

Urban Issues

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The Institute of Urban Studies





THE UNIVERSITY OF
WINNIPEG

FOR INFORMATION:

The Institute of Urban Studies

The University of Winnipeg
599 Portage Avenue, Winnipeg
phone: 204.982.1140
fax: 204.943.4695
general email: ius@uwinnipeg.ca

Mailing Address:

The Institute of Urban Studies

The University of Winnipeg
515 Portage Avenue
Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3B 2E9

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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.

Community committees

(Second of a Series)

According to the City of Winnipeg Act, one of the responsibilities of the Community Committees is to develop and implement techniques that increase the two-way flow of information between City and the residents of the Community.

The councillors have a multitude of other responsibilities most of which may seem rather mundane, but which are necessary for the successful operation of a city. Therefore councillors cannot be expected to devote a great deal of time to increasing the flow of information — this will primarily be left to the civil servants and to the people who can make suggestions which can be weighed by the councillors.

This article will attempt to set forth some possible alternatives for increasing the two-way flow of information, hopefully for the benefit of the city councillors and any other interested parties.

The two-way flow of information means not only telling the people what City Hall is doing and then listening to the reactions of people; it also means enabling policy makers to understand the perceptions and reactions of people; providing, through improved information, greater use and effectiveness of government programs; and transmitting the needs and concerns of people in their efforts to cope with a changing urban environment. Built into this system could be mechanisms to ensure co-operation between the different jurisdictions of government and means of developing consultation between them.

To bring such a concept into reality would require three phases:

PHASE I: Preparation and Negotiation

A full assessment of all available communication systems and networks in Winnipeg could be made. This would include:

- contacts with radio and television stations
- contacts with media departments of schools, universities, and colleges
- negotiations with cable television and closed-circuit installation companies
- Discussions with major newspapers, community newspapers, bulletins and the ethnic press
- assessment of patterns of distribution and type of information contained in newsletters and information sheets presently being distributed by service groups and agencies.

This would give an inventory of equipment presently available and an inventory of ideas of how the equipment is presently being used and what its potential is.

PHASE II: Organizing Citizen Involvement

The active participation of citizen groups, individuals and citizens advisory groups is basic to the success of this concept. Good citizen participation will also relieve the councillors themselves of a lot of the extra duties they would have to bear during the initial thinking phase.

This phase would not only create citizen interest and participation but would also allow people to have a large amount of input into the shaping of the information system in keeping with the basic tenets of the Act.

PHASE III: Analysis and Design

The information gathered would be analysed as regards each Community Committee area and this would lay the groundwork for the type of design to be followed in each area. Possible designs would include such things as:

- the establishment of community radio stations on low-frequency broadcast as well as community radio via cable facilities.
- the utilization of VTR equipment for presentation of policy statements to citizens groups and for the citizens groups reaction to such a policy.
- participation in a community television system which would give both councillors and citizens a platform from which to present a position or, react to a position.
- examining new forms of community newspapers, designed for and participated in by a particular Community Committee Area.
- attempting to present tapes to citizens who do not have access to cable television by using cable drops and monitors in schools, churches, community centres, etc.
- using existing community facilities to serve as focal points for taping interviews and disseminating of written, audio, and video information.
- Preparing information newsreels on governmental programs and policy which could be presented at community locations at prefixed times to allow the citizens to meet, discuss the material presented and elucidate their opinions.
- using displays in shopping centres, plazas, and parks to draw citizens and to gauge their opinions, ideas on governmental programs and to enlist their involvement.

Such a project would demonstrate how government and people might become more intricately connected in the formation of urban policy using modern means of communications and tied to the efforts of the Community Committee Areas.

health research

Democratic and responsive government operates in two basic ways: firstly, it meets the needs of people as these needs arise, and secondly, it plans the meeting of these needs in a democratic fashion by consulting with the people themselves. The Manitoba Government's efforts to improve the delivery of health care and to involve citizens in the planning and supervision of this care are consistent with the above stated principles.

The proposal for the establishment of health centres has ceased to become a proposal to be judged on its merits but has instead become very much a political issue between the medical interests and the provincial government. The real issues of the need to improve medical care and to involve citizens has been overlooked. The University of Winnipeg's Institute of Urban Studies was asked to undertake this task.

This project fell within the Institute's mandate as an university based urban research centre on community urban problems and particularly citizen involvement and the building of self-help groups. The Institute is already involved in a variety of projects in which we have attempted to build community based institutions for citizen action. This organizing and research effort for the establishment of a health facility in urban renewal area II complements our other efforts to build a network of citizen run organizations which can provide an important means of revitalizing the area.

