



# Neighbourhoods Alive!

Manitoba 



## A Report to the Community

v o l u m e 1

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# Ministers' Message

**H**ealthy communities are built by people with a clear sense of common purpose. By increasing the capacity of people living in neighbourhoods in need, and partnering with local Neighbourhood Renewal Corporations (NRCs), the Manitoba government wants to help residents have more control over revitalizing their neighbourhoods and bring about meaningful and lasting change.

Manitobans have recognized that the visible deterioration of inner-city neighbourhoods affects everyone. On June 28, 2000, *Neighbourhoods Alive!* was formally announced as the new provincial government's long-term, community-based social and economic strategy to support and encourage community-driven revitalization efforts in designated older urban neighbourhoods in Winnipeg, Brandon and Thompson. This initiative forms part of a larger strategy that develops community initiatives in provincial economic development.

We recognize that the needs and priorities of each community vary. During the first two years of the initiative, we announced a range of activities and projects supported by *Neighbourhoods Alive!* and responding to locally identified needs, including core funding for our partner NRCs.

New employment training programs, community facility improvements, extensive housing conversion, renovation and new construction, expanded recreation activities for children and youth and crime prevention initiatives are other initiatives underway.

The issues facing inner city neighbourhoods cross many jurisdictional boundaries. We recognize the need to involve all levels of government, to co-operate in rejuvenation efforts. *Neighbourhoods Alive!* staff has initiated collaboration among the three levels of government and developed partnerships with community organizations to co-ordinate efforts, exchange information and ensure that local needs are met.

We are pleased to provide this inaugural copy of the *Neighbourhoods Alive!* Newsletter. It offers information about *Neighbourhoods Alive!* programs, and provides first hand accounts of some of the exciting community projects supported to date.

We also invite you to visit the *Neighbourhoods Alive!* Web site ([www.neighbourhoodsalive.mb.ca](http://www.neighbourhoodsalive.mb.ca)) for timely updates and access to valuable community development tools and links. Please let us know what you think and give us your comments or suggestions on this report or any *Neighbourhoods Alive!* initiative.



Jean Friesen,  
Minister of  
Intergovernmental  
Affairs



Gord Mackintosh,  
Minister of Justice



Eric Robison,  
Minister of  
Aboriginal &  
Northern Affairs



Time Sale,  
Minister of  
Family Services  
& Housing



Drew Caldwell,  
Minister of  
Education, Training  
& Youth

## Renewing pride, renewing homes

**S**ometimes the little things in life can be signs of the biggest changes.

In the Spence neighbourhood on the west side of Winnipeg's core area, people are walking dogs, riding bikes, gardening and getting to know their neighbours again, thanks to a series of positive changes brought about by the efforts of residents, community organizations and governments.

"Everybody talks about the changes," says Shannon Watson, director of the Spence Neighbourhood Association and a resident of the district bounded by Balmoral and Agnes, and Portage and Notre Dame.

"People are spending more time on the street, biking, walking the dog, not just going inside and closing the blinds."

If the mood in the neighbourhood has changed, so, too, has the physical state of its buildings. And those two changes are clearly linked.

### Three levels of government join forces

Funds for housing revitalization in designated Winnipeg neighbourhoods are provided through the Winnipeg Housing and Homelessness Initiative. The WHHI is a three-year, multi-million dollar partnership established by the Government of Canada, Province of Manitoba and City of Winnipeg to address declining housing stock,



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE BRANDON NEIGHBORHOOD RENEWAL CORPORATION

homelessness and the revitalization of the city's older neighbourhoods. Under *Neighbourhoods Alive!*, the Government of Manitoba has committed \$8 million over four years for housing in designated Winnipeg neighbourhoods, plus an additional \$1 million each year for housing in Brandon and Thompson.

From the single-window office at 233 Portage Avenue, the staff of WHHI make it easier for

community housing groups to get help from any of the three levels of government to improve housing conditions for residents in their neighbourhoods. The partnership of *Neighbourhoods Alive!* and the WHHI isn't only fixing houses. Through the JobWorks Youth Builders Training Program, young people are getting a chance to upgrade their employment skills by working on renovation projects.

