

A Toolbox ▶▶▶ *To Strengthen Neighbourhoods*

- | | | |
|------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 Provide variety | 2 Action, not talk | 3 Think out of the box |
| 4 Balanced approach to goals and values | 5 Make a safe place | 6 Assess! Assess! Assess! |
| 7 Use small and manageable projects | 8 Build relationships, not programs | 9 Offer participation in different ways |
| 10 Ownership for all residents | 11 Use funding to strengthen local organizations | 12 Create vision with processes like P.A.T.H. |
| 13 Get onto the street | 14 Asset-mapping | 15 Improve material safety |
| 16 Late night youth program | 17 Build a Restorative Justice Program | 18 Highlight neighbourhood treasures |
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Manitoba 

Neighbourhoods Alive! is the Province of Manitoba's long-term, community-based social and economic development strategy to support revitalization efforts in specific neighbourhoods in Winnipeg, Brandon and Thompson.

Thanks to organizers of the forum:

- Paul Chorney • Richard Dilay
- Derek Pachal • Garry Loewen
- Carol Loveridge • Alec Stuart
- Shannon Watson

This report was written by an independent source, based on his own notes of the forum and notes made by recorders at each table.

TOOLS INSIDE!



Manitoba 

▶▶▶ *Neighbourhoods Make*

a Toolbox *To Strengthen Neighbourhoods*

NEIGHBOURHOODS ALIVE! FORUM, JUNE 14, 2001, WINNIPEG

"This is My Community Centre."



Hon. Jean Friesen opened the forum at Magnus Eliason Recreation Centre with these words.

The painting behind her is one she bought from a young artist at a neighbourhood art show. Purchasing the painting and sponsoring the forum demonstrate a critical tool for neighbourhoods – personal and practical support from government.
Thanks Jean!



Pamela Mason, Wolseley Family Place, discusses arts and culture at table 11. This report draws from the strength of all 19 tables.

On June 14th, close to 150 neighbourhood workers from across Manitoba shared ideas about strengthening neighbourhoods in a Neighbourhoods Alive! forum.

They listened to speakers and then gave their own ideas in discussions at 19 separate tables. Surrounded by street art from street kids, people at each table shared their street knowledge about tools that have helped them build stronger neighbourhoods.

This report attempts to capture the main ideas that ran through the forum,

particularly in the table discussions. It's not a speech-by-speech account of the forum. It's not a collection of theories supported by scrupulous scientific research. It tries to capture the great bubbling of ideas expressed that day by the best experts available – the 150 neighbourhood people attending. They are our real strength in strengthening neighbourhoods.

Together, they've made a toolbox of 21 tools presented here.

One-third of the delegates were young people with energy and enthusiasm for exploring ideas. They included Urban Green Teams and this group from Thompson's Shades and Shadows Drop-in. Shades and Shadows is part of the Lighthouses program, A Neighbourhood Alive! initiative working with local communities to support after-school activities identified and organized by youth.



Table 7 shows the diversity at each table.



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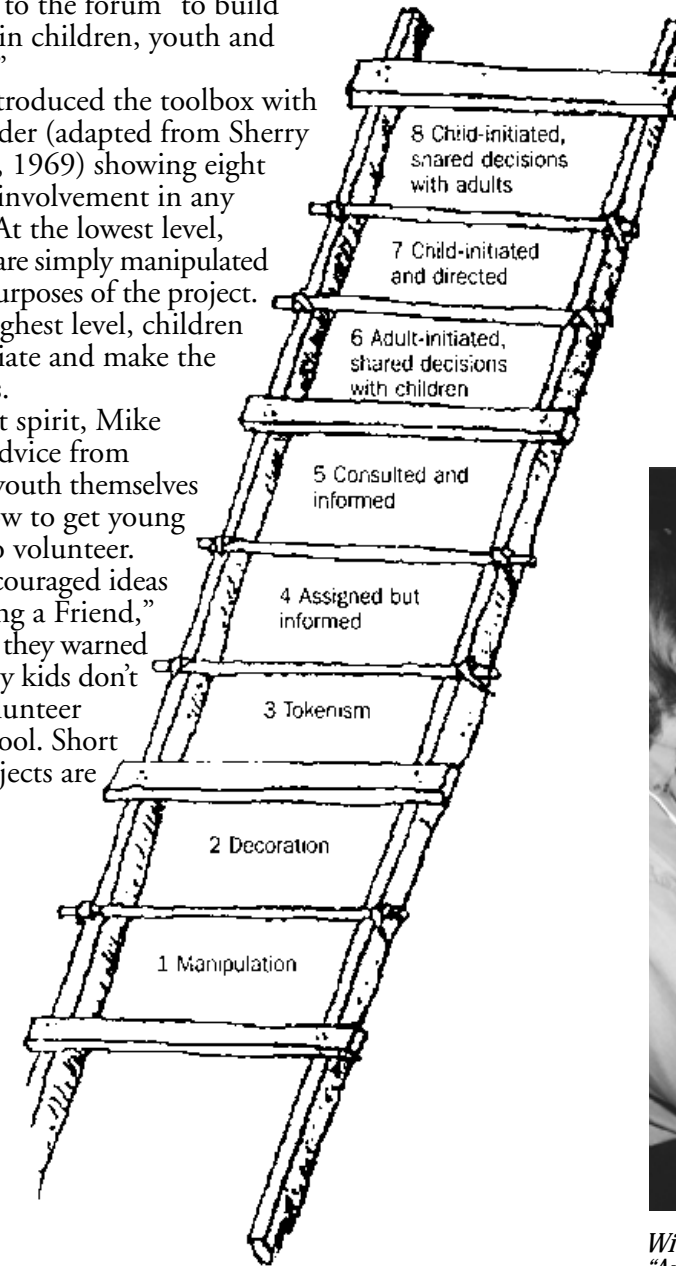
Michael Gray:

Involving Young People ▶▶▶

Former Winnipegger Michael Gray, now with Child and Youth Friendly Calgary, brought his "amazing technicolor toolbox" to the forum "to build capacity in children, youth and yourself."

He introduced the toolbox with a stepladder (adapted from Sherry Arnstein, 1969) showing eight levels of involvement in any project. At the lowest level, children are simply manipulated for the purposes of the project. At the highest level, children fully initiate and make the decisions.

In that spirit, Mike offered advice from Calgary youth themselves about how to get young people to volunteer. They encouraged ideas like "Bring a Friend," although they warned that many kids don't think volunteer work is cool. Short term projects are best.



When a Calgary military base was closing, children were involved in planning and presenting alternate uses. The old parade ground was an eyesore for planners, but kids saw an ideal park for skateboarding and remote-control cars.



With hammer, brake-puller and other tools from his "Amazing Technicolor Toolbox," Mike Gray talks with delegates about strategies they can use to involve more youth in projects like St. Matthew-Maryland's community garden and Thompson's "Shades and Shadows" drop-in.

Tools

▶▶▶ for Involving Young People

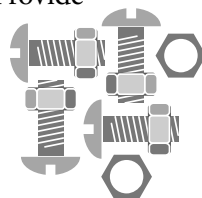
Keep it fun. Even big, cool kids will get drawn into chasing grounders if it's fun.

One forum delegate asked Mike if he ever saw discrimination against kids as they became more involved. Mike replied it was constant, like racism. Even well-intentioned organizers segregate kids into "kids only" projects. "Youth are not simply our future," he said, "They're citizens now."

Mike encouraged all of us to free up the kids in our neighbourhoods, and in ourselves, by using six tools:

1 Provide Variety

Nuts and bolts symbolize variety. What appeals to a 6-year-old doesn't appeal to a 12-year-old. Provide for young and old working alongside each other.



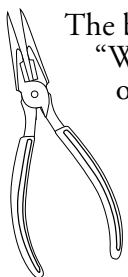
2 Action, not talk

Lots of times, youth tell Mike: "Enough talk. Let's get something done." The hammer symbolizes action – making tree houses in Calgary's elevated pedestrian system, or collecting Care packages for kids in Davis Inlet.



3 Think out of the box

The brake-puller appeals to the "What the heck is this?" side of our character. Brainstorm. Don't judge. Let people fly with their new ideas. Hide your skepticism. Give the kid in all of us a chance.



4 Balanced approach to goals and values

Core values and purposes are important, but beware of pushing your own ideology. Provide balance and understanding of youth values and other values.



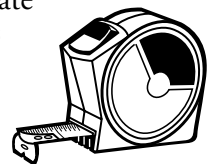
5 Make a safe place

Make places safe for participants. For children's programs, control publicity, staff relations, giving out names, etc.



6 Assess! Assess! Assess!

Always go back to purposes, goals and ask participants "Did it work?" "What would be better?" Give a journal to participants; rate activities on a scale; focus groups; have participants videotape the project.



Community Organizing: ▶▶▶▶ People's Energies Spread to Other People

Paul Chorney began the forum's discussion on critical issues in community organizing by showing slides that told the story of community organizing in West Broadway.

