

# Winnipeg Housing and Homelessness Initiative (WHHI)

## Final Report

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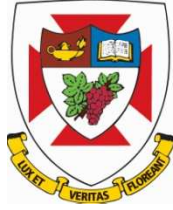
Prepared for the City of Winnipeg  
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Prepared by:

The Institute of Urban Studies  
with  
The City of Winnipeg





THE UNIVERSITY OF  
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The Institute of Urban Studies is an independent research arm of the University of Winnipeg. Since 1969, the IUS has been both an academic and an applied research centre, committed to examining urban development issues in a broad, non-partisan manner. The Institute examines inner city, environmental, Aboriginal and community development issues. In addition to its ongoing involvement in research, IUS brings in visiting scholars, hosts workshops, seminars and conferences, and acts in partnership with other organizations in the community to effect positive change.

# Introduction and Overview of the Process

Over a four week period, The Institute of Urban Studies undertook a series of public consultations with approximately 140 housing stakeholders and members of the general public. The purpose of these sessions was to help inform the City of Winnipeg in its efforts to revise housing policy and provide context for the SpeakUp Winnipeg process. In particular, the sessions focused on housing affordability issues as they pertain to the City of Winnipeg’s limited role in housing policy. As a result, it is important to note that this consultation process, while fruitful, must be seen within this constrained scope, rather than as an overall study on Winnipeg’s housing issues.

This report first outlines the processes undertaken and then moves to present the results. The report ends with a series of policy considerations. Appendix material includes the invitation, the presentation materials used and the comments as recorded by the facilitators.

## Methodology

Working with the City of Winnipeg, the research team developed and refined a set of stakeholder engagements. With the exception of the first session held at the Winnipeg Housing and Homeless Initiative (WHHI), Institute staff coordinated and invited all participants (see appendix for an example invitation). The invitation process consisted of personal invitations to key stakeholder organizations using a targeted email invitation, follow-up by phone confirmations. Notices concerning the public consultations were widely disseminated using a variety of email groups and the City of Winnipeg’s SpeakUp site.

The consultation process included a number of different types of engagement including two large sessions (a WHHI event and an open public session), focus groups (eight to twelve persons each) and smaller round table discussions. Each event allowed for a range of participants to share ideas on thoughts on housing in Winnipeg. All sessions were facilitated by the Institute of Urban Studies. The purpose and dates of the sessions were as follows:

<b>Sector</b>	<b>Date</b>
Winnipeg Housing Homeless Initiative (WHHI) Housing Forum	September 18
City of Winnipeg Staff	September 25
For-profit Housing Organizations	October 6
Non-governmental Organizations and Non-	October 5

profit Housing Groups	
Aboriginal Community Members	October 15
General Public Session	October 22
Neighbourhood Development Corporations	October 28
Seniors	October 26
Persons with Disabilities	October 29
Newcomers and Refugees	October 29

Each session lasted approximately 90 minutes. The sessions began with an overview presentation (See Appendix) to set the context and provide participants with a sense of the key issues and background<sup>1</sup>. Each session included questions divided into the following six areas:

**Part One: The City’s Role:**

- What is the City doing well at with respect to housing?
- Where should the City focus on strengthening its role in housing?

**Part Two: Defining Need:**

- How do we define housing need in Winnipeg?
- What role(s) should the City play in addressing housing need?

**Part Three: Housing Investment:**

- What types of housing is needed (size, function, etc)?
- Geographically, where should support be targeted?
- Do the neighbourhood designations still hold relevance?

**Part Four: Innovation:**

- What types of tools and innovation would be useful?
- What are other jurisdictions doing or what are some examples from here in Winnipeg?

**Part Five: Partnerships**

- What strategic partnerships are needed among government, community and citizens to support housing investment and programming?
- Who needs to be brought to the table and in what type of roles?

**Part Six: Priorities**

- From what we have talked about, what are your immediate and short term needs and goals and what is more of a longer range priority?

