

Central Brandon 5 Year Community Plan 2016 - 2021

A Plan for the Community, Prepared by the Community

Facilitated by Brandon Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation

With Neighbourhoods Alive!, Lorch and Associates, and the 5 Year Plan Community Steering Committee

November 2015



Neighbourhoods Alive!

Neighbourhoods Alive! provides communities across Manitoba with the support they need to revitalize their neighbourhoods. Neighbourhoods Alive! recognizes that often the best ideas for neighbourhood revitalization come from the community itself. To understand the needs of the community, and to ensure that those ideas are heard, they call on the Neighbourhood Renewal Corporations to consult with the community and develop a 5 Year Community Plan. Within this plan, the community is to identify priorities under the 5 NA! Objectives. Communities are also encouraged to identify any other priorities that do not fit into these objectives, but matter to the community. The plan calls on the community to identify potential strategies that will move the priorities forward and partners that can work together to achieve results. This plan becomes a powerful tool for designated communities to focus revitalization efforts and bring together one voice for advocacy and change.

NA! Objectives:

- 1) **Improve neighbourhood capacity/ empowerment** (as measured by increased participation of local stakeholders in renewal efforts, complementary funding leveraged and greater residential stability).
- 2) **Improve housing conditions** (as measured by physical improvements to substandard housing, development of affordable housing units, increased housing values/ investment and promotion of homeownership including cooperative housing models).
- 3) **Increase economic development activity** (as measured by labour market participation rates, job creation, training/ employment preparation, adult education opportunities, sustaining or development of small business and/or social enterprise).
- 4) **Improve safety conditions** (as measured by reductions in crime including fires/arson; improved security measures such as street lighting and home security; and greater perception of safety).
- 5) **Increase access to recreation and wellness opportunities** (as measured by improvements to parks and green space, play structures and other community recreation facilities; increased recreational programming and affordability including equipment and transportation).

5 Year Plan Steering Committee

The 5 Year Plan Steering Committee is a group of residents who live in Central Brandon who were asked to come together to lead the 5 Year Community Plan process. Their input shaped the plan and their hard work is appreciated. The Steering Committee took the data collected through focus groups and surveys and identified the priorities of the community. They worked to develop a list of strategies, and partners, and ensured that the plan continued to reflect the real needs of the community along the way.

The 5 Year Steering Committee members:

Blake Hamilton

Ashley Sadler

Jason Gobeil

Wanda Leigh Rains

Deanna Wolfe

Taiwo Akindele

Naomi Leadbeaker (BNRC Staff)

Carly Gasparini (BNRC Staff)

A special thank you is extended to each member of the Steering Committee as their volunteered time was much appreciated and their wisdom and community spirit has developed a plan that will truly benefit the Brandon Community.

The Consultation Process

The 5 Year Community Plan began with hiring Lorch and Associates to lead the research collection and analysis process. Rhonda Lorch, helped the BNRC staff to develop a survey and focus group questions. She also presented the initial analysis of raw data to the Steering Committee and supported them as they developed community priorities and strategies. Her expertise was helpful in ensuring that the community voice was both heard and understood.

18 focus groups were held with a variety of community groups. Over 200 people provided feedback over the course of these focus groups.

Focus groups included:

- ACC Downtown
- SERC
- BEEP Trainees
- 7th Street Health Access Centre
- Global Market/Public
- City Hall/Public
- Brandon Literacy Centre
- BU students
- BAHC
- Westman Immigrant Services
- Neelin High school Off Campus Students
- Little Teaching Lodge
- King George
- Betty Gibson
- New Era School
- The Poverty Committee
- Kin Village
- BNRC staff & Board

Surveys were distributed across Central Brandon, and were available in both English and Spanish. They were also accessible online and over 300 were returned and inputted. This data was useful in developing the plan in that it provided information not only on what was important to the community, but also on how the community wants to see these priorities addressed.

Overall Themes

The plan lays out 23 Community Priorities and over 70 strategies for addressing those priorities. These priorities paint a picture of Central Brandon that is vibrant, safe, and inclusive. They lead to a community that takes our current strengths and builds on them to create a core area that everyone is proud of and wants to be a part of.

