bridges to the community. There is also, independently of the WSD, a number of community and off-site programs targeted specifically to Aboriginal people in the inner city, such as the highly successful Urban Circle Training Centre.

On the other hand, many challenges for a fully inclusive education system remain. There are relatively few Aboriginal teachers and Aboriginal people in leadership positions in the education system; Aboriginal content continues to be an add-on to the curriculum, both at the secondary and post-secondary levels; and there do not appear to be any plans for a comprehensive Aboriginal and inner city education strategy that attempts to connect the various components together. Many positive programs and initiatives are also at risk with a project-based funding approach that hampers the sustainability of those programs that have been shown to produce results. So while work is being done towards inclusiveness, it remains piecemeal and disjointed, with huge negative consequences for the inner city. Much remains to be done.

THE IMPORTANCE OF CHILDCARE

The educational disadvantages faced by children who grow up in low-income families and/or low-income neighbourhoods begin even *before* entry into school: “...evidence from Vancouver (Hertzman et al, 2002) shows that socioeconomic gradients are present at school entry, with children from lower SES neighbourhoods entering kin-

dergarten less prepared for school learning than children from higher SES backgrounds.”

Pre-school preparation, including high quality childcare, is part of the solution:

We know that high quality childcare can help prepare children for school, providing them with improved cognitive, language and social skills (Peisner-Feinberg et al, 2001). High quality childcare has been shown to be particularly effective at enhancing early development for children from more disadvantaged backgrounds (Kohen, Hertzman and Willms, 2002) (Brownell, Roos et al, 2004, p. 10).

Yet we do not make high-quality daycare available to nearly enough families, and we particularly do not make it available to low-income families and neighbourhoods.

Currently in Winnipeg, there are enough licensed childcare spots for only 17% of children: approximately one in six (Childcare Coalition of Manitoba, 2004). It is difficult to tell how many are on waiting lists without care, but it is not uncommon to be on a wait list for two years.

Coupled with this is the unequal distribution of available spots: there are more spaces available in higher-income neighbourhoods. Childcare centres open not because of government planning or initiatives, but because of community involvement, in an ad hoc manner. Therefore areas where there are individuals and communities with the skills and time to invest in the establishment of a new centre, will have more childcare spots. Families who reside in low-income neighbourhoods have less access to licensed childcare (Childcare Coalition of Manitoba, 2004). This is illustrated in Table 12.

When childcare is not available, mothers more often than fathers will limit their work-force participation, take part-time employment or, if possible, opt for flexible work, all of which generally carry few benefits or pensions. The accom-

modations women make in search of work-family balance have life-long consequences including the very real risk of greater poverty in old age because of low lifetime earnings and inadequate pensions. Childcare can help ease the strain of poverty, while also enhancing women's economic security. For these reasons childcare is essential for gender equity.

Finally, it is only through licensed childcare that subsidies are available for children to attend a childcare centre. So, while there may be individuals who offer to care for children in their homes, there is no government assistance for the costs, and in the case of unlicensed facilities, there is no guarantee of appropriate and stimulating care.

In the absence of appropriate and stimulating care, children in low-income neighbourhoods are less likely to succeed in school, and thus more likely to be trapped in poverty as adults.

What is more, by making childcare available and affordable, parents and especially mothers are more able to enter the workforce. This in turn supports more overall secure employment for childcare workers. And it has been found that for every childcare job, another 2.15 are created (Childcare Coalition of Manitoba, 2004). Early childhood development programs are a productive economic investment.

Table 12: Availability of childcare in two inner-city wards

	# children 12 years & under	# child care spaces available*	Percentage of licensed spaces by children
Daniel McIntyre Ward	7,390	1,119	18%
Spence	750	169	
Centennial	560	62	
Point Douglas Ward	8,420	1,226	16%
Lord Selkirk Park	355	33	

*Not including family day care spaces. Figures are approximate, derived from Prentice and McCracken 2004.

III. Discussion

Many of the solutions to inner city problems are already in existence and have emerged from the community. In the last 25 years, since the beginning of the Core Area Initiative I, there has been considerable funding of inner city projects and programs, and a great deal of experimentation and innovation. The results have been impressive. Many outstanding community development practitioners have emerged. They comprise an exceptionally talented and now very experienced stratum of leaders in inner city community development. Many programs and institutions have been created, and they are now building capacity and making change on an ongoing basis. Much has been learned.