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<sup>1</sup> While a consistent presentation and set of questions was used, there were some modifications made for the final session with Immigrants and Refugees to account for language barriers and knowledge of existing programs.

## **Part One: The City's Role:**

### **What is the City doing well at with respect to housing?**

Non-profit organizations maintain that the City of Winnipeg is doing a good job at inspections; however, they argued that this may not be true for Rooming Houses. They suggested that the City needs a plan to protect residents from eviction due to closures and stated that it is a “balancing issue.”

Attendees at the WHHI forum acknowledged that they thought the WHHI and designated community zones are great examples of partnerships and suggested that they should prepare secondary housing plans for the improvement zones. They also stated that the WHHI needs “more teeth” while others expressed that the City should work with what is there and expand.

At both the community and the WHHI forums, it was expressed that offering lots or housing for one dollar for both renewal corporations and community groups was a good practice.

The city staff also felt that the tripartite agreement of the WHHI is working well as it strengthens the City's role in housing. This group also expressed that the City is doing well in the encouragement of mixed-use development along the Waterfront Drive and that it made progress in relaxing zoning by-laws. The home renovation tax for single family dwellings was deemed to be a positive move as was the introduction of secondary suites for this same category of housing units.

The vacant building by-law was seen as cutting-edge. Winnipeg may be a role model for building maintenance despite the city's aging housing stock. Finally, this group acknowledged that there is better neighbourhood planning taking place and cited the Osborne area as an example.

### **Where should the City focus on strengthening its role in housing?**

When asked this question five common themes arose; advocacy, partnerships, planning, current organizational structure and systems and procedures. The following paragraphs outlines the general comment offered pertaining to these themes.

#### **Advocacy**

Participants from the for-profits organizations suggested that the City take on a “housing first” approach to policy and procedures. They asserted that the WHHI focuses on delivering programs versus playing an advocate role. It is difficult to develop small parcels of land, infill and new housing development and participants suggested that the City lobby the Federal Government to offset housing costs when developing smaller scale housing projects. They add that the social sustainability of housing needs to be emphasized when lobbying other levels of government.

The not-for profit and non-governmental organizations (NGO) suggested looking at amending the City of Winnipeg Act (Charter) and collaborate with the Province of Manitoba in building tools that will help to create more housing in Winnipeg. During the WHHI forum, participants agreed and stated that the role of the City should include lobbying the Federal Government for further supports. This was echoed by participants at the community forum and the for-profit focus group.

### **Partnerships**

Participants at the WHHI forum suggested that communication among stakeholders be increased. This is particularly true concerning intergovernmental relations: the current housing situation is beyond the capacity of city and as such there is a need for provincial supports.

Members from the Aboriginal community added that the city should take a larger role in working with the two levels of government. They asserted that effective inclusive participation in creating changes in procedures is needed in all housing policy areas.

Finally, seniors suggested that the city should have, as part of their mandate, to work with Age and Opportunity Centre regarding housing issues.

### **Planning**

Some participants suggested that the previous the Plan Winnipeg lacked clear definitions or policies. The for-profit groups were insistent that “OurWinnipeg” must contain actual policies vs. motherhood statements while some added that it is important not have sweeping statements. Members from the Neighbourhood Development Corporations asserted that there needs to be “action to the plan.” Participants from the community gathering suggested that:

*The city needs to articulate a policy for creating and preserving rental stock. The language in the existing policy is far too passive – to encourage, to foster. Polices needs to be more prescriptive.*

### **Current Organizational Structure**

The for-profit organizations insisted that the City needs to have a “top down approach” and argued that the City should let the market drive housing development. They added that the City should only facilitate where is needed. The for-profit organizations stressed that the current system of development approval is counter-productive and should be reviewed. Others within this group argued for more management and that the City is leaving it to the non-profit groups.