The priorities speak to a community that works together to solve social issues, that embraces Brandon's multicultural communities, that supports working families and individuals to achieve the best versions of themselves, and promotes downtown Brandon in a way that makes it a desirable location for all Brandon residents. Throughout the plan's development, the community stated over and over the importance of service providers working together to achieve these things and the important role the City of Brandon plays in achieving these goals.

Partners

The Steering Committee identified countless potential partners who could work together to realize the strategies identified. In no way is this list complete, and the plan does not imply that we even identified the right partners in all cases. The community identified these organizations as potential partners because of the good work they've done in the past. Working together we can build on each partner's strengths, combine efforts wherever possible, and avoid duplication and confusion. All organizations who feel they can work toward realizing a community strategy are encouraged to join in efforts in doing so. This Community Plan speaks to working together as a community and it is only in doing so that we can create the Brandon the community has called for.

Enhance Community Capacity/Empowerment

Community Priority 1: Enhance Food Security in Central Brandon

STRATEGIES:

- Support Community Garden Network
- Support Good Food Box program and other programs that enhance food security
- Support the development of Community Kitchens
- Ensure the Soup Kitchen and Food bank services are supported and accessible

Community Priority 2: Celebrate Neighbourhood Identities and Foster a Sense of Community amongst Neighbours

STRATEGIES:

- Encourage low cost and inclusionary events
- Support the Global Market future developments and activities
- Use small grants to support projects that bring people together
- Support language and cultural education
- Use visual art to define location and community spirit

Community Priority 3: Ensure Training Opportunities are Available to Build the Capacity of Community Members

STRATEGIES:

- Encourage and support partnerships that develop a wide range of training opportunities

Community Priority 4: Support Activities that Provide Opportunities for Youth

STRATEGIES:

- Identify and develop a 24/7 safe space for youth
- Ensure leadership development opportunities are available to youth to encourage engagement

Community Priority 5: End Homelessness in Brandon

STRATEGIES:

- Continue to build support and participation in the A PLACE TO CALL HOME: Mobilizing Local Capacity to End Youth Homelessness initiative
- Address homelessness through the administration of the community entities in Brandon, Rural and Remote Manitoba and Aboriginal communities as defined in the Homelessness Partnering Strategy.
- Facilities and programs are installed in the downtown core to ensure the safety and harm reduction for homeless people

Community Priority 6: Preserve and Improve Existing Housing Stock

STRATEGIES

- Promote and administer housing improvement grant programs including HAP, RAD and Front and Paint
- Extend current renovation programs to include backyards, gardens, porches etc and expand eligibility for grants to include a wider range of income groups
- Define 'affordable' and deliver programs that help marginalized populations that do not meet 'low income' criteria
- Expand remediation programs such as Bug 'n Scrub, hoarding interventions, energy retrofits etc.

Community Priority 7: Support the Development of New Housing Options

STRATEGIES:

- Explore a variety of building options for low income home ownership
- Support development of transitional housing
- Identify opportunities and encourage development of low income permanent rental housing
- Identify opportunities and encourage development of housing options for youth, seniors and other at risk groups

Community Priority 8: Ensure Equitable Access to Housing

STRATEGIES:

- Support anti-racism and discrimination initiatives related to provision of housing
- Uphold tenant rights through education and advocacy
- Strengthen relationships between tenants and landlords

Increase Economic Development Activity

Community Priority 9: Encourage the Development of a Vibrant Downtown

STRATEGIES:

- Attract new small local businesses to the downtown core and support existing businesses to remain successful.
- Encourage the BIZ and the Chamber of Commerce to support anti-racism initiatives for their business members
- Support networking and relationship building activities that strengthen the business community and improve the perception of the downtown core
- Collaborate with the BIZ and the Chamber of Commerce to encourage economic events and activities that bring people into the downtown area to shop

Community Priority 10: Support Social Enterprise Development

STRATEGIES:

- Encourage and support development of new social enterprise in the downtown core
- Support training related to social enterprise development