It began in 1996 when Paul and a small group of residents put murals up on the boarded-up Wilson house. The building stood at the entrance to the neighbourhood and was symbolic of the changes happening throughout Winnipeg's inner city. It had been built in the early 1900's, an enormous family home in a burgeoning middle class neighbourhood. But by the '60s, the families had grown up and moved to the suburbs. Big old homes became revenue properties. The Wilson house became offices, a photographic studio and finally the headquarters for Klinic. When Klinic moved, it became a boarded-up eyesore, like many other houses whose owners could no longer get enough revenue to keep them running.

The house sent out a message: "Hey, no one cares about this neighbourhood." Paul and a small group changed that. They met one Saturday in June, 1996. With paint donated by a local business they painted flowers and birds on murals and mounted them on the old house. Elise Finnigan was a teenager painting that morning. She said it made her feel like they were claiming the building back.

The small group grew and continued talking about the neighbourhood. They began thinking about housing issues, researched home ownership along one block, made a photo collage of the street, and organized a meeting with



Then meetings resulted in people in the neighbourhood building relationships, developing trust and energizing one another with their dreams.

various organizations interested in housing – Assiniboine Credit Union, Lions Housing, Westminster Housing Society, Habitat for Humanity, and others. Four of the organizations started working on housing.

As housing efforts began, Paul and his small group organized a larger meeting of all those interested in the neighbourhood – schools, agencies, residents, city planners, university researchers, businesses, community organizations.

"People sat at small tables," said Paul. "We started strategic planning. But also something else was happening at those tables. Many people had never met. Relationships were beginning to form, trust was being built, people's energies spread to other people."

The spreading of energy in that room led to all kinds of partners working for improvements over the next few years – Lions Housing, Art City, Odd Jobs For Kids, aboriginal head start program, pow-wows, drumming groups, recreation programs for kids and much more.



Community organizing in West Broadway started with volunteers putting up murals on a boarded-up house.



The energy spread into all kinds of projects: mural painting, pow wows and much more.

Community Organizing: ▶▶▶▶

Why Don't Residents Get Involved?

When the tables discussed critical issues in community organizing, the major issue that emerged was: How do we get residents themselves involved and taking control of projects in their neighbourhoods?

Table after table talked about getting people involved, getting more than the “usual suspects” out to meetings, achieving a broad base of support for neighbourhood projects.

“We need to involve neighbourhood people to develop their plan,” reported one table, “Not to be told what they want by outsiders.” “The most difficult people to reach are those who don't come out,” reported another table. And most tables agreed that those were the bulk of the people in many neighbourhoods.

There are many reasons – poverty, people using all their energy on just getting by, social and historical factors. That's what being marginalized is all about.

Tom Simms of the Community Education Development Association (CEDA) gave a good explanation of the underlying reasons when he made his presentation.

He showed a pyramid demonstrating the “three dimensions of power” in society (adapted from Steven Lukes, 1974). The smallest top piece represents those who actually have power. Their ideas are in the public dialogue, with debate, conflict, decisions and change. The bottom level represents the huge numbers in society who feel powerless. Tom described this impact in several ways: internalized powerlessness; culture of silence; a sense of apathy; dependency; fatalism. They've never been listened to, so why turn out?

“The huge challenge is how do we encourage people who feel powerless to become involved,” said Tom.

The key may be the middle level of the pyramid – the level at which people begin to come together and begin to ask, “Maybe we can get something accomplished.” They still don't have power. Their ideas are not even on the radar screen, but they're beginning to talk about the issues, beginning to be seen as troublemakers.

Trying to facilitate this second level is the job of community organizing. Tom felt one way to facilitate this in Winnipeg was a city-wide forum with agencies like Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata, Rossbrook House, CEDA, West Broadway, Spence Residents, and many others to listen and identify the priorities for action for strengthening neighbourhoods.

At a simpler neighbourhood level, the 19 tables talked about how they had to work on relationship building if people were going to start coming together.



Tom Simms of CEDA shows the “three dimensions of power” that make it such a huge challenge to get people who feel powerless involved in neighbourhood change.

“The essential question is how do you motivate people to get involved,” said the notes from Table 7. “You do it by developing friendships, relationships with neighbours. As people develop their relationships, the community gets stronger.”

Table 14 warned that, once the community begins to articulate what it wants to do, organizers need to listen. “How does this fit with what the community has articulated?” said their notes. “The best resources are the people, and if they are never listened to, then apathy can set in.”

