



Home is Where the Heart is
and Right now
that is Nowhere...

**An Examination of
Hidden Homelessness
Among Aboriginal
Peoples in Prairie Cities**



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2005



About the Institute of Urban Studies

Founded in 1969 by the University of Winnipeg, the Institute of Urban Studies (IUS) was created at a time when the city's "urban university" recognized a need to address the problems and concerns of the inner city. From the outset, IUS has been both an educational and an applied research centre. The Institute has remained committed to examining urban development issues in a broad, non-partisan context and has never lost sight of the demands of applied research aimed at practical, often novel, solutions to urban problems and issues.

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The research and recommendations are that of the authors of the report and do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Secretariat on Homelessness.

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This project is the result of the hard work and determination of many persons who contributed to the final outcome. As this project commenced we worked with two community researchers, Ann and Ryan, who helped us understand the issues facing persons currently living in temporary accommodation in Winnipeg's inner city. These perspectives, gathered in forty informal conversations, grounded the research and ensured that we directed this journey into those issues deemed critical among persons lacking permanency in their shelter arrangements.

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The Steering Committee also helped this research take a bottom up approach and ensured that a strong Aboriginal presence was heard and listened to in both the content of the survey and in the approaches taken. The names of organizations that the Steering Committee represented are listed in this report and their role cannot be understated.

When we advanced into exploring each of the three cities, we were helped immeasurably by a number of persons who played a key role in helping us build the relationships necessary to engage both people and agencies in the survey process. To Kim (Regina) and Ernie (Regina), Kim (Saskatoon), John (Winnipeg) and the agencies and their clients, we owe the essence of this very report as without their participation and sharing of knowledge, there would be no final study.

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way of embracing Indigenous research methods into a process that largely ignores the importance of traditional ways and thinking.

The material in this report is owned by the individuals that contributed to its development: from the first informal conversations to the final Talking Circle, the words and thoughtful interpretation of the data and stories told belong to them. It remains our hope that our words hold true to their stories.

To this, we remain indebted for their thoughtful participation.

Steering Committee

The Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs
The Aboriginal Council of Winnipeg
The Winnipeg Métis Association Inc.
The Department of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs
Aboriginal Student Services, The University of Winnipeg
The Social Planning Council of Winnipeg
The Indian and Métis Friendship Centre - Saskatoon
The Indian and Métis Friendship Centre - Regina
Community Researchers - Ryan Nelson and Anne Thompson

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This research examined hidden homelessness among Aboriginal persons in prairie cities. In particular, data were gathered in Winnipeg, Saskatoon and Regina that focused on better understanding the shelter circumstances of persons precariously housed in tenuous situations, including those who lived temporarily with friends or family or those who resided in any number of short-term accommodations such as shelters, rooming houses or hotels.

The study was governed by a regional Steering Committee that helped establish the context and purpose of the data collection methods. It was also recognized that researchers needed to be mindful of the richness that comprises Aboriginal culture and diversity in Prairie cities. To help guide the study a respected Elder was invited to provide thought and support. The Steering Committee also suggested that the study commence by undertaking informal discussions with hidden homeless persons so as to better understand the core issues facing persons presently finding themselves in housing distress. These sessions helped researchers understand and set the course for the formal survey process. Where possible community based researchers were used to assist in the gathering of knowledge from participants and sitting on the Steering Committee and in establishing relationships within each of the study cities.

Following the more structured surveys that were undertaken, a traditional Talking Circle was held in Winnipeg. Led by a respected Elder, this session was used to connect participants together and to respect Indigenous methodological approaches. A second set of interviews were then held with service providers in each of the three cities to better understand their perspectives in dealing with housing distress.

The results of the study continue to reinforce the need for additional housing and supports to those currently struggling to find adequate and affordable shelter. Perhaps a key finding was also the nearly 20 percent of participants who indicated they had a seasonal connection to their home communities. This group represented what the Australian literature refers to as "Spiritual Homeless." It is our contention that this group remains unique among those in various levels of housing distress.

However, given that just under 45 percent of the participants indicated they moved more than three times in the last six months is also an indication of the high level of residential instability among participants.

For their part, service providers recognize the enormity of the situation and do their best to cope with a system bursting at the seams with respect to being able to deal with the crushing need to provide shelter and supports to a range of persons who move for a variety of reasons. With respect to mobility, it remained clear that the movement of people is due to a range of factors that this study can only begin to understand.

Perhaps it is critical to reiterate that the “homeless” are by far a heterogeneous group and *they* remain equally complex and diverse, ranging from the absolute and visible homeless to the more invisible “hidden homeless.” But these are merely broad descriptors that do not capture the uniqueness of the urban Aboriginal communities in Winnipeg, Regina and Saskatoon, and in particular, those in housing distress.

The simple but powerful words of one participant sum up much of the research in saying that...

**“home is where the heart is...
and right now that is nowhere”**

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This research sought to identify the characteristics and circumstances of the hidden homeless population, what factors have contributed to the phenomenon of hidden homelessness and what programs and services currently available to alleviate the problem. To guide the project down this path, the research addressed the following questions:

1. What are the general characteristics of the hidden homeless population among Aboriginal persons, and has the pattern of migration into large urban centres played a contributing factor in exacerbating the extent of hidden homelessness?
2. To what extent does the condition and availability of the housing stock, and housing services, exacerbate the hidden homelessness situation in prairie cities?
3. How are governments, community-based organizations and support agencies addressing the needs of Aboriginal peoples who experience hidden homelessness in Winnipeg, Saskatoon and Regina?

In order to address these questions, the study adopted an Indigenous research approach that allowed for the building of relationships with both Aboriginal peoples experiencing homelessness and those service providers who strive to assist these individuals. It was this foundation of respect and trust that led to the gathering of information through informal conversations, surveys, Talking Circles and key informant interviews with services providers.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

General Findings

- * The level of hidden homelessness in prairie cities is pervasive among the Aboriginal population, yet the relative invisibility of this phenomenon makes it much more difficult to accurately estimate the number of people and to respond with necessary programs and supports.
- * Aboriginal persons experiencing hidden homelessness are a diverse group represented by males and females, youth, single parent families, elders, and, increasingly, families.
- * The reasons for housing distress amongst this group are wide-ranging, however, all suffer from overwhelming poverty and the lack of adequate shelter opportunities (both long-term and short-term emergency/temporary).
- * Approximately one-half of the sample consisted of males (55.8 percent) and those under the age of 30 (47.5 percent).
- * Over half of the sample (55.2 percent) reported an annual income of less than \$10,000, while 19.8 percent of respondents reported no income at all.
- * Approximately one-half (47.2 percent) expressed some level of apprehension about remaining in their respective city on a permanent basis.
- * 64 percent of respondents felt that their economic situation would improve.

Mobility

- * Over a six month period 44.2 percent of sample members reported residence in three or more accommodations.
- * Those who changed residence three or more times before the survey were represented by a higher proportion of females and youth.

* Those reporting no income were more likely to experience more moves and greater residential instability.

* 72 percent have moved more than once in the last six months, with 44 percent moving in excess of three times.

Shelter

* 75 percent of the sample indicated that they were currently living temporarily with friends and family.

* There is a significant shortage of affordable shelter options for the urban Aboriginal population in Canadian Prairie cities.

* Despite the lack of housing provision, most respondents indicated that they had social supports that assisted them in maintaining a roof over their heads. It is this social support network that distinguishes absolute homelessness from hidden homelessness. Moreover, this social support network "hides" the problem of Aboriginal hidden homelessness from mainstream Canadian society.

* 30 percent of respondents reported using an emergency shelter in the last six months.

* 74 percent of respondents lived in the current location for less than six months.

* 52 percent indicated that they lived in crowded conditions.

Services and Support

* In each Prairie city, supportive networks do exist for the hidden homeless Aboriginal population. These supports span a continuum that ranges from formal to informal supports. In addition, individuals staying temporarily also contribute support to the household through contributions to the rent as well as in-kind support such as childcare.

* 81 percent of persons living temporarily with friends and family indicated they contributed to the household.

* 77 percent indicated that they had social supports, with a further 76 percent having support of family.

* 35.5 percent indicated that the members of the household would experience a hardship if those who were staying temporarily moved to another location.

* 55 percent of persons actively participate in organizations with nearly 47 percent participating in two or more.

* 58 percent indicated that they were treated fairly and with respect when applying for shelter.

* 35 percent are currently on a wait-list for housing, and have been so for a year.

* 36 percent had a preference for Aboriginal run housing.

* A paradigm shift is occurring with the downloading of services to the community level. With increasing demand on community agencies, their resources are being strained. Nonetheless, the grassroots foundation of these agencies has allowed the development of supportive networks that would not be possible in government programming.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of the study on Aboriginal hidden homelessness provide a foundation to establish recommendations. The following recommendations are outlined in relation to the themes of mobility, shelter and services.

Mobility

* Further investigation is required to gain a better understanding of the complex dynamic between home communities and urban centres for Aboriginal peoples. In particular, focus should be on the hidden homeless experiences of those in the sample who indicated a connection with their reserve resulting in a higher frequency of movement between reserve and urban centres.

* Programming must be established to address the hyper-mobility of Aboriginal peoples in urban areas. It is only with substantive increases in housing provision (both on and off reserve) that the “churn” of Aboriginal peoples will be recognized.

Shelter

* Increased funding is required for the construction of transitional and permanent housing units to accommodate both those migrating to the city (short-term needs), as well as those wishing to reside in urban centres (long-term needs).

* Choices in housing design must be extended and diversified to incorporate culturally appropriate housing for the Aboriginal population. For example, such housing could accommodate the tradition of maintaining three-and four-generation households through multi-generational housing units and guest accommodation.

* Recognition must be accorded to emerging literature that promotes a holistic approach to the provision of housing. Based on this approach, housing represents far more than shelter and incorporates a range of services that enables Aboriginal peoples to sustain an independent lifestyle in a metropolitan centre.

* The overwhelming message of participants in the study was that access to shelter is significantly hindered by systemic barriers that include perceived discrimination by landlords, as well as requirements for references and damage deposits especially for those new arrivals that lack local connections and financial means. These barriers must be addressed to facilitate access to housing for Aboriginal peoples experiencing housing distress.

Services and Support

* The significance of informal support networks (such as family members providing shelter or assistance) for the hidden homeless in the Aboriginal population must be acknowledged. Moreover, the critical nature of this support must be formally solidified so that financial resources will be available to those households that are providing shelter to the hidden homeless. This might take the form of an innovative program that recognizes the unique circumstances of those in need of shelter and the role of friends and family in providing care.

* Most program responses to hidden homelessness are reactive rather than proactive. In order to eliminate hidden homelessness programming must establish long-term goals that will lead to permanent housing solutions.

* Increases in shelter assistance programs are required to allow greater access to housing through increases in shelter dollars. For example, in Manitoba, the shelter assistance rates, which have not increased substantially since the early 1990's, must be addressed to match the current market conditions which have increased dramatically. In addition, access to shelter assistance programs needs to be better communicated to those in housing distress to ensure they are all aware of all of their options to address their situation.

For example, in Winnipeg, there are numerous organizations and agencies that provide programs ranging from temporary or emergency accommodation to long term affordable options. In addition, government subsidized housing programs also exist that provide shelter on a rent geared to income ratio or provide shelter assistance payments to those in need. While many of

these programs have extensive wait-lists, it is suggested by the outcome of this research that many in critical need of shelter are sometimes unaware of the programs and options available to address their shelter needs. Therefore, continuing to disseminate information about existing programs and supports is one small piece of the solution.





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INTRODUCTION

“Home” is a distant thought, an unattainable dream that continues to elude many...

Within prairie cities, an increasing number of individuals face the challenge of accessing permanent shelter and the related supportive services necessary to ensure an adequate quality of life. For some, this has meant that “*home*” is a

distant thought, an unattainable dream that continues to elude many. Home, has therefore, become a collection of places that can include a friend or family member’s couch, a temporary room in a rooming housing, a transitional shelter bed or perhaps a single room occupancy hotel suite. This patchwork of places and the people living within them comprise the subject of this report which seeks to offer a unique perspective on the circumstances of persons precariously housed in temporary situations.

Throughout this report we apply the term “hidden homelessness” to describe a vulnerable segment of the population that lacks permanency in their shelter. More precisely, we explore this social condition within the Aboriginal population in the communities of Winnipeg, Regina and Saskatoon, with the intent of not only describing their current situation but also in seeking answers and looking for strength and resolve among those who are in many ways part of a growing shelter-*less* population. To take this journey we sought the advice and guidance of the Aboriginal community and offered them the leading hand in this research and asked that they guide us in building the relationships necessary to go forward in a manner that respects and embraces the greatness of Aboriginal diversity and culture.

The report that follows provides, first, a literature review on hidden homelessness and Aboriginal peoples, an overview of research methods, and a discussion of the results of the study. In the final section of the report, the recommendations developed from the findings of the study are outlined.



LITERATURE REVIEW: HOMELESSNESS

The line between being homeless and being domiciled is a fuzzy boundary, often and easily crossed...

Although the provision of adequate shelter is a fundamental human right, the crisis of homelessness in Canadian metropolitan centres continues to escalate. The complexity of this issue is reflected in the

conceptual difficulties to define what is meant by homelessness and the subsequent methodological problems to identify how the homeless population should be measured. Overall, strategies to address this issue in Canada have failed to recognize the distinctiveness of the homelessness experience for the Aboriginal peoples of this country (Beavis, Klos, Carter & Douchant, 1997). The uniqueness of this phenomenon for Aboriginal individuals is related to oppression, racism and discrimination that have resulted in severe social and economic marginalization. Moreover, the high mobility of this population between urban and rural domains, along with the inadequacy of housing in both reserve and urban environments has created a dynamic that is distinct to the experience of homelessness for Indigenous Canadians. However, there has been only limited research on Aboriginal homelessness in Canada. In order to more fully understand the issue, it is essential to investigate the movement of Aboriginal peoples in time and place and the relationship of this dynamic with the realities of homelessness for First Nations people.

Aboriginal peoples played a significant role in the early development of Canadian Prairie cities such as Winnipeg (Blanchard, 2005). However, by the beginning of the twentieth century they were virtually invisible and it was not until the 1950s that movement from reserves to urban areas commenced. Simultaneous with the growth of urban Aboriginal populations was the emergence of a homeless Aboriginal population (Wente, 2000). When the numbers without shelter rose significantly in the 1970s researchers began to consider the issue of Aboriginal homelessness. However, a great deal of the focus of this research was on the "Urban Indian Problem" and the incompatibility of Indigenous culture with city life and the inability of Aboriginal peoples to assimilate, acculturate and adjust to urban society (Price, 1978; Sorkin, 1978).

More recently, there has been recognition that the continuing over-representation of people with Aboriginal identity in the homeless population (City of Toronto, 1999; Social Planning and Research Council of British Columbia, 2005) requires new perspectives to identify the deeper causes for their situation and to address the continuum of homelessness they experience. Homelessness has many causes and is the consequence of long-term, large-scale economic and social trends. According to Shlay and Rossi (1992), homelessness is the result of the convergence of many factors that include increasing poverty due to labour market restructuring and the reduction of social welfare, as well as changes in housing market dynamics and the lack of affordable housing. Structural changes have concentrated poverty and the causes of homelessness have affected Aboriginal peoples profoundly (Beavis et al., 1997). Moreover, there are also factors that are unique to the Aboriginal population that have created a houseless crisis for the Aboriginal peoples of Canada. These unique causes relate to oppression, as well as the dispossession of land and culture which created a cycle of welfare dependency (Wente, 2000).

The issue of defining homelessness is not easily resolved. Early investigations of homelessness did not regard the phenomenon as a housing problem, but rather focused on skid row residents who were defined as homeless because of their break with personal ties and relationships within the broader society (Shlay & Rossi, 1992). Contemporary definitions establish a more direct link with residential instability and the inadequacy of shelter provision. Specifically, a homeless continuum has been suggested to more accurately describe the dynamic nature of the condition through which individuals fluctuate between shelter security and insecurity and move in and out of homelessness on a regular basis. The continuum ranges from the absolute or chronically homeless, to those who are hidden in temporary accommodations, and those at imminent risk of becoming homeless. The wide range in perspectives of homelessness reflects recognition of its dynamics because homelessness can be temporary, episodic or chronic (Sider, 2005). As Shlay and Rossi (1992: 133) describe, "at any point in time, those who are then precariously housed may have been homeless in the past and may become homeless in the future. The line between

being homeless and being domiciled is a fuzzy boundary, often and easily crossed”.

Thus, along the continuum that best describes homelessness one is left with the impression that it begins at one end with the most *visible* aspects of homelessness -- that is, those most vulnerable and on the streets, and ends with the least visible -- or those most likely to be considered at risk such as the “hidden homeless” population. The latter is used to describe those Aboriginal persons who comprise the focus for this study, and who also, increasingly, find that they lack permanency in shelter arrangements. This includes those living temporarily with friends and family, in shelters or perhaps in rooming houses or single room occupancy hotels. In all cases, there is a heightened risk of losing ones accommodation at any given time.

Springer (2000) has proposed a global definition of homelessness that consists of two categories of population groups in which there is a frequent exchange of individuals. The first group, the absolute or literal homeless, consists of those without physical shelter who sleep in the “rough”, that is, on the street and other public spaces as well as in places not meant for human habitation. This category also includes those who are temporarily sheltered in emergency shelters, safe houses or transitional housing for women and their children fleeing violence. Therefore, the absolute homeless are visible on the streets or staying in hostels.

The second category proposed by Springer (2000) defines homelessness more broadly to include those that are imminently at risk of becoming homeless. Specifically, this group is subsumed into two sub-classes of the concealed homeless and those at risk of becoming houseless. Individuals who have shelter but are at risk of homelessness include

- (a) those insecurely housed due to the high cost of rent,
- (b) those in substandard housing that does not meet basic health and safety standards, and
- (c) those experiencing crowded housing (Memmott, Long, Chambers & Spring, 2003).

Concealed or “hidden” homelessness encapsulates the many would-be homeless who live temporarily in households maintained by others because they cannot afford any shelter for themselves (Shlay & Rossi, 1992). The hidden homeless are invisible as they “couch surf” amongst the homes of family and friends.