The Spence Neighbourhood Association targeted one specific block on Langside Avenue that had been most in need of improvement, says Watson. Of 21 projects undertaken or completed with involvement from the association, 14 are within that single target block.

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# Neighbourhood Renewal Fund strengthens Manitoba communities



In a neighbourhood once unfairly labelled “crime-ridden” by Winnipeg’s media, young people are now proudly pointing to things of beauty they’ve created.

And in the process, the community artists at Art City are helping to turn around their West Broadway neighbourhood.

Support from the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF) of *Neighbourhoods Alive!* has helped Art City provide people in the community, particularly youth, with art workshops, studio space and the chance to participate in community celebrations.

Founded by West Broadway resident, and internationally acclaimed visual artist, Wanda Koop, Art City is intended to be “a place that’s accessible to everybody, where they can come in and express themselves,” says Elise Finnegan, co-director of the project.

“The kids are able to point with pride to the work they’ve done.”

## Development Corporation plays key role

The West Broadway Development Corporation, which receives funding from the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund for a number of its projects, played a key role in getting Art City up and running. The Development Corporation has used NRF funds to co-ordinate elm banding, build community gardens, organize a community clean-up, a job resource centre, a community newspaper and a neighbourhood lighting project designed to enhance safety, says Paul Chorney, executive director of the corporation.

Now independent, but very much part of the renewal and revitalization of its community, Art City involves hundreds of West Broadway residents, of all ages. The organization puts on special events, such as the community art exhibit that attracted 300 area residents to its opening and a community parade last summer that featured hand-made costumes, masks and floats. Professional artists from the community conduct regular workshops on subjects including Aboriginal beadwork, silk screening, clock making, painting, pottery, photography, songwriting and drumming.

“We have a wealth of artists to draw from in our community,” says Finnegan.

Open from 4 to 8 pm Tuesdays to Fridays and 12 to 4 pm on Saturdays, the West Broadway group gives creatively inclined young people something to do after school. It’s also the setting for the art portion of Gordon Bell High School’s alternative school.

During the summer months, Art City is open from 2 to 9 pm to provide a constructive way to spend the long, hot days. In 2001, a *Neighbourhoods Alive!* funded project at Art City paid for establishment of a creative skateboard park that was open from July to October.

Just as sports camps and team sports are crucial for giving some young people the

chance to develop self-esteem and social skills, the opportunity to create art can be a life-changing experience for many participants.

“The artists act as role models for many of the kids,” says Finnegan, pointing to guests such as acclaimed songwriters Greg McPherson and Christine Fellows, drummer Jordan Hansen and video/multimedia artist Jake Moore, who led a series of workshops in the summer of 2001 culminating in the community parade.

Attracting 300 children and adults to a joyous parade and barbecue is symbolic of the progress made in building a health community.

“During the parade, somebody called out ‘what are you celebrating?’ and one of the kids called back ‘Art!’” says Finnegan.

He might just as accurately have replied: “Ourselves!”

## Play place helps renew Thompson neighbourhood

For the community around Thompson’s Juniper School, neighbourhood renewal meant providing children with a safe place to play.

Since the school’s old playground equipment no longer meets current safety standards, the Juniper School Parent Council took on the task of raising funds, to replace the equipment and create a family gathering place.

With \$11,300 from the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund of *Neighbourhoods Alive!* to bolster local fund-raising and grants from other agencies, the parent council was able to raise the \$52,000 needed for a fitness area that includes climbing structures, swings, and several other play structures. Over time, the plan is to add park benches, trees, basketball courts and soccer pitches.

To make the project more affordable, community volunteers themselves erected the new structure, says Daphne Bennett, vice-president of the council. That, in turn, added to the project’s community-building effect.

“There was such a good feeling among the volunteers who put it together,” says Bennett. It was like family.”

“The kids love it. They respect it. There’s been no vandalism at all.”



PHOTO COURTESY OF TALIA POTASH/ART CITY

## NEIGHBOURHOOD RENEWAL FUND

The Neighbourhood Renewal Fund makes \$2 million a year available for projects that strengthen designated local communities in Winnipeg, Brandon and Thompson. Funds go to a variety of neighbourhood organizations for projects that benefit local communities, involve neighbourhoods in their planning and implementation and are supported by the community. Targeted communities face significant social, economic and environmental challenges, such as high rates of poverty,

unemployment and crime, as well as a need for adequate recreation, family support, affordable housing and economic opportunities.