One participant at the community forum suggested that the city should get out of housing altogether, “Too many cooks in the kitchen, it’s not efficient and too much is spent on administration costs.” Most, however argued for a proactive city government, with a “champion”

on city council. At present, however, some representatives from neighbourhood development corporations and members from the Aboriginal community worry that the City is turning a blind eye to the housing situation. Part of this is owed to the “culture” on council. As one participant commented,

*The culture on city council needs to change. They seem to think that housing renewal corporations are “activists” and not as important as business people. They want to back away from housing responsibilities as a cost saving measure.*

Finally, the for-profit organizations argued that the development review committees should go and offered the following comment:

*They have run their course-needs a balance-community resistance-they only have 10 days to review and process proposals where developers and Architects have worked on housing projects for a year.*

## **Systems and Procedures**

There were many comments regarding how the City of Winnipeg could strengthen its role in housing in terms of systems and procedures.

- Purchase strategic affordable sites and clean brownfields; and
- Provide incentives to developers and landlords to build and manage affordable housing;
- Add provisions in zoning for secondary suites;
- More rigorous inspections needed to clean-up the bed bug problem.
- Give in-kind contributions such as land. The city can regulate new housing more strictly.
- Inclusionary zoning to require a certain percentage of new housing be low or mixed income; other incentives/control/encouragement for developers to build more social housing;
- Housing policy should make connections between housing and other issues – emergency services, play spaces, transportation, communities and community building;
- Adopt a holistic view on housing -- make connections between housing provision and community support, repair, maintenance, long-term sustainability, community training, food security, access, availability. As an example, if there is more and better housing there will be less costs on health care system;
- Make sure every neighbourhood has needed amenities; and
- Encouraging housing alternatives, models, prototypes, need more research money!
- City should inspect more on over-crowding and adequacy of houses

## **Part Two: Defining Need**

### How do we define housing need in Winnipeg?

There were four themes arising out of this question: affordability, availability, adequacy, and transitioning between housing types. The following paragraphs address each of these themes.

#### **Affordability**

The issues of affordability drew the most responses from all groups. Condominium conversions and the current rate for Shelter Allowance were the top issues related to affordability. Most participants agreed that the rent support provided by the Province does not match the housing market rental rate requirements.

At the community gathering it was expressed by one participant that the not-for profit neighbourhood development corporations are not necessarily addressing affordability issues within their communities. For their part, one development corporation group stated that there needs to be a holistic approach to housing needs, one that, for example, is integrated with employment strategies to alleviate poverty reduction.

The senior group stressed that affordability is the top issue and added that the middle class is also feeling this burden. For those who have paid off their mortgages, they feel that living in their home has become unaffordable due to maintenance costs. Tenants generally lack information in how to appeal these rent increases.

#### **Availability**

Both the non- profit and for-profit housing organizations stressed that the available rental stock is continuously dropping, again relating to condominium conversions and gentrification processes. The resulting low vacancy rates affect the normal progression of transitional life moves. As one senior said:

*People are not moving out of their homes as they once were; we need reasonable rental choices when looking at selling our homes and downsizing.*

Another member of the senior group added that for those who are experiencing early signs of dementia, there is a lack of support for those who need to relocate.

The newcomer community noted that there is very limited quantity of Manitoba and Winnipeg Housing. At the same time, new immigrants often report difficulty getting mortgages, and for some, their belief system does not allow for the charging of interest. They stress that there is a very high need for larger units both in terms of rental and rent-to-own. Because of the lack of large



family units, families often get separated and youth end up in troubling situations if they do not remain with their family. One participant stated that it is hard to get into private rentals, references are hard to get and if you don't speak English as a first language people often turn you away.

### **Adequacy**

Much of the housing stock for newcomers was reported to be in very poor condition. There are health concerns because of bed bug infestations, which are regular occurrences. Some participants said that their apartments are sprayed every three weeks, which ends up displacing residents and their belongings. Often tenant complaints are ignored.