Hidden homelessness is particularly relevant within the Aboriginal context as the support of extended family and friendship networks is an inherent component of Indigenous value systems (Memcott et al., 2003). However, the actual magnitude of this process is difficult to determine as it is an extremely complex phenomenon to enumerate because those that are in concealed houseless situations are not easily identifiable. Despite the lack of substantive evidence, hidden homelessness is considered to be a significant issue for the Aboriginal population in metropolitan centres of Canada.

What is missing however from this simple overview of homelessness is that at the far end of the “less visible” side of the continuum lies a segment of the Aboriginal population that has continued to be mobile, moving more frequently between urban centres and home communities. Memcott and his colleagues (2003) suggest that very high mobility between places of abode is a contributing factor of Indigenous homelessness in Australia. This situation was also highly evident in the Aboriginal Mobility Study conducted in Winnipeg which demonstrated that 50 percent of respondents remained part of the hidden homeless population over three successive surveys over an 18 month longitudinal study (Distasio, 2004). In the present study, approximately 20 percent of participants indicated they had a seasonal pattern of movement that connected them with their home community. While it was not the intent of this study to examine this issue, nor did we properly account for its significance, it nonetheless represents an area that requires much more detailed analysis to properly understand and document this dynamic process.

Furthermore, the connection with home community and family represented such a complex aspect of the research that we simply must acknowledge our inability to properly describe its

role. This should not be regarded as a deficiency of this research but, rather, a direction for further research into the complex relationship some have with home communities, families, and the desire to move between multiple locations. Such an understanding requires a greater focus on the concept of the "spiritual" homelessness of Aboriginal peoples representing separation from traditional land and from family and kinship networks (Memmott et al., 2003).

We therefore propose that the continuum noted above be amended to include this "less-visible" form of hidden homelessness. A formulation is required that identifies a somewhat "grey area" of the continuum that represents those who live between places on a more frequent basis or those who are attached to multiple locations through a strong relationship with one's home community and family relations. The following sub-sections of the literature review provide a more detailed discussion concerning

(a) the causes of hidden homelessness amongst the Aboriginal population, and

(b) the relationship between Aboriginal homelessness and residential mobility.

HIDDEN HOMELESSNESS AND THE ABORIGINAL POPULATION

The marginalization of the urban Aboriginal population remains a preoccupation in contemporary studies...

A literature review on Aboriginal homelessness has revealed that this population faces a distinctive set of issues and concerns in comparison to non-Aboriginal populations. *The National Roundtable on Urban Aboriginal Issues* (1993) found that Aboriginal people are far more likely to rent homes, change addresses

more frequently and live in poorer neighbourhoods than non-Aboriginal people. A decade later, a longitudinal study concerning Aboriginal mobility in Manitoba revealed that those who move to urban centres in search of work, education and other opportunities are at a particularly high risk of becoming and remaining homeless, either hidden or otherwise (Distasio, 2004).

High mobility rates remove people from services and impact the development of neighbourhood networks. As a result, service providers face distinct challenges in establishing a continuum of care, and difficulties preparing appropriate policies, business plans and budgets (CMHC, 2002). In the study by Distasio (2004), those persons most satisfied with their neighbourhoods tended to live in close proximity to the services and supports they needed, while residing in some form of permanent housing in a safe environment.

In general, there is a lack of literature on Aboriginal hidden homelessness despite, as Wente (2000) reports, "...interest in the *Urban Indian Problem* since the 1970's mass urban migration". Literature in the 1960s and 1970s emphasized the barriers faced by Aboriginals in cities as they attempted to flee the poverty of the reserve in search of economic opportunity. Those barriers include economic and educational disadvantage, cultural dislocation, and personal risk factors such as substance abuse (Wente, 2000). However, the marginalization of the urban Aboriginal population remains a preoccupation in contemporary studies (Graham & Peters, 2002).

There is also a shortage of literature on Aboriginal hidden homeless people in rural areas despite its strong link to urban Aboriginal homelessness. In 2000, the Saskatchewan Indian

Institute of Technologies (SIIT) examined how the homelessness in rural communities led to migration and mobility in urban centres and that overcrowded and substandard on-reserve housing and the inaccessibility of services and resources are key factors that lead to rural homelessness (SIIT, 2000:9).

Aboriginal homelessness may be described as those individuals who are visibly or absolutely homeless, (i.e. may live outdoors); those who are the hidden homeless because situational factors have left them temporarily homeless (i/e. may have left a dangerous or tragic situation, may have recently moved from one location or community to another – in both cases relying on services of an emergency shelter or hostel); and, those that are at risk of becoming homeless (i.e. live in overcrowded housing, inadequate housing, unsafe housing, unaffordable housing) (SIIT, 2000:7). The poor socio-economic conditions of urban Aboriginal peoples are particularly pronounced in the Canadian Prairie provinces (Graham & Peters, 2002).

Contributing factors that place Aboriginal peoples in the condition of homelessness (or at-risk of homelessness) include poverty, the issues of housing availability (including safety and size suitability), urbanization, racism/discrimination, cultural realities, physical health, domestic violence, policy changes affecting affordable housing in Canada (SIIT, 2000; Devine,1999) precarious/low-wage work, income/rent ratio, social assistance system, and release from prison and health institutions (Beavis et al.,1997; Anucha, 2003). Wentz (2000) further argues that there are factors unique to Aboriginal people that create and perpetuate homelessness that spring from dispossession of land and culture and the consistent, and ongoing systematic oppression that faces Aboriginal people in Canada. In the sub-sections that follow, the circumstances of homeless Aboriginal people are discussed in relation to the provision of housing, the erosion of Aboriginal culture and the provision of services.

HOUSING

Shelter solutions must also address the need for culturally appropriate housing...

In Regina, Saskatoon and Winnipeg, crowded housing conditions are a key issue. For instance, data from the 2001 Census reveals that 18 percent of Aboriginal peoples in Saskatoon

lived in crowded households although they represented only 5 percent of the city's population. In Regina, 15 percent of Aboriginal households lived in crowded conditions, while in Winnipeg 17 percent were similarly housed (Aboriginal Peoples Survey, 2001).¹ The Core Housing Need Model serves to assist in the design, delivery and evaluation of social housing initiatives which is used by Canada's federal government, provincial housing agencies, municipalities and non-profit housing groups to monitor housing conditions. The Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) defines a dwelling as acceptable only if it is:

1. Adequate in condition, with residents reporting that no major repairs are required;
2. Suitable in size, with enough bedrooms for the size and make-up of the household, to meet the norms of the National Occupancy Standard;² and
3. Affordable, defined as costing less than 30 percent of total before-tax household income.

1. Additional analysis of census data is presented in Appendix A in order to explore general demographic characteristics of the three Prairie cities included in the study. This expanded analysis also includes an overview of Aboriginal data wherever possible.

2. According to the National Occupancy Standard enough bedrooms means one bedroom for each cohabiting adult couple; unattached household member 18 years of age and over; same-sex pair of children under age 18; and additional boy or girl in the family, unless there are two opposite sex siblings under 5 years of age, in which case they are expected to share a bedroom. A household of one individual can occupy a bachelor unit (i.e. a unit with no bedroom). (See Core Housing Need in Canada, CMHC, 1991, p. 4)

The 2001 census reveals that the total Aboriginal population in Canada was just over one million persons representing a total of 320,000 households. Of the total Aboriginal population, 48 percent of First Nations people were renters in 2001. Aboriginal households who rent accommodations live in lower quality dwellings as 16.5 percent of dwellings rented by Aboriginals are in need of major repair compared to only 9.0 percent of the non-Aboriginal population (The National Aboriginal Housing Association, 2004). In Regina, Saskatoon, Vancouver and Winnipeg, two-fifths or more of Aboriginal households renting their accommodation were in housing need. Regina had the highest percentage of Aboriginal renter households in need (45.5 percent), while Winnipeg had the greatest number (approximately 5,600 households) (CMHC (a), 2005).

Aboriginal households experience a higher incidence of affordability problems. Out of the 320,000 Aboriginal households, 37 percent spent more than 30 percent of their income on rent, while 15 percent experienced a severe rent burden paying more than 50 percent of income on shelter. Coupled with high rental costs, the Aboriginal population has lower income levels compared to than non-Aboriginals. At the national level, the average income of Aboriginal households is only 87 percent of that of non-Aboriginal households. Therefore, on average Aboriginal households have less money to spend on rent (The National Aboriginal Housing Association, 2004).

The World Health Organization identifies shelter as a basic determinant of health (Hanna & Hanson, 2004). Housing represents not only shelter, but also a place for individuals and families to actively participate in their communities. For those Aboriginal persons experiencing hidden homelessness, the lack of housing impacts negatively upon the linkages and supports offered by the community. Consequently, there is a desperate need for adequate and affordable housing for the Aboriginal population in the urban centres of Canada (Mason, 1996). However, shelter solutions must also address the need for culturally appropriate housing.

While a great deal of exploration is still required to define housing that is culturally appropriate, residences specifically for Aboriginal persons should:

- * Be affordable;
- * Offer alternative housing models such as cooperatives that support Aboriginal ownership and operation;
- * Accommodate traditional ways such as the preparation of wild game;
- * Accommodate healing and counselling programs;
- * Accommodate visits from elders; and
- * Accommodate the tradition of maintaining three and four generation households (Keating, 1991; Mason, 1996; Calgary Urban Aboriginal Initiative, 2000).

By incorporating communal concepts of property and mutual aid, it is possible that the traditional approach of inter-generational living will provide a context in which to address the issue of hidden homelessness within the Aboriginal community.

THE EROSION OF ABORIGINAL CULTURE AND HOMELESSNESS

Social relationships amongst friends and family included traditional activities such as story-telling, dancing, singing, sweats, feasts and sport days and served to bring communities together...

Aboriginal peoples have experienced serious erosion of their cultures and identities (Berry, 1999); however, this does not suggest that there has been no resistance by this distinct population. They have a rich cultural heritage that forms a central part of their community, family and personal lives. The tolerance shown by Aboriginal peoples is related to their non-oppositional and

self-governing values that support their culture (Angell and Dunlop, 2001).

In 1999, Berry conducted six Learning Circles, comprised of 10 to 12 persons each, from a variety of communities, to explore Aboriginal cultural identity. The findings and the methods used may be found in the full RCAP report. The learning circles revealed (Berry 1999:19) "*Experiences with the land, traditional culture, social relations and family were the most positive influences; experiences with addictions, prejudice, residential schools and government institutions were the most negative experiences.*"

In the Learning Circles, the participants stated that their relationship to the land and social relationships were central to their cultural identity. Traditional activities include being able to hunt, fish, trap and go berry picking. Being forced to live away from their home environment caused many participants to lose touch with themselves and their culture. Social relationships amongst friends and family included traditional activities such as story-telling, dancing, singing, sweats, feasts and sport days and served to bring communities together. Berry (1999:22) states, "*Their sense of belonging stemmed from a secure place within family and from shared goals within the community.*"

In terms of negative influences and relationship to cultural identity, the participants highlighted government agencies such as social services, welfare and housing that impacted their culture in a powerful way. One person stated, "*Government is a real negative for me because of the lack of independence we are born into.*" Residential schools were a major traumatizing factor affecting these participant's cultural identities. Many spoke of the emotional, physical and sexual abuse they experienced, but the biggest loss for many was that they could not speak their language (Berry, 1999:25).

Wente (2000) attributes generational homelessness to the "Residential School Syndrome" that affected Aboriginal peoples in Canada. While not all Aboriginal peoples were negatively affected, those who experienced problems encountered difficulties with lack of parenting skills that subsequently led to the removal of many of their children from their homes by the child welfare system. This situation resulted in what is now known as the "Sixties Scoop" in which Aboriginal children were placed into non-Aboriginal homes by Child Welfare Agencies resulting in further detachment from their cultures (Wente, 2000).

SOCIAL SERVICE DELIVERY

“The systematic underdevelopment of reserve areas and First Nations economies and populations, the geographies of reserves and the dispossession of Métis people from their lands contribute to contemporary poverty of Aboriginal peoples in Canada...

A review of social service provision reveals that at least fourteen federal departments and agencies offer substantial programs for Aboriginal peoples with total expenditures of approximately \$8.3 Billion in 2003-04 (Abele, 2004). Very high poverty rates on reserves and the “open-access welfare policy” have produced a high rate of welfare dependency that has been transferred to urban neighbourhoods. The typical reserve cannot generate many productive jobs offering earnings greater than income through social assistance and this has generated a “culture of poverty” (Richards, 2001).

Under Section 91(24) of the Constitution Act (1867), the federal government was given responsibility for “*Indians and the Lands reserved for Indians.*” Responsibilities for public lands, health, welfare, education, administration of justice and municipal institutions were given to the provinces (Section 92). According to Peters (2001), the reserve system and the inaccessibility of social services have had a major impact on the contemporary poverty of Aboriginal peoples in Canada. She asserts that “*Many First Nations peoples’ attempts to maintain contact with their reserve community of origin by moving between reserves and urban areas, the fragmentation of jurisdictions makes it more difficult to access social services*” (Peters, 2001).

Aboriginal peoples living off reserve must look to the provincial and municipal government for provision of public services. However, the provinces (generally) have maintained that the federal government has primary jurisdiction over all of Canada’s Aboriginal peoples, especially related to finances. Disputes over jurisdiction have led to inadequate provision of services and funding (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada [INAC]). The end result is that Métis, non-status, or First Nations people do not benefit from the \$6 billion annual budget of the Department of

Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND), which includes health, education, housing, economic development, cultural and social programming. Again, while Aboriginal peoples could access provincial programs of general applications, many face serious challenges accessing those services and prefer culturally appropriate programming (The Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples, 2003).

In response to a growing homeless problem, and one that was becoming increasingly visible in the media, the Government of Canada announced in 1999 the National Homelessness Initiative (NHI). Within the structure of the NHI, over \$45 million has been allocated to deal with the unique needs of Aboriginal communities in Canada. These resources target projects and initiatives that recognize and enhance culturally sensitive and specific operations. The Congress of Aboriginal Peoples (CAP) acknowledges that this federally funded program has "*favourable interpretations of the definition of the household*" and "*facilitated the housing of extended families and kept housing affordable*" (CAP, 1998).

The centerpiece of the NHI program has been the Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative (SCPI) that is focused on creating a more inclusive, integrated approach to the issue of homelessness. SCPI not only acts as a vehicle for providing funding to local groups, but also encourages them to work closely with other organizations, provincial and municipal governments to increase the potential of the services they deliver. Aboriginal housing institutions have been able to integrate employment initiatives, child and health care and home ownership into their services fostering a sense of community among their clients (CAP, 1998). Created under the umbrella of the NHI, the Winnipeg Housing and Homelessness Initiative (WHHI), a three-year, multi-million dollar tripartite partnership has begun to address declining housing stock, homelessness and revitalization of older neighbourhoods (WHHI, 2001).

Also in response to the particular socio-economic needs of the urban Aboriginal population, in 1998 the federal government launched the *Urban Aboriginal Strategy* (UAS) to develop specific collaborative arrangements and agreements between the three levels of governments and local Aboriginal groups in order to better coordinate programs and services. In 2002, *The Prime Minister's Caucus Task Force on Urban Issues*, commonly known as the *Sgro Task Force*, made several recommendations aimed at alleviating some of the pressures experienced by this diverse population. Specifically, the Interim Report focused on socio-economic disadvantage, issues related to homelessness and housing supports for Aboriginal peoples in cities. In September 2002, the Government of Canada reported, "*In a number of cities, poverty is disproportionately concentrated among Aboriginal people.*" One key recommendation of the Sgro Task Force was that the UAS be strengthened (Graham & Peters, 2002). To respond to this issue, \$25 million over three years was allocated to support the UAS.

THE PROVISION OF SERVICES TO AND BY THE ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY

First, Aboriginal people should, whenever possible, receive services from Aboriginal institutions. These institutions must have adequate, stable funding. The expansion and creation of Aboriginal service institutions in major urban centre, whether as agencies of Aboriginal governments or as autonomous entities, is the most effective and systematic method of responding to the needs of urban Aboriginal people over the long term and should be supported by municipal, provincial, territorial and federal governments. Second, Aboriginal people should be involved in the design, development and delivery of services provide by governments and mainstream agencies. Intensive and field orientated cross-cultural training for non-Aboriginal service providers is essential. (RCAP, 1996)

Generally, the establishment of Aboriginal run organizations is neglected in the literature on Aboriginal peoples (Newhouse, 2003:245). However, the *Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples* (RCAP) reported that in the urban centre, Aboriginal peoples often must access services set up to serve the needs of the general public, which do not take a holistic approach, but tend to deal with specific problems. Aboriginal peoples need services that fit with their culture and focus on healing through a holistic approach which is adapted to their lifestyle and not based on bureaucracy (National Round Table on Aboriginal Urban Issues, 1993:7).

This sentiment was echoed at the beginning of 2005 when the National Secretariat on Homelessness of Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) and CMHC conducted a series of stakeholder consultations to develop the *New Canadian Housing Framework*. A roundtable consultation focused exclusively on urban

Aboriginal homelessness and the need to adopt a holistic approach to Aboriginal housing. A holistic approach is one that includes raising awareness and building capacity while providing affordable housing. The participants mentioned that support services should ideally be on-site and integrated with housing services. These services range from food banks, clothing drop-offs, outreach programs, child care, adapted

transportation, counselling, education and skills development programs, as well as work placement and emergency aid (GPC Public Affairs et al, 2005).

A recent study conducted by CMHC found that agencies reported that many Aboriginal clients will not use a non-Aboriginal service, particularly without Aboriginal staff. Reasons for this preference included feeling less embarrassed and more comfortable with staff who understand cultural norms, speak the language and are aware of challenges in adjusting to urban life from a rural, remote northern lifestyle (CMHC, 2005). Graham and Peters assert that Aboriginal political organizations are at "*the heart of what actually happens in urban centres*" and point out that these service providers see a situation of the local population on a daily basis and make strong efforts to improve circumstances despite very limited resources (2002:11). See the chart on the following page for differences in Aboriginal and North American management schemes.