Fighting apathy, motivating people to become involved – those are the goals of the first set of tools that came from the tables. They're listed on the opposite page:

▶▶▶▶ Tools

to Fight Apathy and Mobilize Residents

7 Use small and manageable projects

Catherine Collins at Table 10 told delegates they didn't have to solve the problems of the whole world – starting small was okay. Volunteers working on their own time could get burned out by projects requiring endless meetings, financial details, city council meetings, etc. That's how she felt when her group spent nine years fighting to save a home in the McDermot/ Sherbrook area. But when the call went out for volunteers to put up a fence at the house, 17 people turned up, the job was done by early afternoon, and everyone enjoyed a barbecue. Friendships were made.

Her group is now involved with a community garden at Cumberland and Edmonton, a garden with people from a dozen different cultures who share a love of gardening. “It's as much about talking and getting to know one another as it is about saving the neighbourhood.”



Good neighbours make good fences.

8 Build relationships, not programs

Table after table emphasized this. As people get to know one another, they begin to share and think about changes. One table described a tutoring program that never worked until the tutors decided to forget about tutoring and got to know the kids on their block. Getting to know people is the first and most important step, whether in parent groups, or pot lucks, or a game of softball.

10 Ownership for all residents

A person can invest in their neighbourhood without owning their home. Include tenants, landlords, rooming house residents, youth and multi-generations. Use translators. Give everyone a sense of ownership.

11 Strengthen local organizations

Almost all tables identified strong independent local organizations as a key element. When the funders decide what's happening, this can build apathy in residents. The personal characteristics of the organizers are often reflected in the characteristics of which residents actually get involved. Some suggestions to improve involvement: hire local people (improving the economics in the neighbourhood and providing local role models); support the leaders and visionaries in the community.

9 Offer participation in different ways

Sometimes it's always the same people at meetings because those are the people who go to meetings. But a work party will bring different people; a pot-luck; a Bingo game; the crowd at a drop-in; a forum to meet government agencies.

Components Of A Neighbourhood Safety Plan

Begin with the Residents

Both speakers on community safety stressed the process starts with consulting residents.

Angela Mathieson conducted city planning research in West Broadway. She held a series of focus groups at drop-in centres and found that neighbourhood perceptions of safety were not captured in standard income and crime statistics. Two safety issues dominated: neighbourhood violence – particularly domestic violence – and residents’ feelings of safety or non-safety. Angela used these to develop progress indicators for West Broadway’s program.

Carolyn Buffie joined Andrews Street Family Centre in 1999 to coordinate a neighbourhood safety program. Andrews Street itself had begun in 1995 with an intense process of community consultation. Six residents were hired and went door-knocking, gathering residents’ perceptions of the North End neighbourhood, both positive and negative. This “Asset-mapping” survey became the Andrews Street blueprint.

Carolyn also used public consultation to launch safety efforts. In the distinct neighbourhoods around Andrews Street, she held six P.A.T.H. planning meetings, a process allowing people to develop their own visions. Residents began working on safety issues identified at the meetings: arson, youth services, green space, the need for residents to volunteer more.

Carolyn saw that as residents began to gain the city’s cooperation for issues like emptying over-stuffed dumpsters, they began to think in new, more powerful directions. People began to say, “Yes, I can do this.” When kids took responsibility in the Adopt-A-Block program, they wouldn’t let other kids litter “their” block.

After a year, surveys of 100 residents indicated improvements in all the safety areas: arsons had decreased; 57 % of the residents surveyed had personally increased their volunteer efforts; and 87 % felt the neighbourhood was safer.



Where it all started -- Andrews Street Family Centre's original director, Josie Hill, with two residents hired to conduct the 1995 neighbourhood survey: Margaret Richard and Gary Kopichanski.

Lots of activities to get to know neighbours

All tables stressed that safety grew when people got to know their neighbours.

Much of safety is perception, and the lowest level of safety comes when people feel they can't trust their neighbours. But as neighbours get to know one another – through pot-lucks, garbage clean-ups, painting murals, strolling streets, whatever – the level of safety increases.