As a destination for many newcomers, the Central Park neighbourhood has a large population housed at high densities. As a result, participants who tried to transition from Welcome Place to a private rental or ownership reported that there was nowhere in Central Park to live or else no continued support from the government. They therefore often have to leave their own community and ties they have developed.

The newcomer participants stressed that they find themselves in situations that make it impossible for them to be self-sufficient. Some end up going back to their home countries eventually because they feel they are "treated poorly, their credentials are not acknowledged, and the quality of housing, food and life in general is poor." Once again, a holistic approach in housing development that recognizes the connections between housing and all aspects of quality of life, was called for.

The seniors group added that they have serious safety concerns in Manitoba Housing units. One person stated that "safety in Manitoba Housing is bad, people are afraid to leave their apartments."

### **Transitioning to Different Housing**

Members of the senior group all agreed that the City needs to look at life transitions in relation to housing. They argued that there is a need for reasonable rental choices when looking at selling their homes and downsizing. Another member from this group added that for persons with the early onset of dementia need support in transitioning out of their homes with moving. The for-profit group shared this sentiment and stated that the rental vacancy rate is too low and this affects the normal progression of transitional life moves.

Finally, a member of the non-profit group stressed that there is a lack of housing units for vulnerable persons who want to move out of transitional housing. Others called for a definition of "resident" in a Single Room Occupancy housing hotels such as those along Main Street. One person called for better statistical data on the hidden homeless population while another added that the Emergency shelter system should be reviewed.

## **What role(s) should the City play in addressing housing need?**

There was a certain level of concern about the level of the City of Winnipeg's participation in the housing market. Members from the development corporations called for the City to acknowledge that city tax revenue does come from housing, so in fact the City is in the housing business on many levels. Other participants stated that the City should educate more on the positives of what the city is already doing. A person from the disability focus group argued that there is skepticism towards consultation processes and suggested that apathy has set in because there is a lack of supports given to certain stakeholders.

Three main themes emerged from this question: holistic approaches; homeownership and quality of neighbourhoods; and processes.

### **Holistic Approaches**

A member of the profit-organizations argued that there is a lack of coordinated efforts in expansion of new housing and stated that transportation and public works should be considered with all new development. To this, several community forum participants added:

*The city needs to be more prescriptive in terms of design guidelines – to insist on mixed uses, density and affordability – and with aesthetically pleasing developments. But the reality is that a declining and inadequate housing stock costs the city a tremendous amount through police and fire services, as well as a lack of investment in impoverished areas, and declining property tax revenues.*

*City council needs to see investments in the housing stock as good business! It's more affordable to maintain houses well than to replace or major renovate - this can go in neighbourhoods that may appear to be stable like parts of St. Boniface.*

### **Homeownership and Quality of Neighbourhoods**

The issue of homeownership, in terms of instilling pride in neighbourhoods rose. It was viewed that the quality of neighbourhoods would increase with an increase in pride of home ownership. Members of the Aboriginal community added that the City should inform people about the values and benefits of home maintenance to people on reserves so when they migrate they can transition into urban neighbourhoods. They acknowledged that there is a need for housing supports for people migrating from the reserve or home communities to Winnipeg. Participants also suggested that the City could do more to instruct people on the all the responsibilities and processes related to homeownership and include newcomers and refugees in this education.

## Processes

In the area of processes, participants suggested that the city could:

- Inspect the current affordable stock to ensure adequate, safe housing;
- Cap rental units in communities and increase homeownership possibilities through the creation of incentives
- provide more awareness of renovation programs so people know they may qualify for the programs;
- Provide an advocate for seniors -- a “go between” relating to housing issues; and
- Require developers to ensure “visitable” suites and buildings, create by-laws and incentives to existing buildings.

## **Part Three: Housing Investment**

### **What types of housing is needed (size, function, etc)?**

Affordable housing was the most significant need voiced among all participants. Following this, mixed and supportive housing was deemed an important area for the City to focus their efforts.