Table 2.1			
Features of Aboriginal Management and North American Management Schemes			
Aboriginal		North American Mainstream	
Management Scheme	Function	Management Scheme	Function
Group Orientation	The interests an functioning of the group are more important than those of the individual	Individual	The interests of the individual are paramount over orientation of the group
Consensual	The organization respects employees an expects decision-making to be a collective process	Majority Rules	Decisions are generally made by voting in which the majority wins the right to choose the course of action
Group Duties	Roles are not as specialized and the organization relies on peer support, teamwork, task delegation	Specialized Duties	Each person is expected to have a well defined job with a set of defined duties
Holistic Employee Development	The organization is concerned with all aspects of the employee's life, both inside and outside the organization	Organization Employee Development	The organization is concerned only with those aspects of the employee which directly have bearing upon the ability to do the assigned task
Elder Involvement	Elders are included formally and informally in the organization as advisors and teachers	No elder Involvement	Employees retire at the age of 65 and expertise and knowledge is lost to the organization

(Chapman, Newhouse & McCaskill, 1991)

HIDDEN HOMELESSNESS AND THE HYPER-MOBILITY OF ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

Closer attention must be given to the relationship between high mobility rates and the inaccessibility of mainstream housing for Aboriginal peoples...

For many Aboriginal peoples, frequent geographic movement is an intrinsic component of the experience of hidden homelessness. As a result of social and economic marginalization, Aboriginal peoples are faced with severe housing challenges particularly in major Canadian Prairie urban

centres. It has been suggested that high residential mobility rates within cities, as well as between cities and rural and reserve settlements, reflect the lack of adequate, affordable housing that confronts Aboriginal persons in metropolitan areas (Clatworthy, 1996; Graham & Peters, 2002; Norris, Beavon, Guimond & Cooke, 2004a). The Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (2001) identifies migration to urban areas, residential mobility within those areas, and homelessness as important issues for Aboriginal people in Canada. However, there is an absence of information regarding the linkages between homelessness, residential mobility and the unique circumstances of Canada's Indigenous peoples.

An analysis of the relationship between mobility and inadequate shelter provision must take into account both historical and present day structural inequalities experienced by Aboriginal peoples that have resulted in high poverty rates, unemployment and chronic homelessness. Moreover, it is essential to encapsulate the historical context of European settler contact with Indigenous groups that resulted in the confinement of Aboriginal peoples to isolated land areas in rural settlements and reserves where they were subject to extreme political and social control (Frideres, Kalbach & Kalbach, 2004). As a result of this segregation, Aboriginal peoples were excluded from mainstream social and economic trends towards urbanization, industrialization and modernization. It was only in the post-war period that individuals of Aboriginal ancestry began to migrate to metropolitan centres. While urbanization has occurred, the continuing importance of rural and reserve communities suggests a distinctive Indigenous demography that underscores the fact that Aboriginal populations have homelands within modern nation-states (Taylor & Bell, 2004a).

According to Newbold (2004), Indigenous mobility and its conceptualization are ultimately different from that of the general population. The Indigenous populations of first world countries (including Australia, New Zealand, the United States and Canada) share a common history of oppression, racism and discrimination that has created the context for the unique movements of Aboriginal peoples between their traditional homelands and modern metropolitan centres (Newbold, 2004). Amongst these Indigenous groups, post-war migration to urban centres has been countered by a sustained presence in rural settlements and Indigenous lands.

These distinct geographies have created high levels of mobility amongst Aboriginal peoples with population churn between cities and reserve and rural settlements. Specifically, a system of circular mobility involving both urban and rural contexts has been identified as a unique characteristic of Aboriginal demography (Taylor & Bell, 2004b).

In Australian literature, circular movement is recognized as an essential strategy fulfilling multiple objectives among Indigenous communities (Bell & Taylor, 2004). Urban-rural circular mobility to maintain cultural and social networks with homeland communities is considered to be an important component of the maintenance of Aboriginal identity. However, high levels of mobility between reserves and metropolitan centres, as well as hyper-mobility within cities are more likely an indicator of the marginal position held by Aboriginal peoples in Canada and the realities of inadequate housing provision (Graham & Peters, 2002). In light of the multiplicity of factors including the history of invasion, discrimination, and low socioeconomic status, closer attention must be given to the relationship between high mobility rates and the inaccessibility of mainstream housing for Aboriginal peoples.

Effective policy development depends fundamentally upon understanding the distinctiveness of Indigenous mobility and the association between high mobility rates and the lack of housing. However, there has been no systematic analysis of the geographic movement of Aboriginal peoples and, as a result, very little is known about the mobility behaviour and patterns of Indigenous groups (Kinfu, 2005; Taylor & Bell, 2004a).

The next sub-section outlines the need for new conceptualizations of the linkages between housing distress and hyper-mobility experienced by Aboriginal peoples in Canadian urban centres.

This is followed by an overview of the limitations of Canadian census data as it does not capture the extensive nature of Aboriginal mobility nor the availability and conditions of housing for Aboriginal persons in both reserve and urban environments. The section concludes with a discussion of what is known about Aboriginal mobility patterns and trends, as well as the relationship between this movement and unaddressed housing need.

CONCEPTUALIZING THE LINKAGES BETWEEN MOBILITY AND HIDDEN HOMELESSNESS

Unlike international migrants, rural and reserve communities are a home to which return is relatively easy...

New conceptualizations are required that address the high mobility patterns of Aboriginal peoples and the relationship between inadequate housing provision and the churn that occurs between reserves and cities, and particularly within

metropolitan centres. The effects of chronic housing distress contribute to hyper-mobility and the insurmountable obstacles experienced by Aboriginal individuals when attempting to establish residency in urban areas of Canada. However, current conceptual models of migration lack a comprehensive framework to create linkages between the mobility patterns of the Indigenous population, the reserve-urban hierarchy and residential instability.

Traditional models of migration, based on economic cost-benefit analysis, would suggest that churn between reserves and cities can be attributed to work-related reasons. However, the high rates of migration and residential mobility cannot be accounted for by economic motivations alone. Alternatively, the transnational perspective on migration has been proposed as a basis to conceptualize the movement of Aboriginal peoples in Canada (Ponting, 2005). A transnational migrant maintains familial, economic, social and cultural relationships that transcend boundaries of nation-states (Bailey, 2001). Unlike international migrants, rural and reserve communities are a home to which return is relatively easy (Norris, Cooke, Beavond, Guimond & Clatworthy, 2004b). Therefore, the transnational approach underscores the significance of homelands within modern nation-states for Indigenous populations and supports the importance of familial and cultural ties that First Nations people maintain with home reserve communities. Nonetheless, it does not take into account their mobility within cities and the social and economic conditions that create profound difficulty in securing appropriate housing.

An alternative approach is the conception of the hyper-mobility of Aboriginal peoples in Canadian cities within the context of the postmodern metropolis and the spatial consequences of global

and national restructuring. The urban landscape has been radically transformed by the dynamics of spatial mobility and the demographic hyperactivity of disadvantaged groups. According to Kearns and Smith (1994), one dimension of this process is related to ethnic change and the socio-spatial polarization that has occurred as a result of economic and social restructuring. In contrast to the new enclaves of the rich and privileged in suburbs, the most deprived sectors of the population including ethnic under classes, the elderly and the homeless are relegated to derelict areas of the inner city. The loss of affordable housing and the inflation of prices ultimately isolate and separate the most deprived sectors of the population. These marginalized groups are "frequently on the move in search of a stable and comfortable niche in the urban fabric. To this extent, the conditions of the contemporary western city are creating nomadic groups which could be described as the 'incipient homeless'" (Kearns & Smith, 1994: 115).

Kearns and Smith (1994) assert that the hyper-mobility of marginalized urban population groups creates a downward spiral of frequent moves in response to eviction, discrimination and overcrowding. These groups are severely constrained and research has found that frequent mobility may subsequently lead to homelessness. This dynamic between recurring movement and the inability to secure affordable and appropriate housing can certainly be applied to the experiences of First Nations peoples in Canada's metropolitan centres. However, the development of a framework to better understand this dynamic is limited by the inadequacies of current data to capture the linkages of the marginalization of the First peoples of Canada, their inability to obtain shelter and their subsequent geographic movement.

ABORIGINAL MOBILITY AND HOMELESSNESS: DATA LIMITATIONS

The primary weakness of the Canadian Census is the inconsistencies and inaccuracies of enumerating the Aboriginal population.

Although there has been long-term interest in the mobility behaviour of Indigenous populations, knowledge of this issue is fragmented due to the limitations of existing data sources. Protocols for data collection are oriented towards the general population and may

not be suited to the social context and spatial behaviour of Indigenous peoples (Bell & Brown, 2005). In Canada, research on the patterns of migration and residential mobility of First peoples has relied on data obtained from the Canadian Census. Although the census gives the most complete picture of the patterns and trends of migration in Canada, caution must be taken with respect to the use of census data to measure Aboriginal migration and mobility patterns.

The primary weakness of the Canadian Census is the inconsistencies and inaccuracies of enumerating the Aboriginal population. This is due in part to patterns of under-enumeration and under-coverage on reserves, as well as the historically low participation in censuses of Aboriginal individuals and communities. In addition, census data rely on the self-reporting of Aboriginal identity and status. Since 1996, the Canadian Census has followed the standard "ethnic" group question with an "identity" question. Population enumeration is affected by changing census definitions of Indigenous populations, as well as shifts in individual awareness and changes in ethnic self-identity. This phenomenon of "ethnic mobility" has also been caused by the government's introduction of Bill C-31 in 1985 which redefined the criteria for claiming First Nations status under the Indian Act (Fideres et al, 2004; Norris et al., 2004b).

A further limitation of Canadian census data is that it does not capture new arrivals to a city, nor transient individuals who are not in permanent residential accommodations. Because of lower rental costs, high concentrations of Aboriginal peoples live in rooming houses or single-room occupancy hotels in urban centres. However, persons in institutions such as prisons, chronic care facilities, or rooming houses are not included in

census enumeration. According to Norris and Clatworthy (2003:53) "...the fact that persons in institutions such as prisons, chronic care facilities, or rooming houses are "missed" could be problematic given...that in urban centres there tend to be very high concentrations of Aboriginal people who are either living in rooming houses, because of lower rent, or who are homeless."

Furthermore, information on the migration and residential mobility of Aboriginal peoples is incomplete due to the limited value of fixed-period measures of migration (Taylor & Bell, 2004b). The most common form of mobility measurement utilized in census-based data analysis compares place of residence at two points. If residences differ, a move is recorded implying permanent relocation. The exclusion of non-permanent moves is particularly notable in the case of Indigenous groups who circulate through a network of places and spaces. According to Bell and Brown (2005), the census is designed to collect categories of information that make little sense in Indigenous contexts. For example, based on reported place of residence, the Canadian census registers only one move in relation to (a) the twelve-month period prior to the census, and (b) the five-year period between censuses. As a result, census data does not capture moves of those persons who leave and return during an interval, as well as multiple moves made during an interval (Norris et al., 2004a). By using a single place of residence, these fixed interval measures focus on long-term or permanent migration, while multiple short-term, cyclical patterns of Aboriginal movement go unrecorded (Bell & Brown, 2005). Moreover, sequences of multiple, circuitous moves are reflected as no more than a single move between two points. Newbold (2004) asserts that Indigenous movement is not effectively captured by conventional definitions of time and space as it excludes measurement of short-term, circulatory mobility.

An additional problem in relation to census-based measures of mobility is the difficulty in defining place of residence. The concept of a single usual place of residence is central to most census measures of migration. However, a defined single point of residence overlooks key forms of population movement and the social porosity of communities. For example, the homeless

do not have a single, fixed place of residence (Bell & Brown, 2005).

In the case of Indigenous peoples, residential space may be perceived of as regionally defined rather than fixed in a single locality (Newbold, 2004). As a result, some researchers have suggested that the concept of a "mobility region" may better define Aboriginal perceptions of place (Taylor & Bell, 2004a). Ultimately, new conceptualizations and measurements of place and geographic movement are required to gain a greater understanding of the mobility and housing issues of Aboriginal peoples.



ABORIGINAL MOBILITY AND THE INADEQUACY OF HOUSING PROVISION

The realities of the city for individuals of Aboriginal ancestry are far more complex...

Although many Canadian cities have emerged in traditional gathering spots or settlement areas of Aboriginal peoples, the urbanization of members of the Indigenous population of Canada has been conceived of as a

problem (Peters, 1998). The high rates of migration and residential mobility of this group have been interpreted as an indicator of the incompatibility between urban life and the fundamental beliefs and practices of Aboriginal peoples (Nagler, 1973; Sorkin, 1978). In fact, the realities of the city for individuals of Aboriginal ancestry are far more complex. The high mobility rates for Aboriginal people reflect a transient marginalized population that must cope with poor housing conditions and the lack of affordable shelter through itinerant movement.

Frideres and Gadacz (2001) refer to "two solitudes" in which there is frequent movement between cities and reserves and rural settlements by Aboriginal peoples. Moreover, the term "churn" has been coined to describe the high mobility of Aboriginal people both within urban areas and between urban and rural areas. The elevated frequency of this population movement and resulting residential instability has significant implications for the well-being of Aboriginal people and communities (Norris & Clatworthy, 2003). However, research on the urbanization and settlement patterns of Aboriginal peoples of Canada remains poorly developed (Graham & Peters, 2002). This "churn", therefore, has been identified as an important area of research (McNaughton & Rock, 2004).

Since the 1950s, the settlement patterns of Aboriginal peoples in Canada have changed dramatically. While in 1951 only seven per cent of the Indigenous population lived in cities, by 2001, the proportion of urban Aboriginals had increased to 49 per cent (Newhouse & Peters, 2003). This significant shift in the distribution of the First peoples of Canada suggests that there is a newly emerging relation to space and time (Levesque, 2003). According to Norris and Clatworthy (2003), the main issue of Aboriginal mobility is not the redistribution of the population, but

rather, the residential change that occurs frequently both between reserves and cities and within cities. Innovative concepts and methodologies are required to explore the spatial experiences of Aboriginal peoples as they navigate between rural and urban settings, and evaluate the effect of chronic housing distress on the hypermobility of Aboriginal peoples.

Early conceptualizations of Aboriginal urbanization perceived of Indigenous culture as a barrier to successful adaptation and adjustment in urban society. Moreover, cities and Aboriginal communities have been portrayed as opposing, discontinuous and irreconcilable living environments (Frideres & Gadacz, 2001). It is only recently that notions of assimilation have been contested and replaced by a new concept of modernity that emphasizes the retainment of Indigenous nationhood and a dynamic continuity or extension of community life from the reserve to the city (Levesque, 2003; Ponting, 2005). Although this new perspective emphasizes the social and cultural links that exist between urban and Aboriginal communities, it does not encapsulate the complexities of urbanization for Aboriginal peoples. Specifically, an intrinsic component of new formulations of Aboriginal urbanity must be the related issues of high mobility rates and the inadequacies of housing provision that Aboriginal peoples face.

Despite issues of quality concerning the Canadian Census, the data does provide a basis to better understand the circumstances of the Aboriginal population. Using census data, several authors have focused on the rates of absolute net migration and demonstrated that, in general, First peoples are more mobile than the non-Aboriginal population. In the twelve months prior to the 2001 Census, for example, one in five Aboriginal people moved compared to one in seven for the general Canadian population (Statistics Canada, 2003). Similarly, in the period between 1991 and 1996, approximately 55 percent of the Aboriginal population changed residence within Canada while only 40 percent of the general population moved (Norris & Clatworthy, 2003). During the same time period, over 70 percent of the Aboriginal population in Canada's Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs) changed residence within the same urban centre compared to less than 50 percent of the non-

Aboriginal population (Norris, Cooke & Clatworthy, 2003). It is notable that the highest rates of Aboriginal mobility are most characteristic of Regina, Winnipeg and Saskatoon (Clatworthy, 1996).

The urbanization of First Nations people is complex and does not reflect traditional patterns of rural population movements, but rather it consists of direct movements from reserves and rural settlements to large metropolitan centres (Frideres et al., 2004). Moreover, the migration of Aboriginal peoples is a reciprocal process consisting of circulation between rural and urban areas (Graham & Peters, 2002). Since the 1960s, a pattern of positive net migration has been recorded to both rural areas and cities. Of those First Nations people who migrated between 1966 and 1971, 28 percent moved to urban areas while 27 percent moved to reserves (Norris et al., 2004a). This pattern continued so that in the period between 1986 and 1991, a net increase of 5540 Aboriginal individuals was registered to Canadian CMAs, while reserves gained 9540 persons (Clatworthy, 1996). Similarly, in the year before the 2001 census, both reserves and CMAs recorded a net increase from migration of 1145 and 3100 Registered Indians respectively (Ponting, 2005).

The high mobility of First Nations people in the rural-urban hierarchy suggests that, as a point of both origin and destination, reserves and rural settlements represent a unique set of push and pull factors that encourage the "churn" phenomenon (Norris, Cooke & Clatworthy, 2003). Migration from the reserve is generally the result of push factors related to high population growth and overcrowding on reserves, and the inability of the economic base to support the existing Aboriginal population (Frideres, 1998). As a result, push factors from reserves include the absence of economic development and the lack of employment and educational opportunities. In addition, migration off reserves is prompted by poor quality housing and overcrowded and substandard living conditions, as well as the inequitable distribution of housing in some reserve communities (Yerbury, 1980; Gerber, 1984). Thus, Aboriginal people are pushed off reserves in search of affordable, suitable and adequate housing (CMHC, 2002). Corresponding to the push factors of reserves, various pull factors of cities encourage

migration to urban settings. These pull factors include opportunities for both employment and education, the greater availability of services, the presence of an urban Aboriginal population, as well as better access to housing (Norris & Clatworthy, 2003; Ponting, 2005).

While Aboriginal peoples move from reserves in search of better opportunities and services, new challenges are encountered in cities as racism and poverty create severe difficulties in obtaining suitable housing. One of the first problems for Aboriginal individuals when arriving in an urban centre is locating accommodation (Krotz, 1980). In comparison to the non-Aboriginal population, First peoples experience the greatest housing deficiencies as they are more likely to live in older, poor quality housing located in declining inner city neighbourhoods. Krotz (1980) refers to the collection of old and deteriorating housing as the private preserve of the Aboriginal community. In Canada's largest cities many Aboriginal people live in housing that is derelict and overcrowded.