The Institute's main efforts have been in research on the health needs of Urban Renewal Area II. The Utilization of existing facilities, the satisfaction with other facilities and the need to improve them is presently being studied through questionnaires being administered by residents of the area. The Institute has also been trying to interest people in their health and involve them in the planning of the proposed new health facilities.

Preliminary findings show that only about one third of the residents have their own doctor, well over half go to the General Hospital's Outpatient Department and that fifteen percent don't seek any medical care. About forty percent of the people expressed dissatisfaction with medical care in the area. Half of the residents had heard of the proposal for health centre and in fact hoped that one could be established in their area.

A significant result of this research is the accumulation of necessary information on the kind of improved health facility that will be required so that it reflects the particular needs of the community. At the same time, we are trying to involve citizens in the planning of the proposed health facilities and in the subsequent supervision of the health facility.

Small intimate meetings have been held where provincial government representatives presented the health centre proposal. We have involved more than thirty residents of the area and about sixty more have expressed an interest in becoming involved in the project. The work is continuing and further progress will be presented through this newsletter.

urban university workshop

THE URBAN UNIVERSITY WORKSHOP

and
the

R. H. G. BONNYCASTLE FOUNDATION LECTURE SERIES

The University of Winnipeg recently conducted a workshop dealing with the role of the University of Winnipeg in the growth and development of the City of Winnipeg. The sessions were organized by the Institute of Urban Studies and were integrated with the R.H.G. Bonnycastle Foundation Lecture Series. Lecturers in the series included Dr. Jack Meltzer of the University of Chicago who spoke on the subject "The Role of the Urban University"; Dean Vito Perrone of the University of North Dakota's New School of Behavioral Education, lecturing on the topic "Affecting Change and Influencing Public Policy in the Field of Education"; and Mr. David Weatherhead, Parliamentary Secretary to the Hon. Robert Andras, the Hon. Sidney Green, Minister of Urban Affairs, Province of Manitoba, and Mr. Abe Yanofsky, Alderman in the new City of Winnipeg Council, who dealt with the subject "Evolving an Urban Policy for Canada."

Participants in the workshop were limited to approximately fifty specially invited individuals representing the University, Government, business, professional and private sectors of the Winnipeg community. They devoted the better part of two days to discussion of the role of the University of Winnipeg in the urban community. The workshop did outline a number of concepts or ideas for consideration by the University of Winnipeg when giving further thought to its role in the City of Winnipeg. Those in attendance employed the resources of the R. H. G. Bonnycastle Foundation Lectures as well as background papers supplied by the Institute as a basis for their discussion.

This Urban University Workshop is the subject of a brief report to the participants. Others interested in receiving a copy may contact the Institute. The R.H.G. Bonnycastle Foundation Lectures are not in printed form but have been recorded on V.T.R. and the tapes may be borrowed upon request. The Urban University Workshop concluded with the observation that the University of Winnipeg should discuss and further resolve its own concepts of the role of the University in the community. Representatives of the other sectors of the community expressed interest in assisting the university in the determination of ways and means whereby some form of coalition might lead to development of an effective and meaningful program of community participation and co-operation in programs relevant to the needs of the urban community. The possibility of an workshop session in the future was discussed but no commitments were made.

IUS
DOCUMENTS

Report on the Neighbourhood Development

Corporation concept by Jim Cassidy,

Institute of Urban Studies.

Kinew

KINEW HOUSING INCORPORATED
(Head Office - Winnipeg)

Kinew Housing Incorporated was formed under the Companies Act of the Province of Manitoba as a non-profit company authorized to engage in the process of purchasing or leasing residential and commercial properties for lease or sale to persons of Indian ancestry anywhere in Manitoba. Governed by a Board of Directors all of Indian ancestry, it employs persons of Indian ancestry in the areas of office management, property acquisition and dwelling maintenance and rehabilitation.

Kinew's origin stems back to a study conducted in the spring of 1970 by the Indian and Metis Friendship Centre and the Institute of Urban Studies,¹ That study attempted to identify the problems faced by Indian and Metis people of Winnipeg and to find ways and means of solution to such problems. It involved the people of Indian ancestry in the discussion, planning and implementation of courses of action. A detailed description of the study and the subsequent progress of individuals in the Indian - Metis community in their efforts to develop a program to deal with one aspect of the housing problem is recorded elsewhere.² The result of these investigations was the establishment of Kinew Housing Incorporated on August 28, 1970.

Kinew has been in operation for some twenty months and has been able to initiate programs which go a long way to realization of its stated objectives, namely:

1. To provide reasonably good housing in satisfactory living environments within the City of Winnipeg for families of Indian ancestry and thus assist them in the transition from rural or reserve communities.
2. To plan and provide a community relations program which will assist the tenants in their orientation to a new home, a new community, and a wide range of support services available to all members of society.
3. To help develop the administrative and leadership skills of persons of Indian ancestry through participation in and employment by the company, thus facilitating the process of self-government and self-determination.
4. To establish a method evaluation from which development and expansion of the company programs might be determined by the Directors.