We know, for example, that solutions come from and are based in the community. We know that there are no quick or easy solutions, but that if community-based organizations are able to keep working consistently over time, then change for the better happens, slowly but surely. We know that community-based solutions work best when people in the community are involved, when they participate in deciding upon what is to be done and how, and when they themselves are hired to do the work when employment opportunities arise.

The provision of adequate housing, for example, is an important part of a comprehensive, inner city anti-poverty strategy. It is best done via community-based housing organizations, and with the use of a community economic development approach to create jobs and build community capacity. We need improved housing policies to ensure that this happens.

Employment is an important part of a comprehensive inner-city strategy. We have many very

effective inner-city employment development organizations. We need enhanced strategies aimed at connecting them with educational institutions and employers.

Education is an important part of a comprehensive inner-city strategy. The inner city has *particular* characteristics that require specifically tailored educational approaches. One particularly effective approach that has emerged in recent years is Adult Learning Centres, which respond effectively to the fact that a disproportionate number of inner-city residents do not complete high school, but choose to pursue high school accreditation later, as adults. We need considerably more investment in these unique, community-based organizations, and policy aimed at ensuring that all inner-city residents have ready access to an Adult Learning Centre.

A detailed evaluation of the Ndaawin project in Lord Selkirk Park—a relatively small pilot project aimed primarily at preventing the sexual exploitation through prostitution of at-risk Aboriginal children aged 8-13 years—also points to the benefits of community-based approaches. The analysis found that the costs to society of children being sexually exploited through prostitution are very high: for example there are increased health-care costs, increased criminal-justice costs, lowered lifetime taxable earnings. So high are these costs that the five-year Ndaawin program, which cost approximately three-quarters of a million dollars, would be recouped if just 1.6 children were prevented from being sexually exploited through prostitution as a result of the program (RESOLVE and CS/RESORS Consulting, 2005).

Multi-year funding of CBOs is still far from

the norm, but there are small steps being taken in that direction. The provincial government, primarily through Neighbourhoods Alive!, has provided core, multi-year funding to inner-city community development corporations, like the Spence Neighbourhood Association and the North End Community Renewal Corporation. United Way of Winnipeg is now providing some multi-year funding, as is the Winnipeg Foundation in Centennial neighbourhood. This is a development that is very much to be applauded and encouraged.

The opposite trend, as exemplified by the City of Winnipeg's threatened withdrawal of funding for inner-city housing and the officers in the schools program, is still very much a problem that holds back inner city revitalization.

More broadly, the currently trendy notion is that CBOs should be able to become "sustainable," meaning that they should be able to support themselves financially. This is simply unrealistic and wrong-headed. A 2003 Canadian Council on Social Development report, *Funding Matters* (Scott, 2003), observed that: "the capacity of the non-profit and voluntary sector to fulfill its important role in Canadian society is being undermined and eroded by new funding strategies that are intended to increase accountability, self-sufficiency and competition." But the very nature of the work that inner city CBOs do requires ongoing government support. It is the responsibility of governments and other funders to fund the CBOs that have demonstrated success, and to do so on a multi-year basis, and when they do so, we all benefit.

What is needed now is more funding for the solutions that work: more stable, core, long-term funding.

In addition, we were told repeatedly that poverty is a major problem in Winnipeg's inner city. Although poverty is about more than just low incomes, it is indeed about low incomes. Many inner-city peoples' incomes are so low—the result

of low wages and the declining real value of social assistance rates—that they must take extraordinary measures to survive. Inner-city incomes are so low that many people are being trapped in poverty. Significant increases in the minimum wage and in social assistance rates are an essential part of an inner city revitalization strategy.

What we can expect if we invest in community-based organizations and increased incomes in these ways over the long term is the creation, in time, of healthy mixed-income neighbourhoods in which people feel safe to walk the streets, in which schools are centres of community activity, in which recreational and employment opportunities are available for all, and particularly for youth, and in which there is a ready supply of comfortable and affordable housing, including rental housing, to meet all needs.

IV. Recommendations

The following recommendations are based on the discussion in both volumes of the *State of the Inner City Report*. Several of the recommendations below are best understood in the context of Volume II's discussion of community safety and security and the Lord Selkirk Development.