Upon arrival in a city, a migrant may find temporary accommodation with friends or family in housing that is likely to be substandard and over-crowded. As a result of low incomes and the discriminatory practices of landlords, the adequacy and the very availability of housing becomes a day-to-day problem for new Aboriginal migrants to Canadian cities. Many of these new migrants become part of the hidden homeless population who struggle on a daily basis to find provisional accommodations. Currently, urban centres within Canada lack organizational structures to address Aboriginal settlement issues thus resulting in the temporary residential status of individuals as they move between rural areas and cities (Frideres et al., 2004).

The higher mobility rates of Aboriginal peoples reflect not only migration from reserves and rural settlements, but also high levels of residential mobility within Canada's large cities (Norris & Clatworthy, 2003). While Registered Indians change communities more often than the general population of Canada, they are particularly mobile in major metropolitan centres (Graham & Peters, 2002; Norris et al., 2004a). Moreover, in

both large and small cities, Registered Indians record higher rates of residential mobility compared to other Aboriginal groups. Nonetheless, the high rates of residential mobility identified for all Aboriginal groups in urban areas suggest that factors that lead to residential instability, particularly the lack of available quality housing in the city, are encountered by all sub-groups (Norris & Clatworthy, 2003).

Although several authors have stated that the high rate of residential mobility of First Nations people in cities is directly related to the lack of quality housing (Graham & Peters, 2002; Norris et al., 2003), there is little research to confirm this relationship because of the inadequacies of current data. Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that a pilot study on residential mobility found that Aboriginal migrants did not consider mobility to be the primary problem, but rather, they perceived the need for adequate and affordable housing as the major issue with mobility being a symptom of the lack of appropriate housing (CMHC, 2002). In addition, data from the 1991 Aboriginal Peoples Survey demonstrates the importance of housing-related issues to residential mobility as more than half of all moves within major urban areas were made either to improve housing conditions (51%), or to access housing (8%). However, these moves did not resolve housing problems as Clatworthy (1996) found that residential movers were more likely to experience issues of housing affordability and deficiency.

While housing availability represents a pull factor to cities, the lack of access to affordable housing in cities, combined with racism and difficult social conditions, are factors that push First Nations people back to reserves and rural settlements. According to Norris and Clatworthy (2003: 66), "for those able to secure housing in reserve communities, returning home to a reserve may be preferable to remaining in the city where affordable housing is often located in impoverished inner-city areas". Furthermore, pull factors related to return migration to reserves include the refuge offered by relationship with the land, as well as cultural familiarity and the stability and support provided by family and extended kinship networks (Norris et al., 2004a; Ponting, 2005). Therefore, while return migration is often regarded as a reflection of the inability of an Aboriginal

individual to adjust and find employment within the urban context, these pull factors suggest that the reserve community offers shelter and social support networks that are not available within Canadian cities (Norris et al., 2004b).

The push-pull dynamics of rural communities and cities demonstrate that housing is a major factor for high mobility rates both between reserves and cities and within urban areas. This churn suggests a very transient lifestyle for some Aboriginal peoples off-reserve, and reflects the marginalization of this population within Canadian society. High mobility rates may have serious consequences for the stability and well-being of Aboriginal individuals and communities. It is difficult for individuals to establish social and neighbourhood networks that would contribute to capacity building and a greater sense of security (CMHC, 2002). The constant movement of First Nations people also prevents effective policy development related to the provision of services and programming for urban Aboriginals (Frideres & Gadacz, 2001; Grahams & Peters, 2002). Furthermore, the process of churn limits the development of both organizational and economic foundations for the urban Aboriginal population.

Although research on the settlement patterns of the First peoples of Canada has provided greater insight into migration and residential mobility, it does not portray the complex reality of the urban experience for this population group. The high rates of mobility within the city coupled with the absence of adequate housing are indicative of the on-going crisis that must be addressed so that a reformulation of organizations and practices can support a distinct identity for the Indigenous population of Canada within cities.

METHODOLOGY

To explore issues surrounding hidden homelessness and to better understand the experiences of Aboriginal individuals in housing distress, this research project consisted of five distinct phases. The first component of the research was to develop relationships within the Aboriginal communities of Winnipeg, Regina and Saskatoon. A critical aspect of Indigenous research methodologies is the embracement of Aboriginal values, culture and perspectives. Therefore, the initial phase of relationship building fostered trust between researchers and the community that facilitated further phases of the research project. The second phase consisted of informal discussions held between community researchers and 40 individuals experiencing hidden homelessness. These preliminary conversations led to the identification of themes that were the basis for the development of the survey instrument. In the third phase of the research project, 179 surveys were completed by Aboriginal persons experiencing hidden homelessness in the three Prairie urban centres. In the fourth phase, a traditional Indigenous Talking Circle was held to provide the opportunity for those experiencing housing distress to connect with other individuals and share their knowledge. Finally, key informant interviews were completed by 60 service providers to evaluate the effectiveness of services provided for the hidden homeless and to identify gaps in service provision. The five phases of the research study are described following this introduction to the methodology section.

INDIGENOUS RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES: RELATIONSHIP BUILDING

Indigenous research methods promote respect, responsibility, relevance, and reciprocity...

Historically research conducted on the Aboriginal Community has been done under the direction of non-Aboriginal professionals. This has raised concerns from Aboriginal peoples and a need for direction from their communities

(Kowalsky et al., 1996). It is critical to note that this research sought to embrace Aboriginal values, culture, and perspectives by adopting a collaborative approach that was sensitive to Indigenous research methodologies. As a result, we promoted a greater engagement of Aboriginal communities in the research process and the importance of cultural sensitivity became highlighted in this process.

Indigenous research methods promote respect, responsibility, relevance, and reciprocity (Pidgeon and Cox, 2002). This methodological process takes time, careful planning, genuine commitment to involvement, community acceptance, and a conducive cultural and political climate. The research plan must be sensitive to the leadership within the community and ensure that all the appropriate people are involved. Moreover, early in the research process the researchers and collaborators must come to some common agreement on the methods. The process of collaboration requires appropriate organization, particularly in polarized political situations (St. Denis, 1992). Cora Weber-Pillwax (1999) suggests that the following principles, reflective of Aboriginal cultures and histories be considered:

1. The interconnectedness of all living things;
2. The impact of motives and intentions on person and community;
3. The foundation of research as lived Indigenous experience;
4. The groundedness of theories in Indigenous epistemology;
5. The transformative nature of research;
6. The sacredness and responsibility of maintaining; personal and communal integrity; and
7. The recognition of language and culture as living, developing processes.

The time spent building relationships within the community was a critical aspect of the success of the study. In reviewing the pertinent literature and undertaking informal discussions with key members of the Aboriginal community, it was recommended that the "*invitation to participate*" be an important step in forming a working group to guide the project. It was strongly believed that developing a sense of trustworthiness among participants was a key element in embracing an Indigenous research approach. It was further concluded that the process of doing research was more important than the research product because the emphasis is placed on the relationships between people. As such, the research team stresses the importance of building trust and striking relationships but acknowledging that this process takes time and effort to cultivate.

In an effort to reach out for support from the Aboriginal community and to build the needed relationships and trust, we began by offering tobacco to an Elder, seeking his guidance, advice and knowledge. He accepted the tobacco and we were honoured that he agreed to provide his guidance on this journey.

A regional Steering Committee was critical in developing the necessary relationships in Regina, Saskatoon and Winnipeg and in formulating the questions and structure of the research instruments. More importantly, the Steering Committee helped to ground the research within the Aboriginal community and to strike an important balance in our approach. The research team created strong associations with the Aboriginal community and organizations that resulted in a collaborative and holistic working relationship on the Steering Committee. This group was instrumental in guiding the research process and also helped to identify key issues and concerns within the hidden homeless population. Furthermore, the structure of questions and the ultimate approval of the survey template were obtained from the Steering Committee.

A further component that was essential to the relationship building in this study was the initiation of fieldwork with service providers in the three Prairie cities. While this work was ongoing in Winnipeg, during the last week of January 2005,

initial fieldwork was undertaken in Saskatchewan, in the cities of Regina and Saskatoon. Extensive lists of service providers, and appropriate information regarding program delivery were gathered in each city. The intent of these initial visits was to establish key contacts and build relationships with service providers.

Informal meetings were held at the friendship centres in all the three cities, as well as with key service agencies, both governmental and non-governmental. Further to these informal discussions, complementary site visits (and additional informal interviews) included agencies involved in both transitional and permanent housing, youth services, employment, family and community support, childcare, justice, food supplement programs and sports and culture. These agencies expressed a willingness to participate further in the research study.

The process of relationship building has continued throughout the study as the trust fostered between researchers and the community was essential in further investigation of Aboriginal persons in housing crises. The building of relationships with service providers was instrumental to the data collection phase of the study. First, service agencies contributed perspectives that were incorporated into the design of survey instruments. Moreover, service providers assisted in identifying potential respondents of the study while also volunteering to participate in key informant interviews. The following sub-sections describe the methods utilized in this study: surveys, Talking Circles and key informant interviews.

The following section provides discussion of the results concerning the Talking Circle, as well as the survey completed by Aboriginal individuals experiencing hidden homelessness. This section also outlines the perspective of the service providers and the issues that they identified to be particularly pertinent to Aboriginal persons in housing distress. It should also be noted that Appendix C provides a comparison of the three Prairie urban centres in relation to the survey results. Furthermore, the participant comments are incorporated into Appendix D.

DATA COLLECTION AND THE HIDDEN HOMELESS ABORIGINAL POPULATION

Data were collected from a number of sources including personal interviews and informal discussions, as well as reviewing the Census of Canada and other pertinent sources. In addition, a scan of relevant literature on homelessness was conducted and an annotated bibliography was developed. Appendix B provides a listing of these suggested readings.

As noted, the purpose of the Steering Committee was to advise and direct the research. What was raised from the outset was that such a group needed to contain “grassroots” representation. This was deemed to be fundamental in ensuring that researchers and the group connected closely to the individuals who were interviewed. As such, the inclusion of the two community researchers was vital to this process. Both individuals lived in the inner city of Winnipeg and were familiar with the issues and considerations of the hidden homeless population. In fact, both individuals were instrumental in the development of the research structure as they conducted a series of informal conversations with forty persons meeting the criteria of being part of the “hidden homeless” population among Aboriginal persons in Winnipeg. It was these initial conversations that allowed the Steering Committee to develop the survey template based on the issues that persons raised in these conversations.

Therefore, the first stage of the research process was the informal conversations with Aboriginal individuals living in the inner city of Winnipeg who were experiencing housing distress, which was carried out by the two community members. The intent was to use the comments and thoughts of those presently part of the hidden homeless population in order to develop an interview survey that accurately reflected the concerns and issues raised during these discussions.

Our selection of this course of action was based largely on the work of Pidgeon and Cox (2002), which cited the important role of preliminary conversations and pre-test instruments in the process of Indigenous research. Furthermore, while surveys and/or questionnaires advance certain knowledge of the targeted homeless population, *“they tell us relatively little about life on the streets as it is actually lived and experienced”* (Snow and Anderson, 1991, 151). As a result, it was felt that the initial

conversations, gave us a perspective from the street not normally viewed by “non-community” researchers.

These discussions helped the research team to gauge the general sentiment of persons currently experiencing a shelter crisis. No specific sampling technique was used to talk with these individuals and it was that by simply opening the lines of communications and establishing a relationship within the community allowed researchers to develop a better sense of the issues facing persons currently part of the hidden homeless population in Winnipeg. For the most part, the informal conversations took place in the inner city of Winnipeg, on streets and in local restaurants or other neighbourhood locations. Those who shared their time and thoughts in this process included youth (over 18), single parent mothers, elders and other individuals. The outcome was four theme areas that researchers were told needed further attention.

1. A lack of affordable housing;
2. A lack of support networks;
3. A lack of information for new arrivals to urban centres; and
4. Institutional discrimination.

By no means was this step considered a “sampling technique” nor did we seek to draw a “representative sample,” but rather this method allowed researchers to gain a valuable foothold into a community that is often voiceless.

** “I sometimes miss having persons to talk to, to confide in personal friendships, especially since I came to the city. There’s a sense of Aboriginal community that is not here, like it was back on the reserve. There is a reserve community but it’s not a kind of community that I want to be a part of because of too much dysfunction within and between families. I’d like to be a part of a healthy functioning and well adjusted community of Aboriginal people in the city, even if it is just a small, private, ongoing type of group offering support and friendship to one another.”*

**"I find that there is too much stereotyping towards young First Nations and perhaps if we had a lot more First Nations working in Social Services and housing as well as restructuring these services it would help benefit First Nations."*

**"I don't know anybody except my older sister that I live with. I just started school and would like my own place but student allowances is not enough to cover rent and damage deposit. I don't know about this city or about housing at all. My sister has two kids and I have to help baby-sit so I can't keep up in school and I find it stressful. I need more information about the city, like a counselor who could give me some referrals to find a decent rental home."*

**"There needs to be more groups to offer support to the Aboriginals who really need a lot of help, like those who can't talk for themselves, to English language problems, and those who can't read or write very well. It would be good to have advocate groups, Native Studies groups, personal/social sharing groups because we have more than our share of problems in life and in the cities."*

These four theme areas provided insight into the development of the final survey instrument that was then reviewed extensively by the Steering Committee and local experts prior to conducting the interviews in Winnipeg, Regina and Saskatoon. The intent of this consultation process was to have persons review the language, wording, tone, format and cultural sensitivity of the questions presented. Feedback was gathered and the survey template was adjusted and submitted for ethics approval to the University of Winnipeg.

The final survey template consisted of 78 open- and close-ended questions that address the four theme areas. The survey gathered information regarding the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents, as well as their situation in relation to housing and social supports. It is important to note that we were concerned with the manner in which Aboriginal communities conceptualize the notion of 'home'. This not only prevented a Eurocentric concept of home (and homeless) from dominating the research process, but further offered the opportunity to engage and understand the Aboriginal cultures and histories at the base of that process. As a result, the first question in the survey asked "what is the meaning of home." ³

Potential respondents for the survey were identified in the three Prairie cities by partnering organizations and agencies, as well as through word-of-mouth. A total of 129 Aboriginal individuals who were part of the hidden homeless population were interviewed during the spring of 2005. A total of 50 surveys were carried out in Regina and Saskatoon, while 79 were conducted in Winnipeg. Interviews in all three cities were conducted at various locations ranging from organizations that provide upgrading in education to those offering support services for Aboriginal children and families.

With respect to the sample structure, it was difficult to determine what constituted a representative sample of this population as it remains relatively unknown and understudied. However, our intent was to ensure that both genders were equally represented, and that youth (over 18), a mix of family types (single family households, married etc) and seniors/elders be included. Our assumption was that youth are over-represented within this population, so a concerted effort was made to ensure that an adequate number was included. This finding was also largely confirmed by the informal conversations held in which youth appeared to be more vulnerable to the cycle of homelessness. As a gesture of respect for the information and stories shared with the research team, respondents were provided with an honorarium. Participants were overwhelmingly passionate about participating in the survey process and thanked us for the information provided to them.

3. A copy of the survey can be obtained by contacting the authors of the study.

To evaluate the representativeness of the sample, gender and age characteristics were compared between the total Aboriginal population of Canada and the respondents of the study. As Table 3.1 illustrates, there was a slight over-representation of males and youth in the sample. As it is generally agreed upon that these groups compose a large proportion of the Aboriginal hidden homeless population, it can be concluded that, in general, the sample is reflective of the population under study.

Table 3.1. A Comparison of the Canadian Aboriginal Population and the Sample

	Canada % (n)	Hidden Homelessness Sample % (n)
Gender		
<i>Male</i>	48.8 (476,700)	55.8 (72)
<i>Female</i>	51.2 (499,605)	44.2 (57)
Age (years)		
<i>15-19</i>	14.2 (92,985)	8.5 (10)
<i>20-24</i>	11.7 (76,085)	16.9 (20)
<i>25-44</i>	45.1 (294,405)	63.6 (75)
<i>45-54</i>	14.8 (96,370)	8.5 (10)
<i>55-64</i>	8.1 (52,830)	2.5 (3)
<i>65 and over</i>	6.1 (39,675)	0

The analysis of the in-person interviews was based on the generation of frequencies and distributions of coded data. These data were explored thematically coded and analyzed. A significant emphasis of the data analysis was placed on listening to the voices of the respondents to ensure that we carefully recorded and reported on the issues arising among persons currently considered part of the hidden homeless population. The software package, SPSS, was used as the diagnostic tool for entering data and generating frequencies, distributions and tabulations of the survey results.

It is important to note that data quality and interviewer training were central parts of the research process. Interviewers were trained at the Institute of Urban Studies using an internal training manual. This comprehensive guide assisted researchers in ensuring that the interviews proceeded in a manner consistent with standard practices, while emphasizing the safety of interviewers. Data quality control was monitored through the supervision of interviewers. It is also important to note that the initial proposal called for focus groups. It was determined that the Talking Circle provided a “focus group” setting that allowed researchers to explore the findings of the 129 surveys and seek clarification on issues.



THE TALKING CIRCLE

In consultations with Aboriginal community leaders the notion of holding a Traditional Indigenous Talking Circle was explored. The Institute of Urban Studies was assured that this would be an ideal way for those experiencing the hidden homeless condition to have an opportunity to connect with each other as well as researchers involved in this study.

Traditional Indigenous Talking Circles are used to offer an opportunity to listen and respect the views of others. In this setting, only one person speaks at a time and should feel free to express themselves in any way that is comfortable: by sharing a story, a personal experience, by using examples or metaphors, and so on. The Talking Circle revolves in a clockwise manner and everyone has the right to pass. An object that symbolizes connectedness to the land, such as a stick, stone or a feather, is used to facilitate the Circle. The person who is holding the item has the right to speak while the others have the responsibility to listen. Many Circles have an Elder who facilitates the discussion in a non-judgmental way. The Elder may begin with words that foster the "opening of hearts to understand and connect with each other" (Simpson, 1996).