The progress of Kinew to date has to be impressive. There is no doubt that the company has been faced with many problems not uncommon to any fledgling corporation. However, its many achievements are primarily due to the sincere efforts of its Directors, the ability to acquire CMHC housing loans and the effective use of volunteer resource people including a solicitor, real estate appraiser, accountant, staff of CMHC and personnel of the Institute of Urban Studies. The records of the progress of Kinew provide background information with respect to the development of Kinew to date and its influence upon both those it serves and society as a whole.³

For the purposes of this report, an up-to-date summary of the current status of the Kinew operations will be briefly outlined.

Kinew has purchased twenty-eight single family dwellings averaging \$12,530.00 in various sectors of the City of Winnipeg. Interestingly enough, none are in areas which have been desig-

nated as urban renewal or urban rehabilitation areas.⁴ The determinants in selection of housing locations have been availability, general conditions, cost, and the characteristics of the neighbourhood. The concern for proximity of satisfactory housing in relation to schools, parks, transit, community clubs, and community support services has also greatly influenced the selection. An original \$360,000 loan by CMHC⁵ has facilitated the acquisition and partial rehabilitation of these units which are leased on the basis of an economic rental. To date no direct subsidy or profit elements are inherent in rentals averaging \$134.00 per month, although the financial assistance of The Winnipeg Foundation in the acquisition of fixtures and appliances for newly acquired dwellings has greatly offset potential costs to the tenants. Ways and means of permitting a lower rental to be established with respect to a certain percentage of the dwellings are being explored.

Kinew had been successful in obtaining a grant for purposes of developing its management and community relations capacity.⁶ The experience gained over the last ten months by those employed by the Company has proven to represent a sound basis for further expansion of the Kinew program.

The recent granting of funds to Kinew under the current Federal Local Initiatives Program for purposes of employing people of Indian ancestry to be employed in the maintenance of its housing stock will prove to be of great benefit to the employers and tenants alike.

Kinew has far to go to reach its overall purpose, namely to develop its program to the point where a greater percentage of its tenants will be those who have more recently moved to the urban scene. The recent approval by CMHC to a further housing loan⁷ of \$375,000 will permit Kinew to expand its housing supply. This loan, the experience gained to date, a more realistic rental system and a new approach to the method of tenant selection, presents an excellent opportunity for further realization of the Company's objectives.

The Kinew program which was experimental in nature has its weaknesses but they are recognized by the membership which named three of the Kinew tenants to the Board of Directors at its Second Annual Meeting held on November 13, 1971. The successes and true value of Kinew are also reflected in the minutes of that annual meeting. There are other indicators of the merits of the Kinew program not the least of which are the establishment of similar companies throughout Canada;⁸ the development of other non-profit companies for related purposes in which former and present Directors and staff of Kinew are involved;⁹ and indications of new public policies developing in response to the possibilities reflected in the successful experience of Kinew Housing Incorporated.

FOOTNOTES

1. The Indian-Metis Urban Probe, "A Study by the Indian and Metis Friendship Centre and the Institute of Urban Studies", January 1971.
1. David B. Vincent, An Evaluation of the Metis Urban Probe, "A Study by the Indian and Metis Friendship Centre and the Institute of Urban Studies, University of Winnipeg, May-August 1970", November 19, 1970.
2. David G. Henderson. An Evaluation of the Kinew Housing Incorporated Experiment, Institute of Urban Studies, University of Winnipeg, January 7, 1971.

2. David G. Henderson, A Second Report on the "Kinew Housing Incorporated Experiment", Institute of Urban Studies, University of Winnipeg, September 16, 1971.
3. Ibid.
4. The Metropolitan Development Plan adopted as Schedule 'A' to By-Law No. 1117 of the Metropolitan Corporation of Greater Winnipeg, Plate 14.
5. This loan was made under Section 16 of the National Housing Act, 1954 to finance the acquisition and rehabilitation of approximately 30 housing units for persons of low income.
6. This grant made under Section 35 of the National Housing Act, 1954.
7. This loan was made under Section 16 of the National Housing Act, 1954.
8. Reference is made to Canative Housing Corporation of Edmonton, Alberta, incorporated under the Companies Act of the Province of Alberta in the spring of 1971.
9. Reference is made to Winnipeg Native Club Incorporated and the Urban Native Incentive and Developers Association, incorporated under the Companies Act, Province of Manitoba in 1971.

The Institute of Urban Studies

University of Winnipeg

515 Portage Ave., Winnipeg.

Manitoba, CANADA.

Director - Lloyd Axworthy

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