In Winnipeg, the program focuses on the communities of Lord Selkirk Park, North and South Point Douglas, William Whyte, West Broadway and Spence. Within Brandon, the focus is on the city centre. In Thompson, the fund focuses on parts of neighbourhoods throughout the city.



# Helping communities lead change

The renewal of neighbourhoods in Winnipeg's North End can be measured as much in worn-out walking shoes as in derelict buildings that have been renovated.

"Every Tuesday night there's a group of us who get out and walk the streets and look for broken sidewalks or streetlights," says Sue Ziemski, co-chair of the William Whyte Residents' Association and a 24-year resident of the North End. "We meet up with people and tell them about our association and then they start coming out with us."

"Since the residents' association started, people are getting out and talking to their neighbours. You're seeing a resurgence of care."

While the conversion of run-down or boarded-up buildings into modern homes, the creation of community gardens and junk hauled away in community clean-ups are the obvious results of neighbourhood renewal efforts in communities like William Whyte, neighbours who care are the key to all those improvements.

## Community Renewal Corp supports neighbourhoods

And behind the scenes is the North End Community Renewal Corporation (NECRC), a non-profit, democratic organization with a mandate to help residents of the North End improve their economic and social conditions.

The NECRC helped the William Whyte Residents' Association – and several other community groups – become established, and continues to provide administrative, research and communication support. With \$200,000 per year in operating funds from the Neighbourhood Development Assistance Program of *Neighbourhoods Alive!*, the NECRC has the resources and expertise to keep positive momentum going throughout the North End.

Garry Loewen, executive director of the NECRC, says the North End has suffered from a variety of social stresses for years, but previous efforts to renew the area tended to be program-oriented and directed from outside the community.

## Local control is key to improvement

"What was required was an entity under the control of North End stakeholders," he says. The North End needed a democratic organization that could put residents' priorities

into action and co-ordinate the efforts of the many organizations working on issues such as housing improvement.

Although housing has been a major focus of the North End CRC, the organization has supported improvements in safety, wellness, education and career upgrading. The NECRC brought together community organizations to establish the PATH (Planning Alternative Tomorrows with Hope) Resource Centre where, in 18 months, approximately 770 community residents worked on career planning, literacy training, education upgrading or family issues. It has also been leading 18 organizations in planning to create a wellness and fitness centre to replace the old North End Y.

On the safety front, the neighbourhood renewal corporation helped establish a pilot project in which three Winnipeg police are assigned as resource officers to 15 North End schools and it has formed a community group to conduct a North End safety plan.

The NECRC helps local organizations with research, grant-proposal writing and other vital areas of non-profit administrative expertise. As a result, grassroots groups are able to grow and better serve their community. For example, the NECRC helped the Point Douglas Women's Empowerment Project expand its programming and space by obtaining funds to buy a building.

"All of that kind of work is capacity building, and none of that could have been funded on a project-by-project basis," says Loewen. "That's why operating funding from *Neighbourhoods Alive!* is so important."

Ziemski, who moved to William Whyte 24 years ago from River Heights, sees the result of the growing capacity of the community to make positive changes: "When I first moved here it was great, but then things declined. Now something's happening. It's a lot more pleasant again."

## Affordable housing is Brandon's top priority

In Manitoba's second-largest city, economic growth is creating a shortage of affordable housing, leading to concerns about downtown.

That's why the Brandon Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation (NRC) has targeted creation of affordable housing in the city centre as a top priority.

Executive director Laurene Viarobo notes that Brandon's suburbs have grown rapidly but until recently, there was little housing growth in the core.

"A healthy core leads to a healthy city," says Viarobo.

To get more people living downtown, the Brandon NRC has been targeting development of second-storey housing in commercial buildings, in the process it is helping to revitalize several heritage buildings. Viarobo's organization, which receives \$75,000 per year from the Neighbourhood Development Assistance Program, helps landlords qualify for Neighbourhood Housing Assistance or other forms of aid to upgrade their buildings.