The Talking Circle was arranged to offer persons contributing to the study the opportunity to gather and share thoughts and was held at Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre, Inc. (means..."We all help one another") in Winnipeg. This centre provides support services to Aboriginal children and families in the urban community. As it is important to offer participants food, the Circle was catered by Neechi Foods which is a worker co-operative located in Winnipeg. The word Neechi means friend in Cree and Ojibway.

In total, 8 persons attended (4 females, 4 males). Elder Roger Armitte (plus one Elder's assistant) led the session with two persons from IUS representing the research team. The event was a Traditional Circle, with four direction smudge. Before the Talking Circle began, an IUS researcher explained how the research process was being conducted, i.e. that those around the room are the "*teachers and holders of the knowledge*" regarding the hidden homelessness issue and thanked them for what they were about to share.

The Elder began by speaking about pride and responsibility for “*who we are today*” and used the metaphor that “*once when we hunted [before contact] we could not blame shortcomings on anyone, we needed to survive, and by doing so we have survived. It is no different today, with the struggles we face with homelessness today. The choices we make, who we blame, etc. are up to us.*”

The participants spoke of hardships of residential schools, for both them and their parents and the legacy of physical and mental abuse as children. They also discussed the pain that they have in coping in daily life, especially those with children who are experiencing hardships as well.

The importance of the Talking Circle cannot be overemphasized in contributing to the projects ability to embrace a key aspect of this research and Aboriginal culture and traditional methodologies. By giving ownership of the Talking Circle to the Elder, we respected his ability to lead the research on a journey of understanding traditional ways. The experience and wisdom from this first session greatly aided participants and researchers.

KEY INFORMANTS: SERVICE PROVIDERS

In the final phase, data were collected by interviewing 60 key personnel involved in the provision of services in Winnipeg, Regina and Saskatoon. These were conducted in face to face meetings, over the phone, and having agencies complete surveys on their own accord.

The selection of service providers interviewed ranged from a diverse set of organizations, non-profit and for profit, government and non-government. Some specialized in a specific area of support such as housing or employment while others offered a range of services under one building, such as a drop in centre or an emergency shelter. In terms of those persons they serve, approximately half concentrated their efforts on providing assistance to the Aboriginal community, while the remaining organizations had a mandate that covered their community as a whole. It should also be noted that those interviewed held various positions within the organization they worked, for example, some interviewees were general managers whereas others were frontline workers.

The results discussed in this report are therefore based on 230 interviews in Regina, Saskatoon and Winnipeg and a Talking Circle (conducted in Winnipeg).

ANALYSIS OF SURVEYS

Social support helps motivate me to work, to pick myself up when people put me down, to keep going on with life, even when I don't want to anymore...

In this section the results of the survey are evaluated in relation to the socio-demographic characteristics of the sample, to their housing circumstances and sources of social support. The section is comprised, first, of a sub-section that outlines the residential instability experienced by sample members. This is

followed by a discussion of both the demographic and economic characteristics of the sample. The next sub-section provides an overview of the housing circumstances of respondents that is described in relation to the use of emergency shelters, the relationship with home communities, type of housing, length of residency, as well as the use of subsidy housing programs. The section concludes with an overview of the sources of social support. The discussion includes a consideration of the sample's experiences of discrimination, their sources of social support, their participation in organizations and their connection to the reserve.⁴ Given the lack of understanding regarding the issue of hidden homelessness, the intent of this section is to describe the general housing circumstances and characteristics of First Nations peoples in housing distress so as to better understand the factors that have contributed to their present shelter situation.

⁴ The data was also evaluated in relation to the three Prairie cities included in the study. The tables are contained in Appendix C.

RESIDENTIAL INSTABILITY

Just over 40 percent of individuals in the sample had lived in more than three locations in the six-month period prior to the survey. This high degree of movement further substantiates the internal residential churn among Aboriginal persons that was introduced in the literature review.

Almost one-half (47.2 percent) of the respondents expressed some level of apprehension about remaining in their respective city on a permanent basis. The residential instability experienced by participants in this study raises significant concerns with respect to both overall affordability and availability of housing in Canadian Prairie cities. As homelessness is characterized by high mobility, an important element to evaluate is the multiplicity of temporary accommodations in which individuals reside for varying periods of time (Springer, 2000). Table 4.1 outlines the number of accommodations sample members reported living in during the six-month period prior to the survey.⁵ The table demonstrates that over half (55.8 percent) of sample members were in relatively stable residential situations as they reported staying in only one or two temporary residences during the period. In contrast, the remainder of the sample members was considerably more mobile as they reported residence in three or more accommodations. The high frequency of movement suggests that this sub-sample experienced considerably more residential instability. Thus, the following overview compares sample members experiencing relative residential stability (one or two temporary accommodations) and those subjected to greater instability (three or more temporary accommodations).

Table 4.1. Residential Instability

Number of Temporary Accommodations in Last 6 Months	% (n)
1	27.9 (36)
2	27.9 (36)
3	22.5 (29)
4	3.9 (5)
5	6.2 (8)
6 or more	11.6 (15)

5. While a total of 129 respondents completed the survey, the n-value for the following tables will vary as not all questions in the survey were completed by all survey participants.



DEMOGRAPHIC AND ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

The demographic and economic characteristics of the sample outlined in Table 4.2 provide a profile of those Aboriginal individuals experiencing hidden homelessness. As the table demonstrates, the highest proportion of the sample is male (55.8 percent) and under the age of 30 years old (47.5 percent). In relation to residential stability, a higher proportion of males and older sample members reported living temporarily in only one or two accommodations in the six months prior to the survey.

In relation to Aboriginal identity, almost three-quarters of the sample (71.7 percent) reported being part of the First Nations of Canada, while 28.3 percent reported Métis ancestry. According to Table 4.2, while one half of First Nations respondents indicated residence in three or more temporary accommodations during the previous six months, a greater proportion of Métis respondents reported relative residential stability.

Table 4.2 illustrates the comparatively low socio-economic status of most respondents in the study. The overwhelming majority (68.6 percent) of those experiencing hidden homelessness were unemployed, while 17.7 percent were employed in some capacity and 13.7 percent were students. Approximately three quarters of those who were unemployed indicated that they had received some form of social assistance. Furthermore, in order to better understand the circumstances of these individuals, it is important to consider other strategies they utilized to earn money. For example, over 20 percent of the sample indicated that they were involved in activities in the informal sector.⁶

"I clean up everyday and watch the children while the mom goes out all night. I also get food requisitions and I'm like the main supplier for food. I would also sell myself for sexual favours just to get money for food, smokes and whatever else we needed." (28-old female respondent)

6. Generally speaking, the informal sector includes such activities as the drug trade etc.

According to Table 4.2, one-quarter (24.8 percent) of the sample reported an education level below grade 9, while over one-half (57.1 percent) of the respondents had obtained some level of high school education although a high school certificate was not obtained. Moreover, in relation to income, three quarters of the sample received less than \$10,000 annually. Specifically, 55.2 percent of the sample reported an income of less than \$10,000 annually and 19.8 percent reported no income at all.

These indicators of socio-economic well-being emphasize the marginalization of Aboriginal persons experiencing housing distress. Nonetheless, 63.4 percent of the sample indicated that they were optimistic that their economic future would at least get slightly better. It is interesting to note that respondents who reported being employed and had little or no income but were optimistic about their economic future were more likely to have resided in three or more temporary accommodations in the past six months. Conversely, greater residential stability was experienced by those respondents who were unemployed.

Table 4.2. Demographic and Economic Characteristics

Socio-Demographic Characteristics	1-2 Temporary Accommodations % (n)	3 + Temporary Accommodations % (n)	Total % (n)
Gender			
<i>Male</i>	59.7 (43)	50.9 (29)	55.8 (72)
<i>Female</i>	40.3 (29)	49.1 (28)	44.2 (57)
Age			
<i>17-19</i>	6.1 (4)	11.5 (6)	8.5 (10)
<i>20-29</i>	34.8 (23)	44.2 (23)	39.0 (46)
<i>30-39</i>	27.3 (18)	26.9 (14)	27.1 (32)
<i>40 +</i>	31.8 (21)	17.3 (9)	25.4 (30)
Aboriginal Identity			
<i>First Nations</i>	63.4 (45)	82.1 (46)	71.7 (91)
<i>Métis</i>	36.6 (26)	17.9 (10)	28.3 (36)
First Nations			
<i>Status</i>	93.5 (43)	91.5 (43)	92.5 (86)
<i>Non-Status</i>	6.5 (3)	8.5 (4)	7.5 (7)
First Language			
<i>English</i>	75.7 (53)	72.2 (39)	74.2 (92)
<i>Cree</i>	10.0 (7)	18.5 (10)	13.7 (17)
<i>Ojibway</i>	7.1 (5)	7.4 (4)	7.3 (9)
<i>Seau</i>	7.1 (5)	1.9 (1)	4.8 (6)
Employment Status			
<i>Employed*</i>	14.3 (10)	22.2 (12)	17.7 (22)
<i>Unemployed**</i>	71.4 (50)	64.8 (35)	68.6 (85)
<i>Student</i>	14.3 (10)	13.0 (7)	13.7 (17)
Education Level			
<i>Grade 8 or less</i>	26.7 (16)	22.2 (10)	24.8 (26)
<i>Grade 9-12 no cert.</i>	56.7 (34)	57.8 (26)	57.1 (60)
<i>High School Cert.</i>	8.3 (5)	4.4 (2)	6.7 (7)
<i>Post-Secondary</i>	8.3 (5)	15.6 (7)	11.4 (12)
Annual Income			
<i>No Income</i>	15.1 (8)	25.6 (11)	19.8 (19)
<i>Up to \$10,000</i>	56.6 (30)	53.5 (23)	55.2 (53)
<i>\$10,001-\$20,000</i>	17.0 (9)	11.6 (5)	14.6 (14)
<i>> \$20,000</i>	11.3 (6)	9.3 (4)	10.4 (10)
Economic Future			
<i>Get much better</i>	28.1 (16)	34.1 (15)	30.7 (31)
<i>Get slightly better</i>	31.6 (18)	34.1 (15)	32.7 (33)
<i>Stay the same</i>	29.8 (17)	20.5 (9)	25.7 (26)
<i>Worsen</i>	10.5 (6)	11.4 (5)	10.9 (11)

*Includes those in full-time, part-time, casual and seasonal employment.

**Includes the unemployed, homemakers and those looking for work.



HOUSING CIRCUMSTANCES

A key piece of the housing analysis of the study probed the use of emergency shelters or places where people went when there were no other options available. According to Table 4.3, 30 percent of the sample indicated that they had used an emergency shelter in the last year. Respondents who experienced greater residential instability were more likely to use shelters. Similarly, those who had resided in three or more accommodations in the past six months reported using shelters more frequently than individuals who were in more stable housing circumstances. The overwhelming majority of the sample indicated that they were treated fairly and with respect by both agency staff (56.9 percent) and other individuals staying at the shelter (61.5 percent) when accessing services. The comments of one person summed up the experience by stating *"yes, we were in the same boat and were there for each other."*

The use of emergency shelters by 30 percent of the sample points to the ongoing need to provide supportive shelter services, especially in cold climate cities. In fact, one respondent noted that there was a need for both additional units and a general public awareness of existing resources and stated that government should *"make more places into homeless shelters and make the public know more about shelters."* Other respondents were positive about the treatment they received with one person stating that staff were *"kind, gentle, caring people who help people in time of trouble."*

Table 4.3. Residential Characteristics: Use of Emergency Shelters and Attachment to Reserve Communities

	1-2 Temporary Accommodations % (n)	3 + Temporary Accommodations % (n)	Total % (n)
Stayed in Emergency Shelter in the Past Year			
<i>Yes</i>	20.3 (13)	42.3 (22)	30.2 (35)
<i>No</i>	79.7 (51)	57.7 (30)	69.8 (81)
How Often Stayed at Emergency Shelter			
<i>Often</i>	6.9 (2)	7.7 (2)	7.3 (4)
<i>Somewhat often</i>	10.3 (3)	30.8 (8)	20.0 (11)
<i>Not very often</i>	31.0 (9)	26.9 (7)	29.1 (16)
<i>Almost never</i>	51.7 (15)	34.6 (9)	43.6 (24)
Have You Ever Lived On Reserve?			
<i>Yes</i>	58.2 (39)	67.9 (36)	62.5 (75)
<i>No</i>	41.8 (28)	32.1 (17)	37.5 (45)
Live in City on a Seasonal Basis			
<i>Yes</i>	18.6 (11)	18.0 (9)	18.3 (20)
<i>No</i>	81.4 (48)	82.0 (41)	81.7 (89)
How Often Return to Reserve			
<i>Often</i>	0	7.9 (3)	3.8 (3)
<i>Very often</i>	4.9 (2)	10.5 (4)	7.6 (6)
<i>Somewhat often</i>	22.0 (9)	13.2 (5)	17.7 (14)
<i>Not very often</i>	56.1 (23)	57.9 (22)	57.0 (45)
<i>Never</i>	17.1 (7)	10.5 (4)	13.9 (11)

At the outset of this report, the literature review confirmed that the Aboriginal community is complex, characterized by a high degree of differentiation among various groups (e.g., First Nations, Métis and Inuit) and geographic location (e.g., rural, northern, remote and on and off reserve). To explore the complexity of connections to home communities, respondents were asked whether they had ever lived on reserve. According to Table 4.3, 62.5 percent of the sample had lived on reserve with a slightly higher proportion of those respondents in greater residential instability having lived on reserve previously. Reasons given most often for leaving the reserve included the desire to access educational and employment opportunities, as well as better housing.

A question was also posed regarding whether respondents lived in their home community on a seasonal basis. According to Table 4.3, the overwhelming majority (81.7 percent) of the sample replied that they did not move seasonally. Nevertheless, it is significant that 18.2 percent of respondents indicated that they indeed had a connection to their home community. Furthermore, although similar proportions of both the residentially stable and unstable sub-groups did live in the city seasonally, those respondents who reported residing in three or more temporary accommodations in the past six months visited their reserve community with greater frequency. It is important to recognize that those individuals who move on a seasonal basis undoubtedly represent a key segment of the population that will move periodically between urban and home community. When asked about the seasonal aspect of living in the city and home community, those who offered comments noted that friends and family (in the home community) contributed to their decision to move between places.

The residential characteristics of the sample are outlined in Table 4.4. With respect to the current housing situation, 69.3 percent of the sample indicated that they presently lived in an apartment, row or single detached home. The remainder of the sample was housed in rooming houses, single room occupancy hotels or other transitional housing units. Table 4.4 demonstrates that those respondents who reported a greater number of temporary residences were more likely to be housed in accommodations consisting of a single room.

Table 4.4. Residential Characteristics: Type of Shelter, Length of Residence, and Residency in City

Residential Characteristics	1-2 Temporary Accommodations % (n)	3 + Temporary Accommodations % (n)	Total % (n)
Type of Temporary Shelter Currently In			
<i>Housing unit*</i>	75.0 (54)	61.8 (34)	69.3 (88)
<i>Single room**</i>	25.0 (18)	38.2 (21)	30.7 (39)
Average Length at Each Accommodation			
<i>2 weeks or less</i>	14.5 (10)	25.0 (14)	18.6 (24)
<i>0-3 months</i>	17.4 (12)	35.7 (20)	24.8 (32)
<i>3-6 months</i>	21.7 (15)	28.6 (16)	24.0 (31)
<i>6-12 months</i>	46.4 (32)	10.7 (6)	29.5 (38)
Length in Current Temporary Place			
<i>2 weeks or less</i>	8.80 (6)	25.9 (14)	16.4 (20)
<i>0-3 months</i>	29.4 (20)	35.2 (19)	32.0 (39)
<i>3-6 months</i>	27.9 (19)	22.2 (12)	25.4 (31)
<i>6-12 months</i>	29.4 (20)	16.7 (9)	23.8(29)
<i>1 year or more</i>	4.4 (3)	0	2.5 (3)
Length of Time in City			
<i>0-3 months</i>	5.7 (4)	5.7 (3)	5.4 (7)
<i>3-6 months</i>	4.3 (3)	5.7 (3)	4.7 (6)
<i>6-12 months</i>	1.4 (1)	11.3 (6)	5.4 (7)
<i>1 year or more</i>	88.6 (62)	77.4 (41)	79.8 (103)
Plan to Stay Permanently in City			
<i>Yes</i>	55.6 (40)	49.1 (27)	52.8 (67)
<i>No</i>	18.1 (13)	12.7 (7)	15.7 (20)
<i>Unsure</i>	26.4 (19)	38.2 (21)	31.5 (40)

*Includes apartments, single-detached housing and row housing.

**Includes rooming houses, single-room occupancy hotels and transitional housing.

Data related to length of time in a temporary accommodation is an indicator of the degree of residential instability. As Table 4.4 illustrates, almost all respondents indicated that they had resided at the current address for less than one year.

Furthermore, almost three quarters (73.8 percent) of the sample had lived at the current location for less than six months. Those residing in fewer temporary accommodations were more likely to report a longer average length of time at each residence, as well as a longer period of time at the current temporary residence. In contrast, those respondents experiencing greater residential instability reported shorter periods of residency in each temporary accommodation.

In relation to residency in the city, Table 4.4 demonstrates that almost 80 percent of the sample had lived in the city for over a year at the time of the survey. In addition, those respondents reporting fewer temporary accommodations also reported longer residency in the city. And while well over half of the sub-sample of those in relative stable residential accommodations indicated that they planned to remain in the city permanently, more respondents experiencing greater residential instability were unsure of their future plans.

In relation to residential quality, a series of questions was posed to examine the general condition of the present shelter, perceptions of crowding and overall satisfaction with the shelter. With respect to the general condition of the current residence, Table 4.5 demonstrates that 40.5 percent of the sample indicated that their shelter required some repairs, while 23 percent of respondents felt their current shelter was in poor condition and needed significant attention to improve the unit. In relation to perceptions of crowding, almost half (47.9 percent) of the sample did not consider their current residence to be crowded. In contrast, 32.5 percent of respondents were in somewhat crowded conditions, while 19.7 percent indicated that they were living in very crowded conditions. Table 4.5 also outlines the overall satisfaction of respondents in their current shelter. Only a small proportion (10.9 percent) of the sample was very satisfied with current accommodations.