Block Party



Global Market



Community Priority 11: Use Events to Enhance the Image of the Downtown Areas as a Safe Gathering Place

STRATEGIES:

- Encourage event organizers to collaborate in marketing initiatives promoting the safety of downtown especially to non-traditional downtown users
- Plan and implement a 'take back the streets' campaign

Community Priority 12: Promote Anti-racism Initiatives

STRATEGIES:

- Plan, implement and promote activities that help people to get to know one another and bridge the divide between cultures
- Encourage partner organizations (boards of directors and staff) to engage in and promoted anti-racism training and education activities and initiatives
- Use art to celebrate culture and to create understanding and appreciation of central Brandon's diverse populations

Community Priority 13: Promote Initiatives that Improve Safety and the Perception of the Core Area

STRATEGIES:

- Advocate for environmental improvements that enhance safety: lighting, pruning of trees, removal of dense bushes etc
- Identify and encourage community-led solutions for sidewalk snow removal and maintenance, and sidewalk and back alley cleanups
- Enhance current outdoor furniture to create a more welcoming environment

Community Priority 14: Report on Crime Statistics Based on Actual Instances

STRATEGIES:

- Gather crime data to draw an accurate picture of crime in the core area from existing sources
- Develop a new citizen participation program for crime prevention
- Develop a community outreach centre where crimes can be reported, assistance can be found and safety can be immediately sought when needed

Increased Access to Recreation and Wellness Opportunities

Community Priority 15: Support Community Centres and Hubs

STRATEGIES:

- Develop capacity for effective governance of community centres
- Support grant applications to a variety of sources for capital projects and improvements, and local community events

Community Priority 16: Improve Daycare Options

STRATEGIES:

- Work with partners to identify options for increasing the number of quality, affordable daycare spots in central Brandon

Community Priority 17: Enhance Recreational Development Initiatives

STRATEGIES:

- Identify recreation space that could house affordable recreation options
- Establish downtown intramural leagues and rec teams for a variety of sports
- Develop a sports equipment exchange and loan program



1202 Rosser Ave - Housing



YMCA – Recreation and Daycare options

Community Priority 18: Use Equity (Anti-poverty) Lens to Inform Community Development Work in Central Brandon

STRATEGIES:

- Ensure activities and initiatives promoted in central Brandon consider the barriers present for those living in poverty
- Identify and address barriers that prevent those living in poverty from participating fully in community

Community Priority 19: Provide research to support evidence based planning and programming

STRATEGIES:

- Use the poverty report framework developed by BU to develop an annual poverty data set for Brandon
- Support research and data collection that provides support to community programs

Community Priority 20: Address Aboriginal Concerns, Especially those Identified by the TRC

STRATEGIES:

- Encourage partnerships and collaborations that address the recommendations of the TRC
- Support the development of initiatives designed to address the recommendations of the TRC

Community Priority 21: Enhance Brandon's Use of and Support for Green Technologies

STRATEGIES:

- Support the development of initiatives that address green energy options such as community use of solar power or green roofs
- Use 'green' solutions to solve social issues and provide incentives for projects to ensure they are as environmentally sustainable as possible
- Develop a demonstration site to showcase green energy technologies

Community Priority 22: Plan and Implement Core Area Marketing Initiatives

STRATEGIES:

- Ensure Social media is being used effectively so that people know what is happening in central Brandon
- Identify a central location for a physical information board; develop the board to market initiatives, projects and programs
- Encourage partnerships that assist businesses to use cross marketing to promote themselves and one another

Community Priority 23: Support Partnership that enhance the Communities Ability to Work with the City of Brandon

STRATEGIES:

- Identify partnerships that can work together to present a plan to City Council on downtown revitalization
- Identify and pursue opportunities to collaborate with the City of Brandon Poverty Committee and other committees with common community development goals and objectives
- Advocate for review of the City of Brandon community transportation plan including public transit policies, and active transportation systems
- Support the City of Brandon Food Policy and Food Charter efforts
- Work with the City of Brandon to ensure recreation activities, programs and infrastructure are available during the times that families most need them
- Encourage City investment in new recreational facilities in the core area

Community Gardens

STEPP HOUSING