Major successes have included adding seven new units in a vacant commercial building on Rosser Avenue and 11 units in the Sun Centre Building. The neighbourhood renewal corporation also co-ordinated a major building project that saw 11 new units built on the fourth floor of one building, with the other 32 apartment units upgraded.

## Low vacancy rate a cause for concern

Improving the stock of quality affordable housing is crucial in the city, which had a vacancy rate of less than one per cent even before the Maple Leaf plant opened. With other major employers moving to town or expanding – including the arrival of the 2nd Battalion of Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry – the city needs approximately 1,100 units of affordable housing. Last year, the Brandon NRC supported the development of 200 units.

While housing has been the top priority, the NRC is also working to improve greenspace in the city core, developing plans to upgrade Rideau and Stanley Parks and creating a popular water park downtown in Stanley Park.

## NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE

The Neighbourhood Development Assistance program provides funds to support the creation and operation of democratic Neighbourhood Renewal Corporations (NRC) in the designated *Neighbourhoods Alive!* communities. NRCs are locally administered and accountable to their neighbourhoods, working to enable them to plan and co-ordinate community economic development. Start up activities to establish a NRC can be funded to a maximum of \$25,000 and core operations of the corporations are funded for up to five years with yearly contributions of between \$75,000 and \$200,000 depending on community size.

PHOTO COURTESY OF SPENCE NEIGHBOURHOOD ASSOCIATION



# Giving kids reasons to cheer



PHOTO COURTESY OF WASAC

**W**hen Jared Fletcher competed in the 2002 North American Indigenous Games, he had his own cheering section.

That's because the University of Manitoba sport science student, and member of the Bisons Track and Field team, is more than just an athlete. For young participants in the Winnipeg Aboriginal Sports Achievement Centre Kids Camp (WASAC) he's a role model.

This year is Fletcher's third as a program leader at the summer sports camp, located in North End Winnipeg at the Old Ex arena on Dufferin Avenue. He's one of 16 leaders who oversee activities ranging from floor hockey, basketball, baseball and soccer to drumming, dancing, arts and crafts.

The program also put together a team of young athletes for the Manitoba Indigenous Summer Games, which provided a great benefit to all the participants.

## Games boost kids' confidence

"They're a real confidence booster," says Fletcher. "It gives the kids something to be proud of."

Children also learn social skills and make friends during the summer program.

"They can see other kids from the same school and they can build friendships with other kids," says Fletcher. "The kids who came last year are really excited about coming back."

The summer program has been funded through the *Neighbourhoods Alive!* Community Initiatives Program, receiving \$41,000 in 2000-01 and \$75,000 per year since.

Darryl Bruce, executive director of the Manitoba Aboriginal Sport and Recreation Council, which operates WASAC, estimates that 3,000 eight to 14 year olds have taken part in the free program since it began.

## Cost of sports an obstacle

"One of the biggest obstacles for inner-city youth is the cost of sports and recreation," says Bruce. WASAC provides the one-week day camps, plus transportation and lunch, at no cost. Program leaders like Fletcher visit inner city schools in the spring to promote the program and sign up participants.

"The great thing about our leaders is that not only are they knowledgeable and energetic, they are great role models," says Bruce. "They're pursuing post-secondary education and the kids really look up to them. Look at Jared. He's accomplished as an athlete and as a student."

## COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

*Neighbourhoods Alive!* has allocated \$300,000 per year to the Community Initiatives Program (CIP), which supports projects that have a broad impact on Winnipeg's inner city or target specific groups across the inner city. Community organizations can apply to the CIP to fund programs that enhance economic development, increase safety and prevent crime, reduce at-risk behaviour, contribute to better health, strengthen tenant-landlord relations and improve co-ordination and co-operation in neighbourhoods. Initiatives funded through the program must involve more than one inner-city neighbourhood and can include neighbourhoods that are not currently designated by *Neighbourhoods Alive!*





An initiative of Neighbourhoods Alive!

# A beacon of hope for Manitoba's kids

For some kids, having the opportunity to shoot a few hoops or play a round of Monopoly late on a Saturday night can make all the difference in the world.