The high proportion of respondents who were only somewhat satisfied or were unsatisfied with their shelter emphasizes the poor conditions in which Aboriginal persons experiencing housing distress must endure. It is also notable that a slightly higher proportion of those respondents who had changed residences at least three times in the past six months were in very crowded conditions and were unsatisfied with their shelter.

Table 4.5. Residential Quality: General Conditions, Crowding and Satisfaction

Residential Characteristics	1-2 Temporary Accommodations % (n)	3 + Temporary Accommodations % (n)	Total % (n)
General Condition			
<i>Good (no repairs)</i>	36.6 (26)	36.4 (20)	36.5 (46)
<i>Fair (some repairs)</i>	36.6 (26)	45.5 (25)	40.5 (51)
<i>Poor (extensive repairs)</i>	26.8 (19)	18.2 (10)	23.0 (29)
Crowding			
<i>Not crowded</i>	48.4 (31)	47.2 (25)	47.9 (56)
<i>Somewhat crowded</i>	34.4 (22)	30.2 (16)	32.5 (38)
<i>Very crowded</i>	17.2 (11)	22.6 (12)	19.7 (23)
Satisfaction with Shelter			
<i>Very satisfied</i>	12.5 (9)	8.9 (5)	10.9 (14)
<i>Somewhat satisfied</i>	54.2 (39)	53.6 (30)	53.9 (69)
<i>Unsatisfied</i>	33.3 (24)	37.5 (21)	35.2 (45)

From the brief review above, it becomes clear that there is some level of uncertainty about shelter and that satisfaction and condition varied among participants. To examine these issues in more detail a series of questions were posed to examine the level of use of subsidy programs among participants. These questions included asking whether persons had accessed subsidized housing, whether they were on a waiting list and whether they were aware of existing programs. A second and related set of questions then asked whether there were any problems when seeking subsidized housing with respect to their treatment and general experiences.

Overall, the use of subsidized housing was low among participants with only 22.7 percent indicating that they had previously accessed supportive housing.⁷ Furthermore, only 18 percent of the sample was currently on a wait list, while just over 15 percent stated that they had been denied subsidized housing when applying in the past. With respect to those who had applied but were placed on a wait list, over one third (35.7 percent) indicated that they had been waiting for more than a year.

When asked to explain their experience in applying and trying to secure subsidized housing, comments ranged from persons feeling that they were mistreated to those who were completely satisfied with the experience. One person stated they were unsure of the process, writing *"I don't know how to go about it, and I just never hear back the housing company"* while another said that *"Winnipeg regional housing takes forever to answer back...six month to have the first interview."* Another person felt that being single posed a barrier to accessing subsidized housing, *"I have never applied because they give priority to people with children and families...never applied too worried about not getting in and getting my hopes up."*

7. When examining the income distribution of the sample, it was apparent that while few "accessed" subsidized housing, many would benefit because of their low income levels.

Interestingly, many suggested that subsidized housing was only given to persons who were employed or had families and children under their care. When asked about the barriers they experienced, overwhelmingly, most commented on not having proper references or the necessary deposits to secure a place. Others also raised concerns about discrimination and mistreatment by landlords who profile perspective tenants.

In an effort to probe the living situations of respondents in more detail, a series of questions examined the temporary nature of each persons housing situation. At present, 75% of the sample indicated that they were currently living temporarily with friends and or family. Most important, was that 81.5% of persons staying in a temporary accommodation with either friends or family indicated that they contributed to the household in a variety of ways and that if they were to leave this accommodation, 35% felt this would pose a hardship for the household. When asked how persons contributed to the household, many included both financial and non financial elements such as doing chores, providing childcare and basically helping out around the home. Others noted that they contributed money on a frequent (monthly) or infrequent basis (when they had the ability).

From this brief overview, it is clear that the housing circumstances of those presently considered part of the hidden homeless population poses a challenge. On the one hand, many who are presently living with friends or family contribute to that household through a variety of means, with many feeling that their departure would put undue stress should they leave. However, it also became clear that the living arrangements are tenuous, with many moving quite frequently over a short period of time. Ultimately, supportive housing is needed and must recognize the hardship of providing deposits and potential reference checks, especially for those just moving into an urban centre. With a high number on waiting listings, there is a need to continue to provide not only access to units and housing but also to get the necessary information out to persons moving into urban centres about the programs and supports currently available to assist (both on a short term emergency basis and a long term permanent solution).

SUPPORT AND HIDDEN HOMELESSNESS

In this sub-section, support is evaluated with respect to respondents' experiences of discrimination, social support, participation with organizations and support from the reserve. First, the survey included a question regarding the respondents' experiences with discrimination and unfair treatment. It is important to note that while this question was not central to the study, the participants expressed that various forms of unfair treatment were pervasive across all sectors.

According to Table 4.6, well over half of the participants (60 percent) articulated the view that acts of racism and discrimination affected their daily existence in the urban setting. Similar proportions of males (61 percent) and females (59 percent) replied that they experienced some form of discrimination and unfair treatment. It is notable that compared to those in relative residential stability, a higher proportion of respondents who moved frequently experienced discrimination.

Table 4.6. Discrimination

Residential Characteristics	1-2 Temporary Accommodations % (n)	3 + Temporary Accommodations % (n)	Total % (n)
Ever A Victim of Discrimination?			
<i>Yes</i>	56.5 (39)	64.3 (36)	60.0 (75)
<i>No</i>	43.5 (30)	35.7 (20)	40.0 (50)

Examples were provided of the systematic or institutional discrimination experienced by Aboriginal persons in their encounters with housing organizations, government agencies, and potential employers. One male stated that he preferred Aboriginal run housing organizations because he "*would not feel so discriminated against.*" In terms of possible employment opportunities one person claimed that "*I feel discrimination by not getting jobs because of being Aboriginal*" while another person felt that their appearance was a factor, "*Yes, there's a lot of discrimination in this city, most won't hire you because of your appearance.*"

However, not all comments were related to racial discrimination as some participants felt discriminated against by housing organizations because they received social assistance, yet others felt employers did not treat them fairly due to a lack of a high school certificate or a "*poor work history*."

In Table 4.7, the social supports of individuals experiencing hidden homelessness is evaluated. For the purpose of this study, social support was defined to include emotional guidance and encouragement, mentoring and networking (being told about a job opportunity etc.) and consisted of relationships with friends, relatives, neighbours, professionals, as well as community organizations. Social support could mean providing childcare or support for an elder in the home. When asked what social support meant, the comments of survey respondents ranged from "*co-dependency*" to "*accessibility to resources within the community whether it be friends, family or food banks*."

Table 4.7 reveals that over three quarters (77 percent) of the sample had some form of social support. It is interesting that while 75.6 percent of the sample indicated that they had the support of family, only 66.1 percent of respondents had the support of friends. It is also significant that a lower proportion of respondents who moved three or more times in the six months prior to the survey had some form of social support. Moreover, while similar proportions of the residentially stable and unstable had the support of family, a greater proportion of those moving more frequently had the support of friends.

Table 4.7. Social Support

	1-2 Temporary Accommodations % (n)	3 + Temporary Accommodations % (n)	Total % (n)
Do You Have Social Support?			
<i>Yes</i>	81.4 (57)	71.4 (40)	77.0 (97)
<i>No</i>	18.6 (13)	28.6 (16)	23.0 (29)
Do You Have the Support of Family?			
<i>Yes</i>	76.1 (54)	75.0 (42)	75.6 (96)
<i>No</i>	23.9 (17)	25.0 (14)	24.4 (31)
Do You Have the Support of Friends?			
<i>Yes</i>	49.5 (45)	69.6 (39)	66.1 (84)
<i>No</i>	28.6 (26)	30.4 (17)	33.9 (43)

*"I'd like to see more Aboriginal organizations and/or persons providing advocacy services on behalf of other Aboriginals, especially for single moms like myself. I'd like to have more support from a native worker to help me adjust to the city and the areas that I find myself in, someone to do home visits, and possibly a small group of women like myself, I can hang around with, who have the same concerns and feelings like myself."
(24 year old female respondent)*

Many participants spoke of having social support from family through offering a temporary place to stay or simply congratulating them on successes and informing them of different opportunities that may interest them or help them to further succeed in their endeavors. One person expressed a lack of support due to the size of his family, *"no family, except one brother, and he has a family, I am a grown man and pride gets in the way."* He further stated that, *"men have pride, don't want to take help when they know they need it, agencies should be discreet and compensate for this."* Despite this viewpoint, this individual has social support through friends and calls them, *"if I need a place to stay."*

The overwhelming majority (81.5 percent) of those persons staying in a temporary accommodation with either friends or family indicated that they contributed to the household in a variety of ways. If they were to leave this accommodation, 35 percent felt this would pose a hardship for the household. When asked how persons contributed to the household, many included both financial and non financial elements such as doing chores, providing childcare and basically helping out around the home. Others noted that they contributed money on a frequent (monthly) or infrequent basis (when they had the ability).

In addition to the availability of social supports, we considered the involvement of survey respondents in community organizations, as this may also reflect a form of support for individuals experiencing hidden homelessness. According to Table 4.8, over half (55.1 percent) of the sample did participate in organizations. Those respondents experiencing relative residential stability were more likely to be involved in two or more organizations. In contrast, a greater proportion of the sub-sample that moved more frequently were involved in only one organization and participated in the activities of the organization less often.

Table 4.8. Participation in Organizations

	1-2 Temporary Accommodations % (n)	3 + Temporary Accommodations % (n)	Total % (n)
Do You Participate In Organizations?			
<i>Yes</i>	56.3 (36)	53.7 (29)	55.1 (65)
<i>No</i>	43.8 (28)	46.3 (25)	44.9 (53)
Number of Organizations Participate In			
<i>0</i>	2.6 (1)	3.80 (1)	3.1 (2)
<i>1</i>	42.1 (16)	61.5 (16)	50.0 (32)
<i>2 or more</i>	55.3 (21)	34.6 (9)	46.9 (30)
How Often Participate In Activities			
<i>Very often</i>	36.8 (4)	37.9 (5)	13.4 (9)
<i>Often</i>	47.4 (14)	34.5 (1)	37.3 (25)
<i>Somewhat often</i>	10.5 (18)	17.2 (10)	41.8 (28)
<i>Not often at all</i>	5.3 (2)	10.3 (3)	7.5 (5)

In relation to the experience of support for Aboriginal persons in housing distress, it is also important to consider whether support was received from the reserve or home community. As Table 4.9 illustrates, only 10 percent of the sample received financial support from their home community. Almost 90 percent of the sample did not receive financial support with little difference between the residentially stable and unstable groups. In addition to financial support, respondents were asked whether they were involved with their band or community. Approximately 20 percent of the sample did indicate that they were involved with their home community with a slightly higher proportion of involvement reported by those in more unstable residential situations.

The purpose of this section was to examine the support system for those who experience the hidden homeless condition. Often people with no fixed address or living in unstable situations have lost contact with family, friends and have little or no support networks. The challenges that relate to their uncertain circumstances of day-to-day life includes the exclusion of established community networks. Unfamiliarity with existing networks and agencies can result in frustration, inability to find the right supports and isolation from the rest of the community.

Many people do not want to be part of a “culture of dependency” and want to find ways to contribute and engage in their communities. Personal connections with friends and family can be critical when seeking some basic needs such as food and clothing while reaching stability in housing, seeking employment and education. It was revealed during this study that a majority of the participants have social supports, whether it is from service providers, home communities or family and friends.

Table 4.9. Support from the Reserve

Residential Characteristics	1-2 Temporary Accommodations % (n)	3 + Temporary Accommodations % (n)	Total % (n)
Do You Receive Financial Assistance from Reserve?			
<i>Yes</i>	10.0 (4)	11.1 (4)	10.5 (8)
<i>No</i>	90.0 (36)	88.9 (32)	89.5 (68)
Are You Involved With Band/Community			
<i>Yes</i>	15.0 (6)	22.9 (8)	18.7 (14)
<i>No</i>	85.0 (34)	77.1 (27)	81.3 (61)

SERVICE PROVIDERS

The two most important issues facing Aboriginal persons in finding adequate shelter were the lack of financial resources and availability of shelter in general...

Data were collected by interviewing 60 key personnel involved in the provision of services in Winnipeg, Regina and Saskatoon. The selection of service providers interviewed ranged from a diverse set of organizations in each of the three prairie cities. Examples of organizations that generously offered their time for this research included, but was not limited to,

housing, education, health and employment services.

Housing organizations ranged from shelters, transitional housing, supportive housing, affordable rental housing agencies and safe houses. There were many community and "grassroots" organizations such as drop-in, crisis, learning, sport, family and support, community centres and schools that offered their knowledge and experiences. Government agencies were also very supportive and included Police Services, Provincial Housing Authorities and Municipal Governments. Finally, the non-profit sector such as the Manitoba Assembly of Chiefs, the Indian and Métis Friendship Centres and Tribal offices in each of the three prairie cities were instrumental in providing a balanced insight into the challenges and opportunities in providing services to those part of the hidden homelessness population.

It is important to note that not all participating agencies provided programs and services solely to the Aboriginal community; in fact more than half held a mandate that covered their respective community as a whole. The individuals that gave their time was also diverse in that some held positions of leadership while others held the equally important position of frontline worker. During interviews a portion of the agencies preferred to have more than one staff member participate which provided a rich and thorough insight into how their organization delivers services to the community.

It is worth repeating that while they expressed that they were increasingly busy fulfilling their mandates, they participated wholeheartedly in the interview process. This willingness to participate is thought to be partly a result of the extensive relationship building by IUS researchers throughout the study and the dedication that these agencies have in fulfilling their desires to assist the community they serve. For example, one drop-in centre worker in Saskatoon told researchers that, *"In 1995 we had 6,000 visits per year, the past year we exceeded 20,000 visits per year."*

Participants told researchers that the two most important issues facing Aboriginal persons in finding adequate shelter were the lack of financial resources and availability of shelter in general. It is important to note that both service providers and those persons seeking adequate housing maintained that by not being able to supply a damage deposit or supply sufficient references were a significant barrier in accessing housing. A non-profit housing manager in Winnipeg maintained, *"You need a co-signer for renting a place; it is ridiculous, not fair to have guarantee, too hard for some."*

The lack of finances often pushes people into residing in accommodations located in neighbourhoods that are considered "unsafe" by some. One service provider in Winnipeg reported, *"The only place a resident can find, on the amount allocated by social assistance, is to reside in an area that is economically disadvantaged. In the long run, this causes problems for some families due to community issues such as gangs, prostitution, bad role models for children, etc."* In Regina a participant stated, *"Adequate shelter isn't available, that is the issue. Some of the higher ups should be given a welfare cheque and see what type of living situation they can rent with the money."* Lack of employment and education and were other reasons commonly cited.

Affordable housing, lack of urban knowledge and accessing support services were the most commonly cited reasons for the experiences for those who are new to the urban setting. A staff member, who works in a transitional housing organization in

Saskatoon reported, *"People lack knowledge of who they are, where they are, and what they can do. Welfare has programs but do not tell the people, clearly what they are, if you don't ask, you don't get it."* Another key issue were language barriers, especially for migrants from northern communities *"Not knowing the system, the language etc. it does not take much for a person to believe that they can't get help."*



ABORIGINAL PHILOSOPHY OR APPROACH TO SERVICE DELIVERY

**“I am a gap worker,
I fill the gaps.”**

The service providers were asked if their organization has a specific Aboriginal philosophy or approach. A majority of these agencies

reported that they have developed and delivered culturally appropriate approaches to service delivery over the number of years they have been in operation. For example, one housing organization that serves the Aboriginal community in Winnipeg, delivers their services in a holistic manner by being adaptable to the changing requirements of their clients. This organization works with tenants, some of whom may experience personal challenges that lead to difficulties in paying their monthly rent. Rather than being threatened with eviction they are *“listened and cared for, understanding that budgets are limited.”* Other organizations reported that they offered sensitivity training for their staff or had dedicated staff members, such as Elders who were trained to be supportive and sensitive to the healing of Aboriginal peoples.

Service providers were asked if they could identify any gaps in the current system or what other programs were needed that would be of benefit to persons accessing their programs. One frontline worker at an emergency shelter in Winnipeg stated, *“I am a gap worker, I fill the gaps.”* Agencies share the common concerns in long-term funding arrangements. Many stated the procedures for obtaining funding for various grants and projects was too time consuming and interfered with fulfilling their organization’s mandate. In Winnipeg, a provider of adult education stated, *“We are funded short term for a long term problem.”*

The following list highlights suggestions that service providers perceived as beneficial to the current system in relation to access.

- * More funding for social service workers to conduct home visits;
- * Education programs related to house maintenance;
- * Increased focus on youth programs;
- * After care support for people after treatment programs (substance use);
- * Quicker response time in arranging appointments with Social Services;
- * More sport programs for youth;
- * Increase in shelters;
- * Increase in shelters for victims of domestic abuse;
- * Increase in drop-in shelters for over-night accommodations;
- * Central source of information and referrals;
- * Reduction in government bureaucracy;
- * Increase in funding for childcare;
- * Increase in advocacy in general; and
- * Increase in communication.

In terms of outreach and advertising their services, the majority (90%) of the participants reported they did not publicize outside the city limits. In particular, non-profit housing organizations expressed that they saw no value in creating awareness of their organization, regardless of geographical location, due to their extremely long and lengthy waiting lists of tenant applicants.

Forms of service delivery promotion were primarily through partnerships with other organizations, attending conferences and serving on committees where a diverse range of agencies participated. Web sites, pamphlets and various forms of literature (posters, reports, newsletters etc.) were also cited as methods of creating awareness of their services offered.

Most importantly, a majority of organizations acknowledged that their clients primarily learn about their services through "*word of mouth.*" One agency in Saskatoon reported that their clients became aware of their services through multiple ways, "*The majority of our clients come to us through word of mouth, client*

to client, agency worker to agency worker to client. We aim to keep agencies informed."

Organizations continuously adapt to meet the needs of the ever-changing community that they serve. For example, one Winnipeg organization that primarily serves the Aboriginal population has, over the past few years, added parenting, literacy, solvent abuse prevention and nutrition components to their programs due to reports concerning observations the population that they serve. Others have rightfully recognized the impacts of the residential school syndrome and the "sixties scoop" and have adapted programming sensitive to those specific needs required to contribute to the healing process.