In terms of affordable housing, newcomers, refugees, youth, Aboriginal persons, seniors and persons with disabilities were cited as persons with high needs in housing.

While many urged that housing needs to reflect changing demographics they also argued that low-income populations are the most vulnerable, particularly to the “boom/bust” cycle that has been occurring. There is an increasing gap in new housing for mid-range incomes as well. Many suggested that resource allocation must include local, neighbourhood level organizations and also suggested portable subsidies as a partial solution in that it would offer an increase in housing choices.

### **Geographically, where should support be targeted?**

Generally, there were mixed response to this question. For example, some suggested that the need is where communities self-identify yet others suggested that there should be less focus on geographic areas. One participant felt that the question should not *where* should support be targeted but *how* should they should be supported. As an example, one participant stated:

*More neighbourhoods need to be declared improvement zones. The designation helps stakeholders see where issues reside. West Broadway has now accomplished so much that it is in comparatively better shape than other neighbourhoods with no improvement designation.*

One participant pointed out that while neighbourhood improvement plans are good, the issue is that many of these programs have an income limit and if you make above a certain amount, you do not qualify for the program. Another participant suggested putting resources into neighbourhoods which are “on the cusp” and then start momentum to help surrounding neighbourhoods.

More focused answers to this question included the following geographical areas:

- Infill housing in the inner city;
- South Point Douglas;
- Neighbourhoods with existing infrastructure;
- Kapyong Barracks;
- Downtown, West Broadway and the West End;
- Neighbourhoods with predominately post World War II housing;
- The downtown
- Established transit corridors; and
- Polo Park and Downtown.

## **Do the neighbourhood designations still hold relevance?**

Generally, participants agreed that pockets of neighbourhoods require attention. While one person acknowledged that the City of Winnipeg should keep the designated improvement zones areas, nevertheless this can't be an indefinite policy for the city. One participant suggested that multi-tier designations could be a possibility and another recommended the City could start in the central areas and work outwards.

The seniors in particular asked when the city will look beyond the inner city and argued that there is a need for upgrading elsewhere. They confirmed that there are citizen groups that have an interest in helping. They expressed concerns that in the fringe communities people wonder if it is too expensive for the city to do anything such as upgrade the recreation centres.

There was a call for the need to manage growth in a sustainable manner because of the moderate growth of our city. Another suggestion was to review outdated data and continue to monitor our own data versus Census Canada statistics.

## **Part Four: Innovation**

### **What types of tools and innovation would be useful?**

Participants stressed that there is not one solution, and argued for the City to look for promising practices elsewhere and apply these as needed to local needs and specific groups. The results of

this question produced ideas for tools related to processes, planning, policy, zoning by-laws, taxes, incentives, design and advocacy. The following section provides the main points that were offered under each category.

### **Processes**

- Strengthen the Residential Tenancy Branch
- Create a stronger system of inspecting rental units
- Regularly review household-level statistics and identify housing needs
- More diligent enforcement of demolitions
- Emphasis on skill building when conducting repairs and maintenance,
- Encourage density and mixed use
- Establish more community training home renovation programs
- Guidelines need to be recognized and enforced
- Use enforcement tools and incentives such as the multi-family grant program

### **Planning**

- Working towards an integrating approach in transit/development planning
- Look at land banking to keep housing affordable

### **Policy**

- Create a “Slumlord” policy: Create disincentives for landowners to sit on vacant housing/ boarded up housing
- A housing strategy should be tied to an employment strategy in regards to trades training and building local economic resiliency

### **Zoning and By-laws**

- Enforce zoning, in particular secondary suite zoning and examine zoning impediments
- Create a condo conversion bylaw to preserve the rental stock
- Inclusionary zoning to promote or require affordable housing
- Develop urban growth boundary to concentrate development
- Include social housing within residential zoning areas
- Create density requirements for development
- Create infill guidelines to get quality housing development