Rossbrook House, a 25-year-old institution in Winnipeg's North End, gives kids a safe alternative to the street with a 24-hour drop-in centre on weekends and holidays. But, while the house has always been a safe place to go, without extra staff its weekend programming is limited.

Now, thanks to the Lighthouses program, a *Neighbourhoods Alive!* initiative, Rossbrook House can do more to attract kids who might otherwise find unsafe environments tempting, says Phil Chiappetta, program manager.

"Lighthouses has enhanced our ability to provide weekend programming," he says, referring to the gym and games room at the building on Ross and Sherbrook. "If we didn't have extra staff, we wouldn't be able to open up that part of the building at night. We have a nice, cozy place to watch a movie, or you can play one-on-one basketball or play a board game."

## New program helps teenage girls

With extra staff, made possible through the Lighthouses funding, Rossbrook has been able to begin a new late-night program specifically targeting teenage girls 13 to 16. The girls come in for snacks, a place to meet

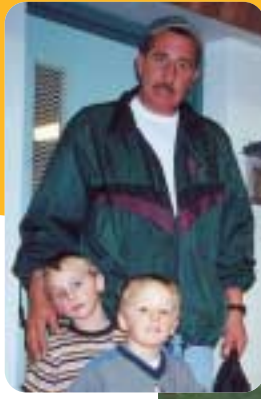
friends and talk to staff and a break from the pressures that can make life even more difficult for young people.

Some of the weekend programs are as simple as loading a half-dozen kids into the Rossbrook House van and going for a drive to see the sights, listen to the radio and stop at a fast-food drive-through. But all the programming has the goal of giving kids a place to go when the alternative might be an environment leading to destructive behaviour.

Founded in 1976 by Sister McNamara of the Sisters of the Holy Name, the staff at Rossbrook House know that some children have no alternative to the street. By offering programs – including elementary, junior high and high schools – as well as a drop-in centre, Rossbrook House reaches as many as 150 young people every day.

"Rossbrook functions as an extended family," says Chiappetta.

The latest additions to the drop-in centre's staff, whose positions are made possible by Lighthouses, are graduates of the drop-in centre themselves. Chiappetta says Rossbrook House hires young people from the drop-in centre as junior staff and when senior positions come up those junior staff are often excellent candidates. They know what the children coming to the centre are going through and they know the community.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF TEEN STOP JEUNESSE



## LIGHTHOUSES

Manitoba Justice has created the Lighthouses fund as part of the *Neighbourhoods Alive!* strategy to support recreational, education and social programs for young people throughout Manitoba. Using schools, recreation centres and other community facilities, 21 programs, funded through Lighthouses, each receive \$15,000 per year for activities organized by and for local youth.

The main goal of Lighthouses is to reduce youth crime by providing young people with positive alternatives, since studies show that children who participate in organized activities outside of school feel better about themselves, get along better with others and perform better in school.

## Giving kids a voice across Manitoba

With 21 Lighthouses programs offered by community groups across Manitoba, a wide variety of activities are available for children and youth, says Richard Kennett, program manager in Manitoba Justice.

"The Lighthouses sites themselves look at what they need the most," says Kennett. "We want the youth involved in decision-making at every location."

Activities at the Lighthouses locations include swimming, drama, bowling, visits with elders and even a 10-week session on parenting. Many sites try to give young people a chance to give back to the community, through clean-ups, fund-raising events or other activities. They also give children a chance to meet young-adult program leaders and reconsider the paths they are following in life.

"Some young people who've made some poor decisions need to make new friends and find new role models," says Kennett.

Lighthouses information available at [www.gov.mb.ca/justice/lighthouses](http://www.gov.mb.ca/justice/lighthouses)

## Renewing pride, renewing homes

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### Positive effects felt far and wide

But the positive effects extend far beyond the individual buildings. Many homeowners have worked with the neighbourhood association to access small homeowner grants of \$1,000 for exterior renovations, generally improving the look of the older neighbourhood. Funding for these small renovation grants comes from the City of Winnipeg and the Province through the WHHI.

And it's not just current residents who are feeling more comfortable in their neighbourhood. Spence is now drawing tenants and homebuyers attracted by the prospect of renovated character homes within walking distance of downtown and the University of Winnipeg.