When asked if they knew of any trends or best practices relating to the provision of services, surprisingly many did not. This may be reflective of the pressures related to the challenging nature of their work within the public realm. One person spoke highly of the recent initiatives and funding from NHI and believes that this program has greatly assisted persons on the verge of homelessness. Another person simply stated that a differing viewpoint is needed regarding the hidden homeless population, "*Don't blame the poor- the victims, deal with solutions versus who is to blame, poverty is the key, then the rest follows.*"

CONCLUSION

At the broadest level, this research has confirmed that hidden homelessness among Aboriginal persons in Prairie cities remains an area of concern. This concern stems from the pressing need to address the chronic shortage of housing and related supportive services that has contributed to the high numbers of persons living in temporary accommodations.

At the outset of this report, we acknowledged the importance of the initial forty informal discussions that were held in Winnipeg. The participants in these conversations raised four areas of concern:

1. Lack of affordable housing;
2. Lack of support networks;
3. Lack of information; and
4. Institutional discrimination.

These four areas were explored in greater detail as the research progressed, and to a large extent, each area was confirmed as being problematic for the wider sample. In particular, it is clear that there is a shortage of quality and affordable housing and mechanisms are needed to better connect persons to the supports they require to better their present situation. Furthermore, the frequency with which respondents raised concerns of discriminatory practices needs to be further addressed to more precisely understand why this was echoed so strongly in each of the three cities.

Perhaps to understand the results of this work is best represented in the first survey question that simply asked respondents to define what they meant by "home." There is no doubt that defining *home* was a complex as it resulted in multiple interpretations. In this research *home* applied to many aspects of life that sometimes included the "physical house" but for most it was more of an intangible feeling such as "*home where you were born and raised*" or "*where my family grew up.*" To others home was a place where they sought safety and refuge: "*Somewhere you can go anytime. Somewhere you can feel safe and not have to worry about violence. A place where you won't get kicked out on the street. Home is supposed to be a safe place where you can go. Home is supposed to be yours*"

and it is supposed to be a special place where you can to have some privacy. It's supposed to be your temple."

Home also evoked an emotional attachment to family and friends: "a safe place where friends and family can come to see me and be able to enjoy the basic comforts (hot water, food plumbing, heat, security and laundry)." Another person offered home is "a place that is safe, comfortable. Somewhere you can raise a child."

Perhaps the words of one person, to whom we titled the report after, sums up the meaning and power of *home* in saying "*home for me is where the heart is at and right now that is nowhere so I am homeless.*" These words clearly echoed the challenges that surfaced in the comments. Many contended that *home* was a place that they could exert control over and independence in thinking and acting, it was about having a space such as one person who observed: "*a home for me would be someplace where I can rest and forget about the world and my problems, it would be a place where I don't have to listen to other people's problems for a while.*"

Within the words of respondents it was clear that home was a house and that meant having a clean place that was free of maintenance problems and was affordable. However, too often, *home* appeared to as a distant thought, something that was just out of reach. Their words often spoke with emotion and a desire for a better life: "*a place where you have people around that love you*" or "*a house where you live everyday with your family.*"

It was this type of sentiment that emphasized the fact that so many lacked *home* but felt that it was out there even if was momentarily unattainable. The words of respondents also confirmed that for many, finding a place to call home remains a challenge that is hard to overcome. It is hoped that this report was able to articulate the complexity of this issues and that all too often many are left without "*someplace that you can call yours, a place where your stuff is. A place you feel comfortable.*"

Within this research we also learned a valuable lesson; that was that the `process of conducting the research" was a vital as the final outcome. This meant that the time spent in each community, collecting information and building the necessary relationships allowed the research team to connect better with those who participated in the study. This thought is important in understanding the value of including the Talking Circle, which was more of an expression of the research process rather than a means from which to collect more data. As was also offered in the methodology section, it was the intent of researchers to embrace Indigenous approaches and perhaps in a few small ways, we took some big steps in moving in this direction.



RESEARCH FINDINGS

This research was guided by three research questions that were posed in the introduction of this report. The following discussion provides insights from the study that address these research questions:

1. What are the general characteristics of the hidden homeless population among Aboriginal persons, and has the pattern of migration into large urban centres played a contributing factor in exacerbating the extent of hidden homelessness?
2. To what extent does the condition and availability of the housing stock, and housing services, exacerbate the hidden homelessness situation in prairie cities?
3. How are governments, community-based organizations and support agencies addressing the needs of Aboriginal people who experience hidden homelessness in Winnipeg, Saskatoon and Regina?

The focus of the first research question relates to the characteristics of Aboriginal persons experiencing hidden homelessness, and the effect of migration to urban centres on this phenomenon. Overall, the results of the study suggest that:

1. Aboriginal persons experiencing hidden homelessness a diverse group represented by males and females, youth, single parent families, elders, and, increasingly, families.
2. The reasons for housing distress amongst this group are wide-ranging, however, all suffer from overwhelming poverty and the lack of adequate shelter.
3. The primary concern for the majority of respondents in the sample was the inability to access a permanent residence.
4. The review of literature in this document and previous research confirm that, for many Aboriginal peoples, migration from rural communities to urban areas creates a complex dynamic between their inability to find appropriate accommodation in the city and their connections to home.

The second research question refers to the condition and availability of housing stock and the provision of housing services in Prairie cities. Specifically, the question poses whether the inadequacies of housing provision exacerbate hidden homelessness amongst Aboriginal peoples. Two main points were generated from this question:

1. There is a significant shortage of affordable shelter accommodations for the urban Aboriginal population in Canadian Prairie cities to address both short- and long-term needs.
2. Despite the lack of housing provision, most respondents indicated that they had social supports that assisted them in maintaining a roof over their heads. It is this social support that distinguishes absolute homelessness from hidden homelessness. Moreover, this social support network "hides" the problem of Aboriginal hidden homelessness from mainstream society.

The third and final research question asks how government, organizations and agencies are attempting to address the needs of Aboriginal people who experience hidden homelessness in Prairie cities. Based on the findings of the study the following points were raised:

1. Most program responses to hidden homelessness are reactive rather than proactive. In order to eliminate hidden homelessness programming must establish long-term goals that will lead to permanent housing.
2. In each Prairie city, supportive networks do exist for the hidden homeless Aboriginal population. These supports span a continuum that ranges from formal to informal supports. In addition, individuals staying temporarily also contribute support to the household through contributions to the rent as well as in-kind support such as childcare.

3. A paradigm shift is occurring with the downloading of services to the community level. With increasing demand on community agencies, their resources are being strained. Nonetheless, the grassroots foundation of these agencies has allowed the development of supportive networks that would not be possible in government programming.



RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are outlined in relation to the core themes of the study (mobility, shelter and services):

Mobility

Further investigation is required to gain a better understanding of the complex dynamic between home communities and urban centres for Aboriginal peoples. In particular, focus should be on the hidden homeless experiences of those in the sample who indicated a connection with their reserve resulting in movement between reserve and urban centres.

Programming must be established to address the hyper-mobility of Aboriginal peoples in urban areas. It is only with substantive increases in housing provision, both on and off reserve, that the “churn” of Aboriginal peoples will be recognized.

Shelter

Increased funding is required for the construction of transitional and permanent housing units to accommodate both short-term needs, such as migrating to the city, as well long-term needs, such as those wishing to reside in urban centres.

Choices in housing design must be expanded and diversified to incorporate Aboriginal culturally appropriate housing for the Aboriginal population. For example, such housing could accommodate the tradition of maintaining three- and four-generation households through multi-generational housing units and guest accommodation.

Recognition must be accorded to emerging literature that promotes a holistic approach to the provision of housing. Based on this approach, housing represents far more than shelter and incorporates a range of services that enables Aboriginal peoples to sustain an independent lifestyle in a metropolitan centre.

The overwhelming message of participants in the study was that access to shelter is significantly hindered by systemic barriers that include perceived discrimination by landlords, as well as requirements for references and damage deposits, especially for

those new arrivals that lack local connections and financial means. These barriers must be addressed to facilitate access to housing for Aboriginal peoples experiencing housing distress.

Services and Support

The significance of informal support networks (such as family members providing shelter or assistance) for the hidden homeless in the Aboriginal population must be acknowledged. Moreover, the critical nature of this support must be formally solidified so that financial resources will be available to those households that are providing shelter to the hidden homeless. This might take the form of an innovative program that recognizes the unique circumstances of those in need of shelter and the role of friends and family in providing care.

Increases in shelter assistance programs are required to allow greater access to housing through increases in shelter dollars. For example, in Manitoba, the shelter assistance rates, which have not increased substantially since the early 1990s, must be addressed to match the current market conditions, which have increased dramatically. In addition, access to shelter assistance programs needs to be better communicated to those in housing distress to ensure that they are all aware of all of their options to address their situation.

For example, in Winnipeg, there are numerous organizations and agencies that provide programs ranging from temporary or emergency accommodation to long-term, affordable options. In addition, government subsidized housing programs also exist that provide shelter on a rent to income ratio or provide shelter assistance payments to those in need. While many of these programs have extensive wait-lists, it is suggested by the outcome of this research that many in critical need of shelter are sometimes unaware of the programs and options available to address their shelter needs. Therefore, continuing to disseminate information about existing programs and supports is one small piece of the solution.



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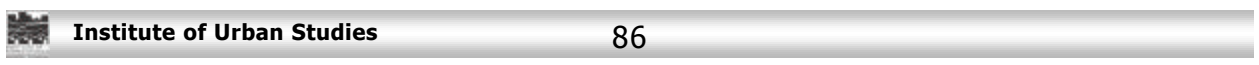
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APPENDIX A: CANADIAN PRAIRIE CITIES: DEMOGRAPHIC AND ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

In order to provide some context for each city included in the study on hidden homelessness, basic demographic and socio-economic indicators from the 2001 Census have been compiled for the cities of Winnipeg, Saskatoon, and Regina as a whole, and are reported in the tables that follow. Included are: population change, housing, employment and education, income, and Aboriginal population comparisons. These indicators are mapped out, and presented at the end of this section, using neighbourhood and census tract data in order to illustrate the variations experienced in specific areas of the given cities. On the whole, this appendix offers an overview of the general indicators outlined in the tables, and illustrates patterns and trends that occur within the three cities.

Table 1 Demographics and Population Change			
Municipality	Regina	Saskatoon	Winnipeg
Population, 1996 - 100% data	18040 4	193653	618477
Population, 2001 - 100% data	17822 5	196811	619544
Population change 1996-2001	-2179	3158	1067
Population percentage change, 1996-2001	-1.2	1.6	0.2
Census Metropolitan Area			
Population, 1996 - 100% data	19365 2	219056	667093
Population, 2001 - 100% data	19280 0	225927	671274
Population change 1996-2001	-852	6871	4181
Population percentage change, 1996-2001	-0.4	3.1	0.6
Source: Statistics Canada, 2001			

This table offers an overview of population demographics, indicating that these three mid-size cities experience minimal levels of growth and change

Table 2			
Housing			
	Regina	Saskatoon	Winnipeg
Total occupied dwellings	71720	79285	252815
In need of minor repair	27.6%	27.2%	28.6%
In need of major repair	8.1%	5.9%	9.4%
Structural Type			
Single detached	68.9%	58.3%	59.7%
Semi-detached/row house	6.3%	8.2%	7.5%
Apartment	24.8%	33.5%	32.8%
Average persons/household	2.4	2.4	2.4
Renters			
Average rent payment	\$567	\$580	\$541
Paying 30%+ on shelter	42.8%	46.1%	38.1%
Owners			
Average major payments	\$760	\$770	\$751
Paying 30%+ on shelter	11.0%	13.8%	11.7%
Average value of dwelling	\$105,407	\$128,124	\$100,525

Source: Statistics Canada, 2001

The percentage of units requiring major repair is highest in Winnipeg (9.4 percent), followed by Regina (8.1 percent) then Saskatoon (5.9 percent). While this data reflects each city as a whole, smaller geographies reveal greater variability when neighbourhoods and census tracts are considered. As Figure 1 demonstrates, the percentage of dwellings in need of major repair reaches upwards of 38.5 percent in some areas. Neighbourhoods with a high proportion of homes in need of repair are often in low-income areas; this may indicate dwellings that are costly to maintain in areas that can little afford to do so. Winnipeg demonstrates a central concentration of homes in need of major repair, as shown in Figure 1, whereas Saskatoon and Regina show more dispersion.

Winnipeg and Saskatoon contain similar proportions of each housing type, whereas Regina has a higher proportion of single-detached dwellings, and a much lower percentage of apartments, suggesting a lower availability of rental units.

The percentage of renters paying 30 percent or more of gross income on shelter ranges from a high of 46.1 percent in Saskatoon and 42.8 percent in Regina, to a low of 32.8 percent in Winnipeg. Figure 2 shows that this proportion is significantly higher in many low-income areas, in the case of Winnipeg and Regina, the issue is more concentrated than in the city of Saskatoon.

Table 3 Employment and Education			
	Regina	Saskatoon	Winnipeg
Employment			
Population 25 yrs+	112600	121640	409240
Participation rate	69.70%	69.10%	67.40%
Unemployment rate	4.70%	5.60%	4.60%
Education			
Population 15-24 yrs	28035	32565	84495
Not attending school	39.9%	40.1%	41.4%
Attending school full time	53.5%	54.1%	50.9%
Attending school part time	6.6%	5.8%	7.7%
Population 20 yrs+ with post-secondary education	47.6%	52.2%	47.0%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2001

As is shown in Table 3, unemployment rates range from 4.6 to 5.6 percent, and participation rates range from 67.4 to 69.7 percent for the three cities as a whole. Figure 3 illustrates that unemployment rates are three to five times higher, and occur in distinct pockets. Figure 4 indicates that participation rates are significantly lower in core areas.

The percentage of persons aged 15 to 24 who are attending school may be indicative of the value placed on education, the support for the pursuit of education, and the confidence young people may have in themselves. At the city level, approximately 60 percent of persons aged 15 to 24 are attending school. Figure 5 illustrates the variability of school attendance at the neighbourhood level with values ranging between less than 25 percent to almost 100 percent. The percentage of persons aged 20 years and over with post-secondary education tends to follow similar spatial patterns to that of persons attending school, as is illustrated in Figure 6. This often occurs in areas with higher average family income (i.e. \$80,000+), as is seen in the southeast region of Saskatoon.

Table 4 Income			
	Regina	Saskatoon	Winnipeg
Income Composition	100	100	100
Employment income	77.0%	76.1%	76.1%
Government transfers	11.1%	11.8%	12.1%
Other	12.0%	12.0%	11.8%
Families			
Average family income	\$66,169	\$62,451	\$63,568
Median family income	\$58,315	\$54,025	\$54,725
Households			
Average household income	\$55,860	\$51,941	\$53,176
Median household income	\$46,847	\$41,991	\$43,385
Incidence of Low Income			
Total population	16.4%	19.7%	20.3%
Unattached individuals	36.8%	41.1%	44.3%
Family	12.2%	14.7%	15.5%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2001

As is shown in Table 4, income characteristics for the three cities are comparatively similar in relation to income composition breakdowns. Figure 7 shows that average incomes can vary from a low of less than \$25,000 to over \$200,000. Similarly, Figure 8 indicates that median family income can range from less than \$20,000 to over \$100,000. These variations appear to correlate spatially with education. In terms of the incidence of low income for the population in private households, Winnipeg (20.3 percent) and Saskatoon (19.7 percent) have similar incidence of low income, while the proportion of the population reporting low income is slightly lower in Regina (16.4 percent). Figure 9 shows a dense concentration of extreme low income (greater than 70 percent of the population) occurs in Winnipeg's core area.

	Regina		Saskatoon		Winnipeg	
	Aborigi- nal Popu- lation	Total Popula- tion	Aborigi- nal Popula- tion	Total Popula- tion	Aborigi- nal Popu- lation	Total Popula- tion
Population totals	15,300	175,600	19,015	193,660	52,415	610,445
Population percentages	8.7%	91.3%	9.8%	90.2%	8.6%	91.4%
Employment						
Unemployment rate	26.2%	6.8%	25.3%	8.3%	19.6%	8.1%
Participation rate	55.1%	72.8%	55.5%	71.3%	59.4%	68.7%
Education						
Population 15-24 yrs attending school	n/a	60.1%	55.3%	59.9%	50.6%	58.6%
Population 20 yrs+ with post-secondary education	n/a	47.6%	30.3%	52.2%	29.3%	47.0%
Income						
Average household income	\$29,890	\$53,740	\$27,716	\$49,555	\$30,853	\$50,408
Incidence of low income	53.2%	13.6%	57.1%	17.1%	53.6%	19.3%
Composition of income in 2000	n/a	100%	100%	100%	n/a	100%
Employment income	n/a	77.0%	69.70%	76.1%	n/a	76.1%
Government transfer payments	n/a	11.1%	25.40%	11.8%	n/a	12.1%
Other	n/a	12.0%	4.90%	12.0%	n/a	11.8%
Mobility						
One-year movers	n/a	16.8%	40.3%	19.7%	30.9%	15.1%
Five-year movers	n/a	43.3%	75.3%	49.4%	67.2%	42.3%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2001



The tables in the previous sections have provided information regarding general population census indicators. Table 5 compares the First Nations people to the total population in relation to population size, employment, education, income, and mobility. This is significant because in all three cities the Aboriginal population accounts for nearly 10 percent of the total population. Moreover, Figure 10 indicates that many city neighbourhoods have Aboriginal populations of 30 to 50 percent, and as the following sections will illustrate, these First Nation populations display characteristics of marginalization. A series of maps is provided to present the data spatially at both the city and the neighbourhood level. A comparison of these maps establishes that acute incidences of poverty, that are illustrated both in Winnipeg and Saskatoon, indicate that areas with highest Aboriginal population tend to correlate with areas of lowest labour force participation and highest unemployment rates. This reaffirms that these census areas are in high need. It should be noted that custom aboriginal data for Regina neighbourhoods is unavailable.