1. More Stable Community Funding

We recommend:

- That a much greater proportion of the funding for community-based organizations and community programs and initiatives be *core funding*—by which we mean funding that enables organizations and programs to operate on a day-to-day basis, funding for staffing, rent, and equipment, for example—as opposed to project funding.
- That a much greater proportion of the funding for community-based organizations and community programs and initiatives be multi-year as opposed to short-term funding.

RATIONALE

Far too much of the time of skilled inner-city community practitioners is spent raising and accounting for funds on a project-by-project basis, taking valuable time away from the work of community revitalization. There is considerable evidence in the literature that core, multi-year funding of community-based organizations and of community programs and initiatives produces greater organizational stability and predictability, which in turn has a positive impact on neighbourhood revitalization. That finding was clearly confirmed in our comparative analysis

of Spence, Centennial and Lord Selkirk Park neighbourhoods. A slight shift in the direction of core and multi-year funding has occurred, and is to be applauded. More is needed.

2. Improved Housing Programs and Funding

We recommend:

- That a much greater proportion of funding for inner-city housing be directed at social housing, by which we mean housing that has a subsidy attached that is sufficient to ensure long-term affordability for low-income families.

RATIONALE

This would enable the creation of more low-income rental housing, which is where the inner city's housing need is greatest. Social housing is needed because the market has failed to produce low-income rental housing.

- That to the greatest extent possible housing production be delivered via community-based housing organizations.

RATIONALE

CBOs that work in the production of inner-city housing are close to and intimately familiar with the neighbourhoods in which they work, and are best able to produce housing in a way that is consistent with the needs of the community.

- That housing delivered by CBOs include a strong community economic development (CED) component, that includes local hiring and training and, to the extent possible, local

purchasing of supplies.

RATIONALE

In addition to adequate and affordable housing, the residents of inner-city neighbourhoods need good jobs. Hiring and training local residents to build or renovate housing creates housing and jobs and contributes significantly to inner-city capacity building.

- That existing Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation stock be repaired and renovated to improve the living conditions of its many tenants, and that this work be undertaken in a manner consistent with CED principles: hiring and training local inner-city residents to do the work and, to the extent possible, purchasing supplies locally.

RATIONALE

Many people interviewed for the *State of the Inner City Report* provided detailed accounts of the need for improved maintenance and repair of the public housing stock owned by Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation. A capital-spending plan for maintenance and improvement of MHRC housing stock is in place. Implementing the plan would provide an opportunity to improve the housing conditions of many inner-city residents, to extend the useful life of existing public housing stock, and to create much-needed jobs and job training for inner-city residents.

3. Employment Development

We recommend:

- That the provincial government take the steps necessary to build an active partnership among the major actors in employment development—CBOs doing various kinds of employment development work, educational institutions, governments, unions and especially employers—to prepare and move large numbers of low-income inner-city residents into good jobs. These kinds of comprehensive employment

partnerships are often called ‘labour market intermediaries.’

RATIONALE

Good jobs are essential for inner-city residents and inner city revitalization. They produce the incomes that can support families and build futures. They create a sense of purpose and of self-worth. Large numbers of inner-city residents are outside the paid labour force, at a time when skilled labour shortages are beginning to appear and are expected to worsen. There is considerable evidence from other jurisdictions that labour market intermediaries are effective in moving large numbers of low-income inner-city residents into good jobs.

4. Education

We recommend:

- That particular attention be paid to the educational needs of inner-city Aboriginal and immigrant and refugee children and youth, with the objective of creating the conditions in which they can thrive in school, and that this be achieved by following the advice of the Aboriginal and immigrant and refugee communities.

RATIONALE

Although improving, levels of educational attainment in Winnipeg’s inner city are still below those of the non-inner city, and there is evidence that this is especially the case for Aboriginal, and in some cases immigrant and refugee children. Non-standardized approaches that are tailored to the particular needs of these groups of students are needed. The Aboriginal and immigrant and refugee communities will have a clear understanding of what is needed to improve the levels of educational attainment of their children.

- That provincial government investment in Adult Learning Centres—not-for-profit, adult educational institutions that offer the mature

Grade 12 diploma to adult school-leavers in a student-friendly environment—be increased very significantly, so as to increase the numbers of such Centres and the numbers of adult learners.

- That the location of Adult Learning Centres be the result of a planning process aimed at ensuring that all inner-city residents have reasonable access to an Adult Learning Centre.