In Spence, and other neighbourhoods targeted for Neighbourhood Housing Assistance, many of the newly renovated homes are available on a rent-to-own basis. After five years of paying rent, residents may become

homeowners by assuming the mortgage. And the rent for a fully upgraded home, with all new wiring, plumbing, insulation and other features, compares favourably with what many families were paying for substandard housing before.

"These are 100-year-old houses," explains Watson. "They're being completely gutted right down to the frame and getting new plumbing, heating, electrical, insulation."

### Renovations draw interest from buyers

The Neighbourhood Association has been advertising renovated sale or rental homes in the Winnipeg Real Estate News or Rental Guide, and the interest has been overwhelming. Homes in the neighbourhood will sell for \$50,000 and up, while new in-fill houses have sold for approximately \$70,000. That home buyers will make that investment in the neighbourhood is a sign of how

far it has come from the recent days when it was known for boarded-up buildings and neglected rooming houses. Through the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund, *Neighbourhoods Alive!* also contributed funding towards the salary of the association's housing co-ordinator, Inonge Aliaga. She worked with residents to prepare a housing plan for reducing the number of vacant buildings, developing vacant land, improving safety and security, and improving the quality of rental housing in the community. Since completing the plan, she has been working with the Winnipeg Housing Rehabilitation Corporation and other housing developers to direct renovations, market renovated or new houses or rental units and help create a tenants' association in the area's rooming houses.

"Throughout the neighbourhood we have neighbours getting to know neighbours. Even in the blocks where there haven't been housing projects we've seen improvement."

## NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSING ASSISTANCE

Neighbourhood Housing Assistance (NHA) helps revitalize housing in designated neighbourhoods by providing grants of up to \$10,000 per residence for purchase, renovation and sales tax on renovations. It supports homeownership and renovation initiatives by community-based groups.

Community and neighbourhood development and renewal corporations, non-profit housing corporations and continuing housing co-operatives can receive assistance under the program.

Funding can also be provided directly to homeowners or to owners of rental housing projects where there is demonstrated community support. Funding from NHA is available for housing in the designated *Neighbourhoods Alive!* areas in Winnipeg, Brandon and Thompson and in urban neighbourhoods identified by the City of Winnipeg as major improvement areas.

NHA is designed to complement housing programs – available from Manitoba Family

Services and Housing and 75 per cent funded by the federal government – such as the Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program, the Shelter Enhancement Program and the Home Adaptation for Seniors Independence program. NHA also complements federal and City of Winnipeg housing revitalization efforts in Winnipeg through the tripartite Winnipeg Housing and Homelessness Initiative.





## Training Initiatives open doors to opportunity

**B**reaking out of the trap of poverty through employment requires more than just job skills. Recognizing that basic principle, *Neighbourhoods Alive!* has \$600,000 a year available for initiatives that train inner city residents for emerging jobs in their local communities – not “McJobs” but positions with clear career paths.

“What changes the people is self-esteem,” says Ruth Murdock, co-director and life skills coach at the Urban Circle Training Program. Urban Circle gives graduates a chance to move into full-time, well-paid employment. The organization is delivering two training initiatives on behalf of *Neighbourhoods Alive!*: the Health Care Aide and Family Support Workers training programs. Urban Circle’s success comes from combining job and life-skills training and cultural exploration for the organization’s mostly Aboriginal clientele.

Focusing on culture allows students to put their own personal struggles in perspective. Elders lead sessions on Aboriginal culture and students study the history of oppression and how oppression affects people.

“With a historical understanding, they are able to move forward,” says Murdock. “Reclaiming our identity and seeing what a beautiful nation we are makes that possible.”

Founded in 1990 by a group of 10 aboriginal women, Urban Circle promotes healing by helping students develop the skills take control of their lives.

“It’s our responsibility to move forward,” says Murdock.

### Urban Circle opened doors for student

“The most promising thing that ever happened to me was the life skills part,” says Johnnie Spence, a 2001 Urban Circle graduate who now works, like many of his classmates, at the Health Sciences Centre.

Now 51, Spence began a mid-life career change at 47 by upgrading his education and completing the 10-month Health Care Aide program.