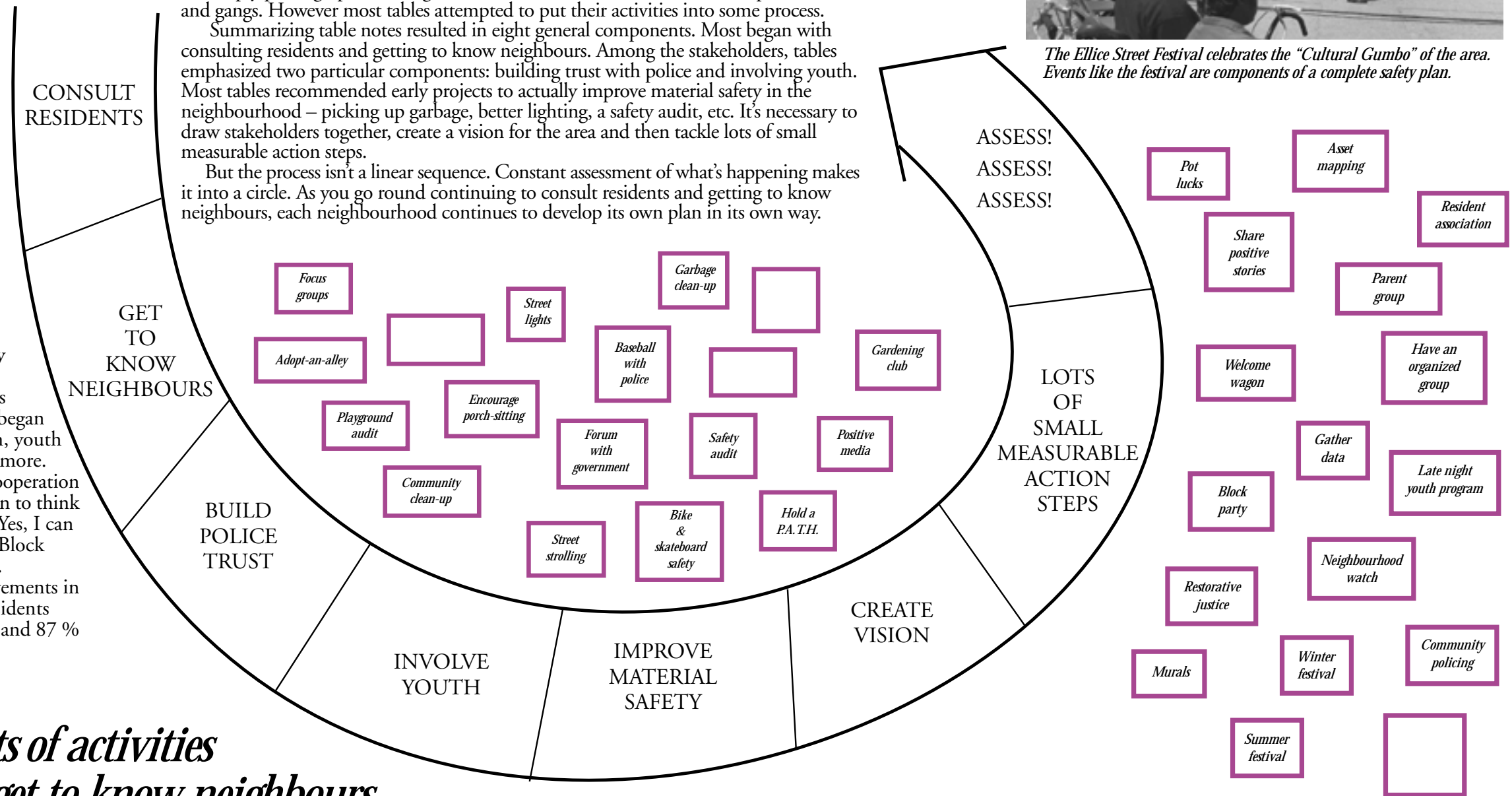
When neighbours’ trust in one another grows strong, they begin to be able to tackle the serious issues of prostitution, gangs and domestic violence. That’s why we’ve left some ideas blank in the scattered list above. The best ideas will come from neighbourhoods themselves as they develop their own components.

When table groups discussed community safety, they came up with dozens of ideas, scattered randomly below.

Simply picking up and doing all these will not solve domestic violence, prostitution and gangs. However most tables attempted to put their activities into some process.

Summarizing table notes resulted in eight general components. Most began with consulting residents and getting to know neighbours. Among the stakeholders, tables emphasized two particular components: building trust with police and involving youth. Most tables recommended early projects to actually improve material safety in the neighbourhood – picking up garbage, better lighting, a safety audit, etc. It’s necessary to draw stakeholders together, create a vision for the area and then tackle lots of small measurable action steps.

But the process isn’t a linear sequence. Constant assessment of what’s happening makes it into a circle. As you go round continuing to consult residents and getting to know neighbours, each neighbourhood continues to develop its own plan in its own way.



The Ellice Street Festival celebrates the “Cultural Gumbo” of the area. Events like the festival are components of a complete safety plan.

Photo by Joel Matthews, West End Cultural Centre

And Remember....

Table groups and guest speakers agreed that community organizers constantly need to have residents assess activities to see if they’re still meeting their original objectives. As the circle goes round again, objectives will change. Every neighbourhood will do it its own way.