RATIONALE

Large numbers of inner-city residents are not completing high school, despite recent improvements in graduation rates. However, many inner-city residents, including large numbers of Aboriginal people, choose to return to school as adults to earn their Grade 12 diploma. Adult Learning Centres have a proven track record of producing significant numbers of adult high school graduates: 343 in 2004/05. They are non-profit institutions that work to standards established by provincial legislation. This is a strategy that works, and is especially important given the importance of education in fighting poverty. We currently invest very little in Adult Learning Centres in the inner city. Increased investment is likely to produce very positive results, given especially that improved educational attainment correlates strongly with other positive outcomes of benefit to the inner city.

5. Safety and Security

We recommend:

- That neighbourhood-based community policing—by which we mean ‘cops on the beat’ in neighbourhoods that they come to know well and in which they are able to earn the trust of residents—be established in all inner-city neighbourhoods.
- That many more structured opportunities for organized recreational activities—team sports, opportunities to engage in music and the visual

arts, for example—be made available for inner city children and youth.

RATIONALE

Safety and security are major concerns for inner-city residents. This came out clearly in our interviews. People told us that they want community policing, in the form of ‘cops on the beat’, in their neighbourhoods. They told us that more structured recreational opportunities are needed for children and youth. These are small but necessary steps toward improved safety and security. It is important to note, in addition, that the implementation of each of the recommendations in this section—improved housing and employment and education, for example—would contribute significantly to improved inner city safety and security.

6. A Vision for Lord Selkirk Park

We recommend:

- That a major long-term rehabilitation and revitalization effort be undertaken in the Lord Selkirk Park Development, and that this include both the Development’s physical re-design, and intensive community organizing and community development work to engage the involvement of residents of the Development, and that this be done in a manner consistent with the existing plans of the North End Community Renewal Corporation.

RATIONALE

Our interviews make it clear that the Lord Selkirk Park Development is a neighbourhood that is struggling. Statistical data confirm this. The high degree of concentrated poverty, together with the physical design of such projects, have been found inevitably to create the kinds of problems identified in this *Report*. All over North America 1960s-style public housing projects like Lord Selkirk Park are being physically redesigned, generally to produce mixed-income neighbourhoods, and

efforts are being made to engage the involvement of residents. This is a process that ought to be undertaken immediately at Lord Selkirk Park.

7. Childcare

We recommend:

- That new expenditures and plans for improved child care in Manitoba include directed funds to increase child care spaces specifically in the inner city.

RATIONALE

Manitoba's readiness to implement childcare strategies includes redressing low salaries and providing advanced training for providers. These are important initiatives. But they do not address the fundamental shortage of licensed and subsidized childcare spaces—a shortage that is particularly acute in the inner city. Without adequate childcare provision parents, and especially women, are limited in their choices for further education and employment, thus trapping low-income inner-city residents in poverty. A focus on the inner city is needed to supplement community capacity to initiative new childcare sites.

8. Incomes

We recommend:

- That the minimum wage be increased to \$10 per hour in today's terms, and indexed.
- That Employment and Income Assistance rates be raised at least to the levels of 1992, and indexed.

RATIONALE

Poverty was identified repeatedly as a major problem in inner-city neighbourhoods. While poverty is about more than just a lack of money, as argued in this *Report*, we are convinced that the incomes of far too many inner-city residents are far too low to enable them to live dignified lives, and far too low to enable many of them to work their way out of poverty.

9. A Comprehensive Strategy

We have listed eight separate recommendations in this concluding section. But these recommendations are not separate. They are interconnected. If we improve inner-city housing, we will promote greater residential stability, which will improve educational outcomes and increase residents' involvement in their neighbourhoods. If residents are more involved in their neighbourhoods, safety is increased. If we use a CED approach to the building of inner-city housing, we create more jobs, which not only improves incomes, but also improves educational outcomes for children. If we invest core, multi-year funds in inner-city CBOs, we will generate more community involvement, which will build more social capital, which will in turn improve safety and security.

The process of revitalizing the inner city will, of necessity, be a slow one. But the evidence is clear that action on each of the fronts recommended above will produce synergies that will magnify the positive changes that will follow.

The costs of implementing these recommendations, although affordable, are considerable. The costs of *not* doing so are greater.

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