The key for him was learning to deal with conflict and stress on the job – something he admits had resulted in his leaving jobs before.

“I didn’t know how to deal with it and I’d end up feeling sorry for myself,” he says. “It’s (Urban Circle) opened doors for me.”

Spence’s career change has been a win-win situation. He’s now in a well-paid job where he is constantly learning new skills and the hospital benefits from his language skills to translate for Cree and Ojibway-speaking patients.

Urban Circle targets high-demand fields that offer an immediate opportunity for employment, offering two programs in partnership with the Health Sciences Centre (Health Care Aide and Health Care Aide/Unit Clerk) and one with Child and Family Services (Family Support Worker). A fourth program at Urban Circle prepares students for college or university study by giving them the chance to complete a high school diploma.

### Graduates succeed in finding jobs

Most students come into the program on social assistance and leave it to take jobs in their chosen fields, says Murdock. In the Health Care Aide program, she says, 98 per cent of students completed the course and 85 per cent gained employment. For the Family Support Worker program, 92 per cent of graduates are employed.

Tom Glenwright, director of community learning and youth programs for Manitoba Education, Training and Youth, points to other *Neighbourhoods Alive!* training initiatives with similar goals. The Canadian Mental Health Association has been approved to offer a Mental Health Proctor Training Program, in conjunction with Red River College, and the Winnipeg Boys and Girls Club previously offered a Youth Recreation Activities Worker Program, also in partnership with Red River.

*Neighbourhoods Alive!* is also supporting Youth Builder programs in Winnipeg’s inner city and in Thompson, which provide at-risk youth with paid work in home renovation and a chance to learn job skills and get back to school.

## TRAINING INITIATIVES

*Neighbourhoods Alive!* has committed \$600,000 per year to training initiatives to help inner-city residents obtain sustainable employment. Programs are particularly aimed at occupations where shortages of skilled workers have been identified.

Programs developed through the initiative must meet strict criteria. They must be accepted for high-school or post-secondary accreditation; be intended for designated *Neighbourhoods Alive!* communities in Winnipeg, Brandon or Thompson; prepare students for training-related employment within their communities; target employment assistance clients and youth; target fields such as health care and family services that offer competitive wages and advancement opportunities; and achieve strong graduation and employment rates.



PHOTO COURTESY OF URBAN CIRCLE



# Neighbourhoods Alive!

## FINANCIAL SUMMARY TO MARCH 31, 2002

### COMMITMENTS BY PROGRAM

	TOTAL COMMITMENTS TO MARCH 31, 2002
NEIGHBOURHOOD RENEWAL FUND	\$ 2,837,000
NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE	\$ 2,428,200
COMMUNITY INITIATIVES	\$ 457,700
TRAINING INITIATIVES	\$ 1,171,800
NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSING ASSISTANCE	\$ 3,554,200
LIGHTHOUSES	\$ 213,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 10,661,900</b>

## What does *Neighbourhoods Alive!* mean for us?

The Manitoba government's *Neighbourhoods Alive!* programs provide community-based solutions on issues that not only affect individual neighbourhoods, but affect the overall health of our cities. By building healthy neighbourhoods and providing people with opportunities for the future, we are helping build strong, successful cities.

*Neighbourhoods Alive!* seeks out the best ideas for revitalization from the community itself. We work with residents, community groups, local organizations and other levels of government to support their ideas and target funding to the neighbourhoods' most important needs.

To date, *Neighbourhoods Alive!* has been instrumental in:

- offering residents and communities an opportunity to engage with one another in revitalizing their neighbourhoods
  - sharply reducing instances of arson, that plagued Winnipeg three years ago
  - helping housing stock and helping to increase property values in some inner-city neighbourhoods by up to 48 per cent
  - targeting the causes of crime by offering positive training and recreational alternatives to youth
  - providing training and employment opportunities for people in their neighbourhoods
  - refocusing the energies of all levels of government to address the challenge of urban revitalization
- We know that rebuilding our downtowns and rejuvenating our inner cities will not be accomplished overnight. By empowering residents to revitalize their local neighbourhoods, we hope to build stronger communities and a stronger province for all Manitobans.



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