▶▶▶▶ Specific Tools To *Among the Many Tools Discussed*



*P.A.T.H. puts new light in the eyes of the West Central Empowerment of Women Group.
P.A.T.H. stands for: Planning Alternate Tomorrows with Hope*

12 P.A.T.H. — A tool for creating vision

Many tables highlighted the P.A.T.H. planning process as a particularly effective tool for creating vision. Carolyn Buffie used a series of six P.A.T.H. meetings to develop the safety plan at Andrews Street Family Centre.

Linda Orr, at Table 17, organized a P.A.T.H. for her West End women's group. Around the table at the forum, Linda talked of the realities of safety in her neighbourhood: the hookers, the johns speeding up and down her street as they cruise the area, the way kids have to learn five different sets of gang colours to go to school. But despite the safety concerns, Linda and other residents love the area, its mix of "cultural gumbo," the affordability, sitting on her doorstep with lots of good neighbours around.

Her group was created to reach low income women in the neighbourhood. They quickly named themselves the West Central Empowerment of Women Group. At their P.A.T.H. meeting, 30 women identified their dreams and visions for the area. Then they looked at the realities today and began sketching steps to reach their alternate future.

Often the realities can overwhelm people. "But when you put 30 women together in a P.A.T.H. they develop their own ideas," said Linda. "They start to see new meanings. You can see it in their eyes."

The North End has established a Path Resource Centre that helps plan personal P.A.T.H. meetings. You can get more information about P.A.T.H. from Carolyn Buffie or other staff there, ph. 927-2300.

Create a Safe Neighbourhood ▶▶▶▶ *at the Tables, Six are Described in Detail:*

13 Getting onto the street

Almost all tables said you had to get out of meetings and actually onto the street if you want to do anything about safety. Something as simple as sitting on your porch brings more eyes onto the street and increases safety. Or it can be as well-organized as a citizen patrol officially linked to police. "Just being outside and saying 'Hi' helps make the neighbourhood safer," said the notes from one table.

One simple program is "STREET-STROLLING" as developed in West Broadway. Residents meet and stroll together through the neighbourhood, greeting neighbours and turning in a list of problems to the night's coordinator.



Street-strollers make friends with one another, and help clean up West Broadway.

14 Asset-mapping

Often neighbourhoods are subjected to Needs Assessments. "Asset-Mapping" asks not only what residents want, but what they can give and what they like about a neighbourhood. It helps recognize and encourage the leaders of a neighbourhood, school volunteers, good landlords, the woman who takes in kids in trouble. Asset-mapping is described in detail in John McKnight's book, "Building Communities From the Inside Out."

15 Improve Material Safety

All tables talked about perceptions of safety. When an area is run down, it encourages crime. Picking up litter, fixing lights, an Adopt-An-Alley program – all improve material safety.

16 Late night youth programs

Youth are essential to neighbourhood safety – they know what's happening and sometimes, if they're idle, they can be a source of some of the problems. So youth drop-ins are important, especially late nights on weekends.

17 Build a restorative justice program

There was a huge sense from the tables that domestic violence, poverty, racism and anger are the real root causes of issues. Many families are in real difficulty and many children are suffering. Often tools treat the symptoms. Few treat the roots. Restorative Justice Programs do. They're now running for families in a few neighbourhood locations.

The Power of Arts and Culture

Popular Theatre Alliance founder Margo Charlton described how the arts have become marginalized in our society. We have become cut off from our creativity and turned into passive consumers of art rather than active generators.

The way we have marginalized art and expression was evident from the discussions at each table. Many saw art and culture simply in terms of product – murals sprucing up a neighbourhood. But others saw art as a process that gave power to participants. “The power of art is that, in the very making of it, you are creating community,” said the notes from table 3.

This power is not highly valued in our society, and perhaps not valued enough by community organizers. Thus, two views – art as empowering process, or art as a useful product – ran through many table notes:

▶▶▶▶ *Process & Product* ▶▶▶▶

- “Art and culture is not a mirror held up to reality – But a hammer with which to shape it.” (Brecht)
- Art builds community. Whether it’s a community dance that brings people together; a pow wow that gives identity and creates understanding and pride; a violent rap song that attacks injustice.
- Several tables talked of the power of popular theatre and role plays to allow community members to express things they couldn’t otherwise express – deep standing pain, emotional connection, history and identification.
- Rico John from table 15 gave an impassioned speech urging us to stop compartmentalizing art and putting it on the side. “Without art, the community is dead,” he said. Art is the centre of community; it is us giving expression together; it is part of the holistic balance of community.
- One aboriginal woman described how she was an adult before she ever attended a pow wow and drumming. “It gave me a sense of myself that I had never had. Traditional ways are important for youth because they make them feel like they belong to their community.” Many tables described how cultural expressions of music and dance have given different cultures their deep sense of identity.
- “It’s amazing what a pot of flowers can do.”
- Using art is a creative way to attract people to community meetings – poster competitions, food from different groups, dances and socializing.
- Mural-painting spruces up a neighbourhood, creates a sense of ownership in participants and is a fun way to draw people of all ages together.
- Many tables saw art as a constructive activity for youth. There should be more art programs and after-school programs. Activities like dance, theatre and other arts provide teamwork, creativity and work experience – the same qualities that Fortune 500 companies are looking for.
- Community art and craft shows can provide income to people and increase their economic opportunities.



Participants from one table won a collection of LPs from the days of vinyl.

Putting Art Into the Centre of a Community ▶▶▶

Many tables talked about the example of Art City – “an Art City on every corner,” said one.

Art City was part of the energizing process and relationship-building in West Broadway that Paul Chorney described earlier in the forum (page 5). As different community residents were looking at big issues like housing, safety, economics, etc., one community member had a passion for art. Artist Wanda Koop remembered the art classes she’d had as a child in city recreation centres and felt the same should be available in low income neighbourhoods today. The alliances that were being formed in West Broadway helped. Together they found property and funding.

Art City has now been operating for three years. Neighbourhood kids come after school every day to do art. Local artists teach sessions in everything from pottery to beading.

“You must be an artist?” coordinator Elise Finnigan asked one local woman highly skilled at beadwork. “No, I work at McDonald’s,” she replied.

Art City has put art right in the centre of the West Broadway neighbourhood. Kids paint murals and carry out small contracts for local businesses and agencies. They learn new skills from local people. And the kids themselves are starting to take initiative for their own projects.

In early June, several skateboarders asked if they could build skateboard ramps. Art City partnered with the Neighbourhood Centre and Urban Sports Camp to look at making a skateboard park. They found Chris Veres, an architectural student specializing in skateboard parks. For three weeks, five or six kids turned up every day to hammer and saw. Art City shifted its classes for the final week to the rink. In the first week of July, the skateboard park opened – a good example of art moving right into the centre of the



The opening of a new park where art moved into the centre of the community.

Giving Voices to the Inner City

Two speakers at the forum showed how the mass media can be used as a tool for community organizing.

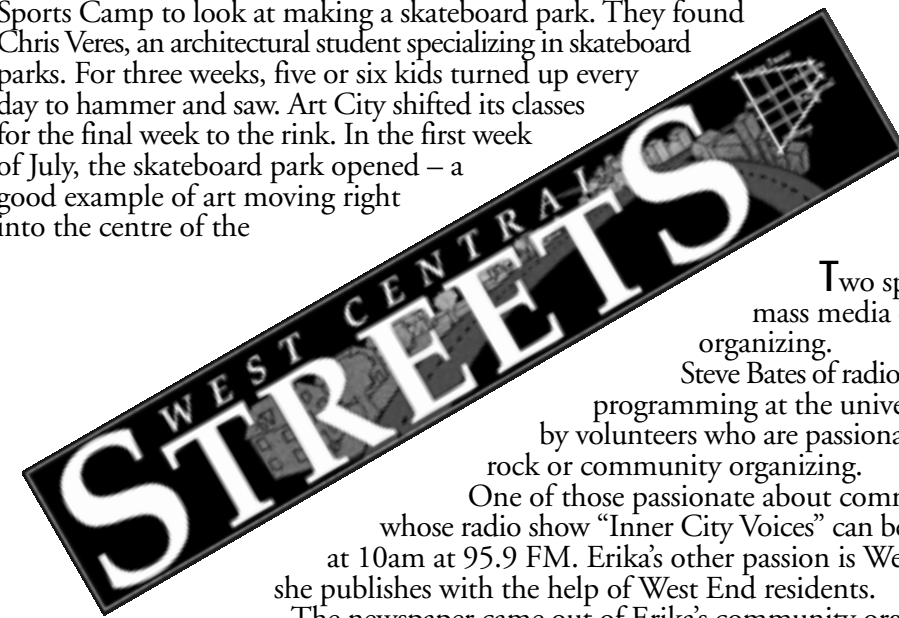
Steve Bates of radio station CKUW described community programming at the university station. It’s a station run mainly by volunteers who are passionate about their issues, whether vintage rock or community organizing.