### **Taxes and Incentives**

- Bring back the Limited Dividend Housing programs
- Reduce taxes for modestly sized units, for example, reduce school taxes
- Create a supportive taxation regime
- Stop subsidies for new suburban development
- Create higher development charges
- Separate school taxes from property taxes

- Give incentives to developers for conditional building but attach to regulations, for example, if they receive a tax break the developer must provide so many units of affordable rental housing
- Better support existing initiatives with tax credits/ incentives for those who are already doing a good job
- Start more tax programs/incentives to encourage people to renovate their homes
- Incentives for developers building rental units
- Provide tax incentives to neighbour residents to mentor new residents in the principles of homeownership.
- Create Developer tradeoffs such as building one lot of infill for every ten lots outside inner city
- Work with lenders to offer pay as you save mortgages, and Green Mortgages
- Offer density bonusing to developers

### **Design**

- Create flexible housing for new Canadians to reflect household size, lifestyles
- Offer design competitions
- Bring down costs of new homes (See Affordability and Choice Today program) and build more units with savings.
- Focus less on standard housing design so we can meet the demand for new housing units

### **Advocacy**

- Host a housing development conference to bring players together.
- Examine how to encourage private investors without offering public funding.
- Work with Federation of Canadian Municipalities to lobby for housing and development.
- Advertise housing programs better
- Learn from people who live in the neighbourhood conservation areas and share knowledge such as maintenance of homes. Transfer this knowledge to other designated areas such as the major improvement zones.
- Provide greater support and advocacy for tenants-at-risk.

## **What are other jurisdictions doing or what are some examples from here in Winnipeg?**

The following section highlights the examples from other jurisdictions that participants offered as possible housing development resources.

### **Vancouver**

- The Woodsworth Building offers a mixed use continuum of housing

- Replacement programs which works with changing housing markets
- Inclusionary zoning for both new developments and redevelopments
- Laneway Houses conversion of garages to single units

### **Montreal**

- Recently developed four unit townhouses where each unit caters to different family sizes.
- Grow homes.

### **Saskatoon**

- Has a business plan for housing which determines where the municipal, private, and provincial responsibility lies
- The Saskatoon Planning Department is working with all players including the banks to develop neighbourhoods with affordable housing.
- Saskatoon's Housing Initiatives Partnership is an example of how the city works in partnership with other sectors.
- Saskatoon has by-laws regarding restrictions on condo conversions

### **Toronto**

- Mandatory green roofing.

### **Calgary**

- Work-related programs in skill building, home care and home repairs allows seniors to stay at home and creates capacity and jobs for others.

### **International**

- Location Efficient Mortgages (United States)
- Pay-as-you-save mortgages (United Kingdom & Ireland)
- Mandatory energy efficiency passports' for units for sale or for lease (European Union)

In Winnipeg, models that were offered for examples were the Habitat for Humanity Housing, Co-housing units and Pocket suites.

## **What strategic partnerships are needed among government, community and citizens to support housing investment and programming?**

Generally, participants agreed that all sectors should be at the table when discussing housing with the city quality of life issues at the forefront. Participants urged that the City needs to work more with the other levels of government. It was argued that affordable housing cannot happen without

the involvement of the private sector. Two participants felt that there is no shared responsibility among government “they keep passing the ball.”

That the City needed to work more closely with the Provincial government was highlighted more than once. Participants stressed that the City should pressure and lobby the Provincial government for increased social assistance and housing support. One participant from the newcomer community insisted that there is no incentive to work more often because if you make more money Manitoba Housing charges more for rent and your social assistance goes down.

Again, throughout this consultation process, it was made clear that a housing policy should be holistic and make connections between housing and other issues such as emergency services, play spaces, transportation, communities and community building.

Participants stressed that the city could be much more active in bringing the social and health agendas necessary for affordable housing with development interests. One contributor offered the notion of a housing ombudsman in order to assist people in navigating the programs available to them. The city could assist in bringing all players together and one person suggested that the City could host a housing development conference to do this.

Participants felt that the building sector can be more innovative because housing starts are not in pace with household growth. Many suggested the importance of promoting social housing in an attractive way to developers while others encouraged the development sector and the zoning department collaborate to create incentives and density bonusing. Other suggested partnerships included:

- Canadian Association for Mental Health
- Indian and Northern Affairs
- Aboriginal housing Associations
- Research groups
- Non-profit organizations/Volunteer sector.
- developers
- Renewal corporations
- Community Economic Development organizations
- Manitoba Housing/ and/or social housing
- Homeless shelters and poverty reduction organizations
- Residential community groups
- Private sector
- Housing management agencies
- Property insurers



## Who needs to be brought to the table and in what type of roles?

The for-profit group stressed that affordable land is an issue and that brownfields could be developed with proper planning when involving non-profits.

The seniors asked whether there might be an opportunity for all sectors to share together in Winnipeg and argued that we need to exchange knowledge. During the WHHI forum, participants stressed the need for the tripartite involvement in secondary plans. They added that the WHHI could improve communication and planning between the three levels of government. Additional comments from the WHHI forums included:

- City planners should attend more events in communities because non-profit neighbourhood planners need more two-way communication with them;
- Develop a 1-800 number for Winnipeg Housing Initiative to provide information and communication specifically for developers.

A member from the community forum highlighted that Employment Income has issues of accountability stating that “EIA leaves no one responsible for mistakes.”

## Part Six: Priorities

- Fortify and increase power/amount of inspections/fix our waste removal get rid of couches/beds in back lanes and increase beat cops
- Look at rooming houses-fix legal and illegal groups
- Create supportive zoning for secondary suites
- Create a phone-in line for landlord concerns
- Harm reduction/in tenancy supports to stop eviction cycle like the MHCC demonstration project
  - Engage with the Aboriginal community in a consistent and meaningful way
  - Lobby Province to ensure that EIA is matched with reality
  - Have stabilized neighbourhood help and teach other neighbourhoods
- Leadership! Affordable housing needs a political champion. Have a housing Directorate at City Hall to provide leadership versus the EPC simply reacting to housing issues
- Better enforcement of existing provisions to preserve the housing stock.
- Public and private sectors need to come together
- Expand housing improvement zones, and expand resources given to them
- Connect housing strategy to addressing poverty issues.
- OurWinnipeg should acknowledge and incorporate goals of improvement zones.
- Kapyong Barracks is a major issue – use the affordable housing supply that is just sitting empty! More proactive stance with Canada Lands on this issue is needed.
- Develop a Neighbourhood Housing Development Strategy

- Rental bylaw that limits condo conversion in low vacancy times and encouragement of secondary suites
- Renovation incentives
- More rental unit provisioning/raise annual housing targets
- Create an Urban Growth Boundary
- More collaboration among departments! (Avoid the silo effect)

## Conclusion

We heard repeatedly from attendees that the City of Winnipeg needs to be aware that the core housing need in the city is quite significant, and current practices are not commensurate with these needs. As well, it is short-sighted to consider affordable housing as one of many social issues, when in fact it connects to so many problems in our communities. It is a political, social, economic, environmental imperative, and one that intersects with a host of government services such as police, firefighting, ambulance and health care. A declining housing stock not only negatively affects the well-being of thousands of Winnipeggers, but represents a significant drag on the economy.

A holistic housing strategy is needed, one that connects all relevant stakeholders and considers investments in affordable housing as a major factor in the city's economic well-being.

## Recommendations

- Plan for affordable housing in a holistic manner
- Have an annual housing conference that brings all sectors together in a meaningful way
- Establish a Civic housing committee or working group
- A housing champion needed on City council
- Establish firm partnerships among all three levels of government
- Lobby for additional resources among other levels of government
- Enforce all relevant bylaws more vigourously: increase inspections, enforce derelict building bylaw, tackle the bed bug problem
- Implement the components of OurWinnipeg and the Housing Policy