One of those passionate about community organizing is Erika Wiebe, whose radio show “Inner City Voices” can be heard Mondays at 5 pm and Fridays at 10am at 95.9 FM. Erika’s other passion is West Central STREETS, a newspaper she publishes with the help of West End residents.

The newspaper came out of Erika’s community organizing work. Several years ago, after a long succession of meetings at City Hall to stop various booze cans, massage parlours and pawn shops from operating, Erika thought there must be another strategy to get residents involved in their community. West Central STREETS was born.

Today it’s a paper completely put out by local people. They write it, make cartoons, hold writing workshops, deliver it door-to-door. Everyone who contributes gets a fair wage. It gets into every part of the community, informs people of issues, creates forums for discussion, helps provide a network to organize gardens, street patrols and artist circles.

Perhaps most important, it gives a voice to people who normally haven’t been heard. And that’s a vital first step.



Arts & Culture as Tools ▶▶▶

To Strengthen Neighbourhoods

18 Highlight your neighbourhood's treasures

Every neighbourhood has its own unique character. Highlighting these builds neighbourhood pride and identity. West Broadway has done it through a heritage walking tour of its historic buildings. The West End has highlighted its cultural gumbo. The North End has always had a rich cultural tradition and a strong sense of family and neighbourhood. Seeking out the treasures is exciting; figuring ways to highlight them builds strength.

19 Fight for art for all kids

Parents of middle class kids have long known the benefits in child development of extra-curricular activities like dance, drama and music classes, but these are advantages often denied low income families. As more studies show the importance of art and culture activities to enhance children's development in the early years, fight for programs like Art City to be as common as soccer and baseball teams.

The walls at the forum were totally covered by paintings created by young people who are part of the Graffiti Gallery on Higgins Avenue in Winnipeg's old Pt. Douglas area.

Steve Wilson is shown here posing with a group of friends painted by Fred Thomas. Steve has found that Fred is one of a growing number of young people riding the rails across Canada, like the hobos of depression years. He hopped off a freight near the gallery on Higgins and spent a few days spray painting this masterpiece. Graffiti Gallery earns money for its artists by selling paintings.

If you're interested, phone the gallery at 667-9960.

20 Combine with schools

Effective partnerships are the key to community organizing, and in the area of arts and culture, there is no stronger natural ally than neighbourhood schools. Table 17 described several programs linking schools and communities: a US program in which kids make neighbourhood maps, photograph local features, and put it all together in presentations; programs from housebuilding to photography at R.B. Russell Technical School, in the North End. Your local school principal could be one of the main allies in strengthening the neighbourhood.

21 Local art shows

Everyone wins in local art shows – people travel into the neighbourhood and get to see it in a new way; local artists gain income; and beauty is created. Add crafts tables, bake sales and businesses donating supplies, and you end up with an activity that strengthens the whole neighbourhood, all ages, all cultures and all income groups.



Some of Their Ideas: ▶▶▶

A lot of the best ideas from tables didn't fit pre-arranged patterns. People weren't afraid to brainstorm.

Why can't we have intergenerational drop-ins, where kids and parents can do things together, and where adults can learn from kids what's really going on?

Remember, not all tools need to be active. Sitting and listening is the most important tool of all for community organizing.

Urban Art Teams as well as Urban Green Teams?

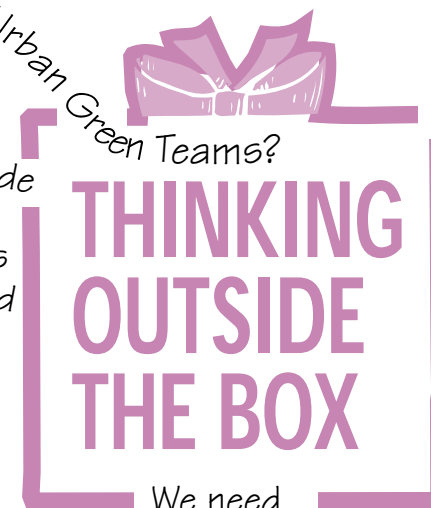
Many of the tables made strong connections between personal issues like domestic violence and neighborhood development. Can new and better ways to deal with such deep issues? Restraining orders and 911 calls don't seem the best way.

With the ability of art to develop individuals and build communities, we need to look at countries like Australia, which fund community art.

Lots of small amounts of funding to lots of local residents doing lots of small projects could give a cumulative effect.

There's a great need, as community organizers, to be aware of our own biases and filters.

Keep your mind open to different angles, different cultures, different kinds of speech, different kinds of silence.



We need to get the whole city involved: Suburbs have more to learn from the inner city than stereotypes indicate.