Table 5 demonstrates that unemployment rates for Aboriginal persons are significantly higher than those for the general population. For example, Regina has an unemployment rate of 6.8 percent for the general population, and 26.2 percent for Aboriginal persons. With an unemployment rate that is 3.9 times higher for Aboriginal persons, Regina has the highest disparity in both unemployment and participation rates, followed by Saskatoon, then Winnipeg. Figure 11 illustrates these trends, as areas experiencing high unemployment rates for Aboriginal persons are found dispersed throughout older, lower income neighbourhoods in both Saskatoon and Winnipeg. Similar patterns are seen in the general population of both cities, as demonstrated in Figures 3 and 4.

Figure 12 illustrates labour force participation rates for Aboriginal persons, with city averages for Saskatoon and Winnipeg at 55.5 and 59.4 percent respectively. This map suggests that labour participation and unemployment trends are closely related, as demonstrated in the neighbourhoods occupying the west quadrant of Saskatoon. Further, it shows

that suburban Aboriginals, while relatively low in number, are more likely to be labour force participants.

School attendance among Aboriginal youth in Saskatoon and Winnipeg is 5 to 8 percent lower than that of the general population. As Figure 13 indicates, low school attendance often occurs in low-income neighbourhoods. Suburban Aboriginal youth are more likely to remain in school; similarly higher employment rates are found in these areas. In Saskatoon, over half (52.2 percent) the general population has post-secondary education, compared to only 30.3 percent for Aboriginal individuals. In Winnipeg, nearly half (47.0 percent) the general population has post-secondary education, whereas 29.3 percent of Aboriginal persons had obtained this level of education. As illustrated in Figure 14, areas of low education correlate to areas of high unemployment, low labour force participation, and low school attendance.

In all three centres, average annual household income is approximately \$50,000 for the general population, and only \$30,000 for the Aboriginal population. Figure 15 displays Aboriginal income by neighbourhood for the city of Winnipeg. Following the pattern made established in previous figures, low annual incomes are scattered throughout inner city neighbourhoods. These neighbourhoods demonstrate that high unemployment, low labour participation, low school attendance, and low levels of education result in the lowest incomes.

Incidence of low income for Aboriginal people is significantly higher than that of the general population. In Regina, over half of Aboriginal persons reported low incomes (53.2 percent) compared to only 13.6 percent for the general population. In Saskatoon, incidence of low income is 3.3 times higher for Aboriginal peoples, and in Winnipeg this figure is 2.8 times higher. From Figure 16, it can be seen that although there are high concentrations of poverty in the inner city, many outlying neighbourhoods experience such levels of poverty as well.

In Saskatoon, the percentage of income derived from government transfers for the general population and Aboriginal population is 11.8 and 25.4 percent, respectively, while in

Winnipeg it is 12.1 and 20.0 percent. As Figure 17 illustrates, in many neighbourhoods in both Saskatoon and Winnipeg, income derived from government transfers is nearly double the city average, and in some cases, nearly three times as high. Winnipeg closely follows the spatial pattern shown in Figure 16.

The Aboriginal population tends to be more mobile than the general population. In Saskatoon and Winnipeg, mobility rates are twice as high for one-year Aboriginal movers and one-and-a-half times as high for five-year Aboriginal movers. Figures 18 and 19 display the neighbourhood mobility rates for one-year and five-year movers respectively; over a one-year period, distinct pockets of transience are visible, whereas over a five-year period this trend can be noted throughout the city. At the neighbourhood level, high mobility rates are often seen as an indicator of instability and transience.

Figure 1

Percentage of Dwelling Units in Need of Major Repair, 2001

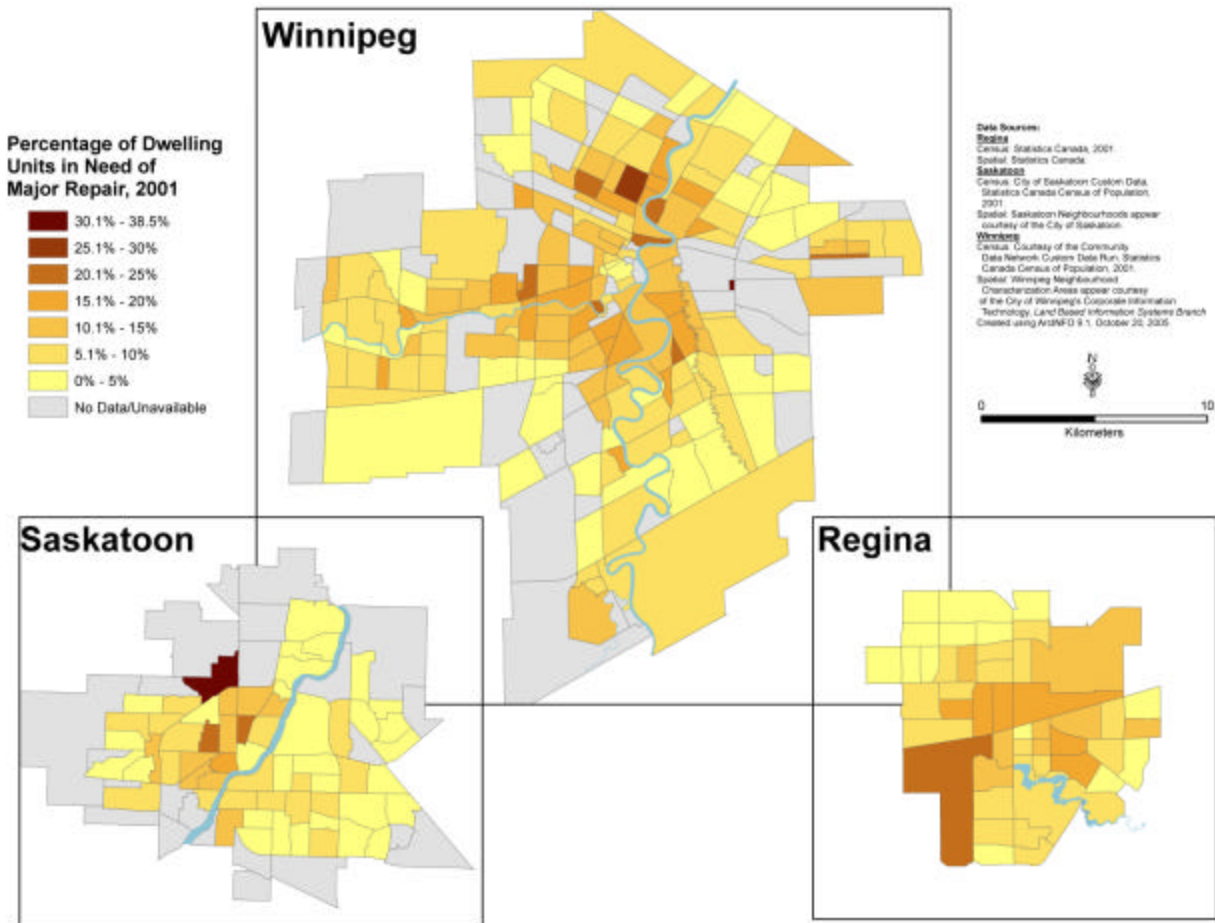


Figure 2

Percentage of Renters Spending 30% or More of Gross Household Income on Shelter

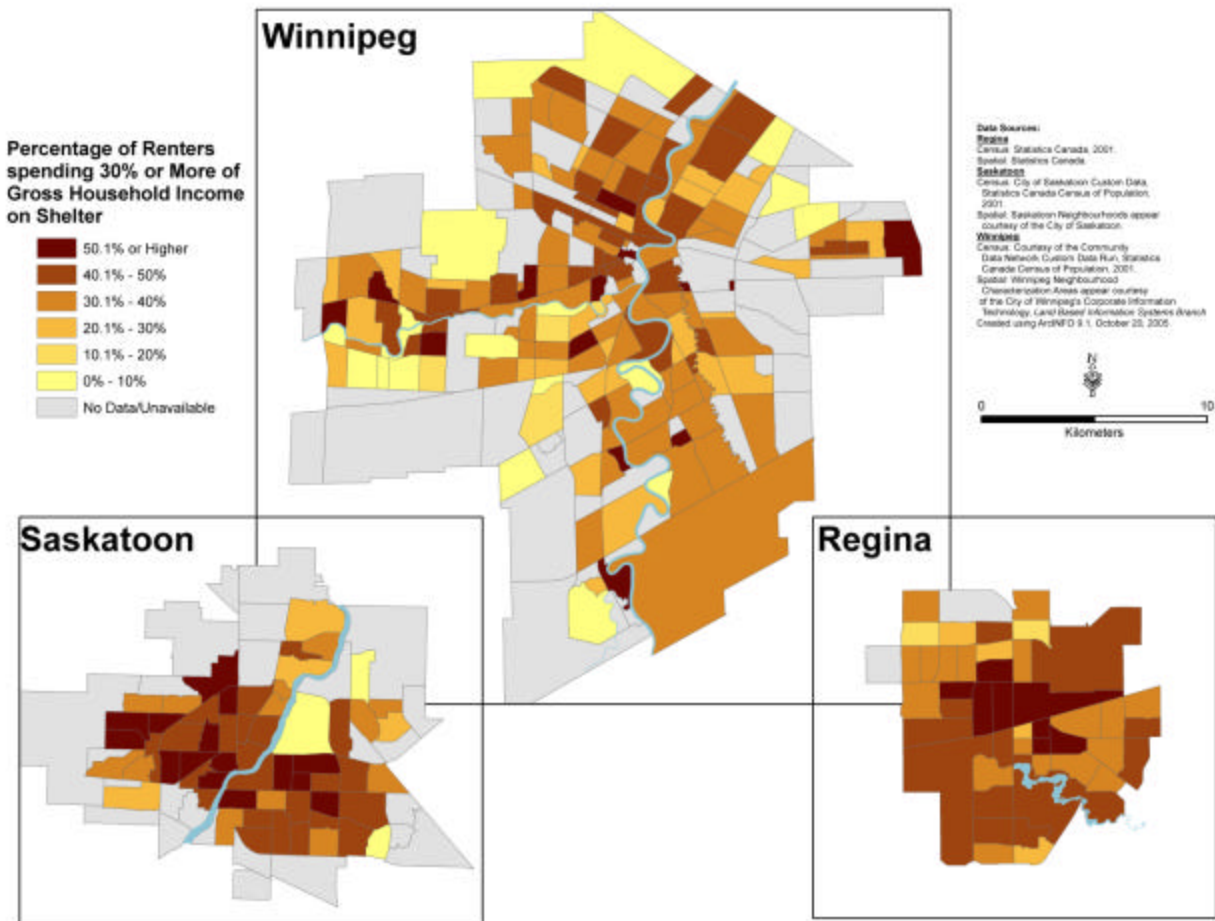


Figure 3

Labour Force and Unemployment Rate, 2001

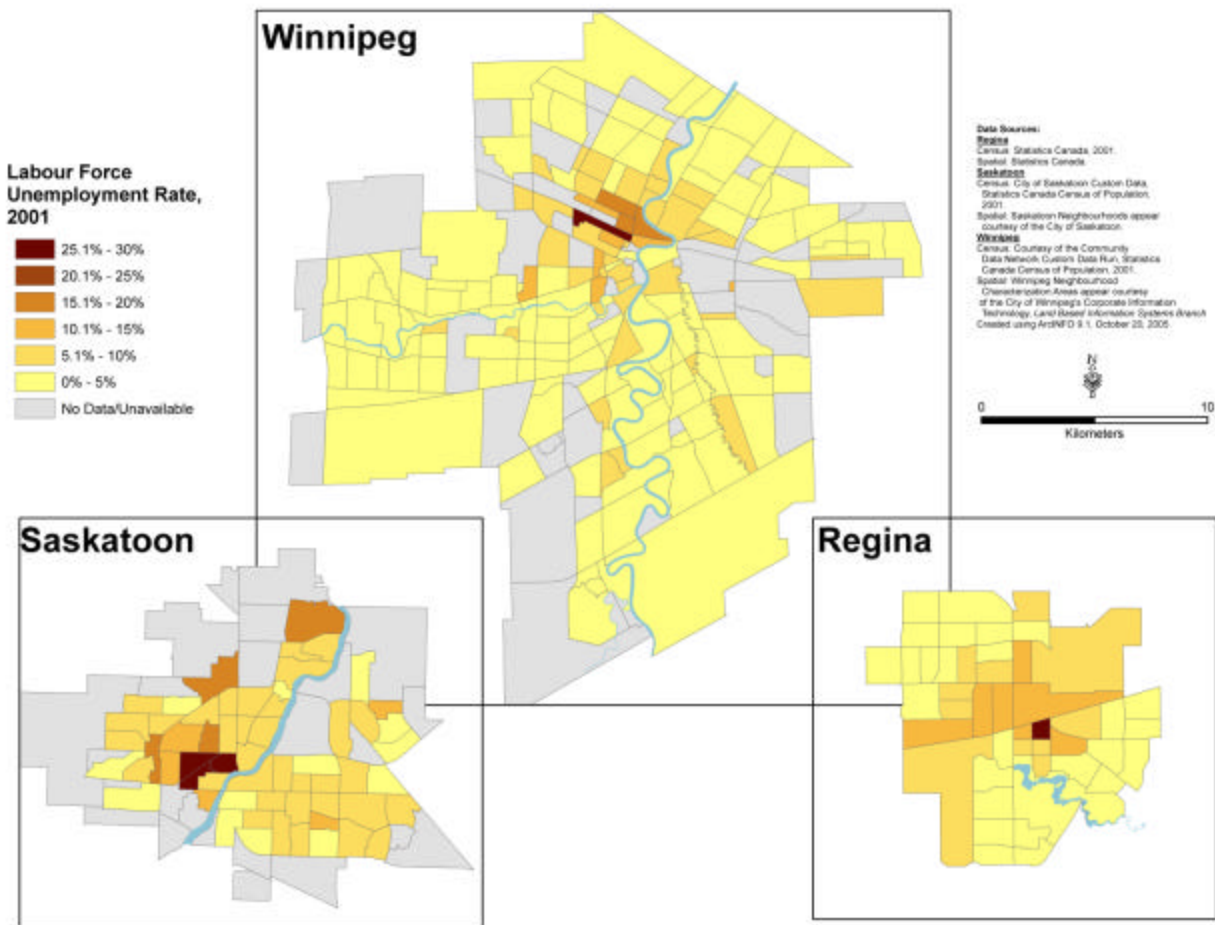


Figure 4

Labour Force Participation Rate, 2001

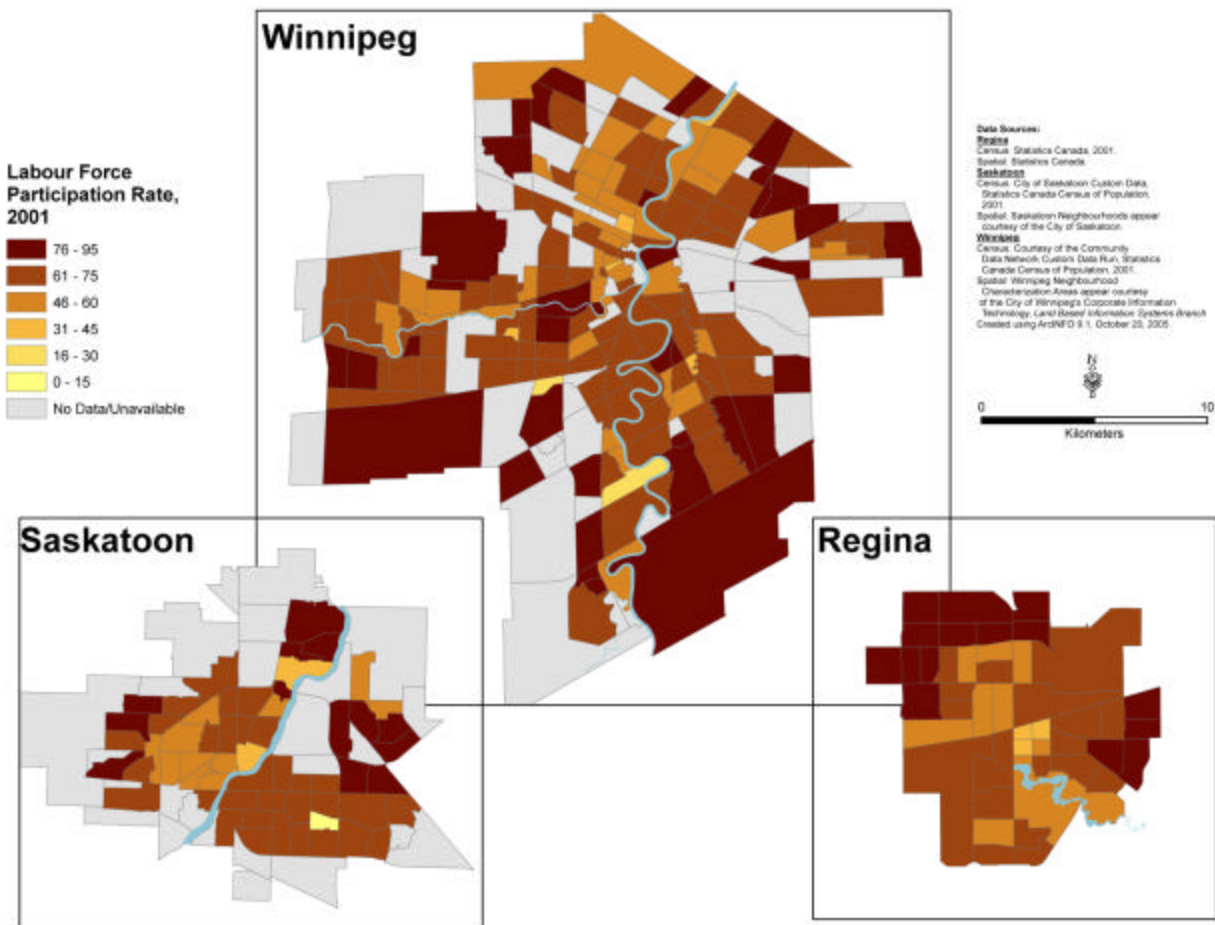


Figure 5

Percentage of Persons Aged 15 to 24 yrs Who Are Attending School Full or Part-time, 2001

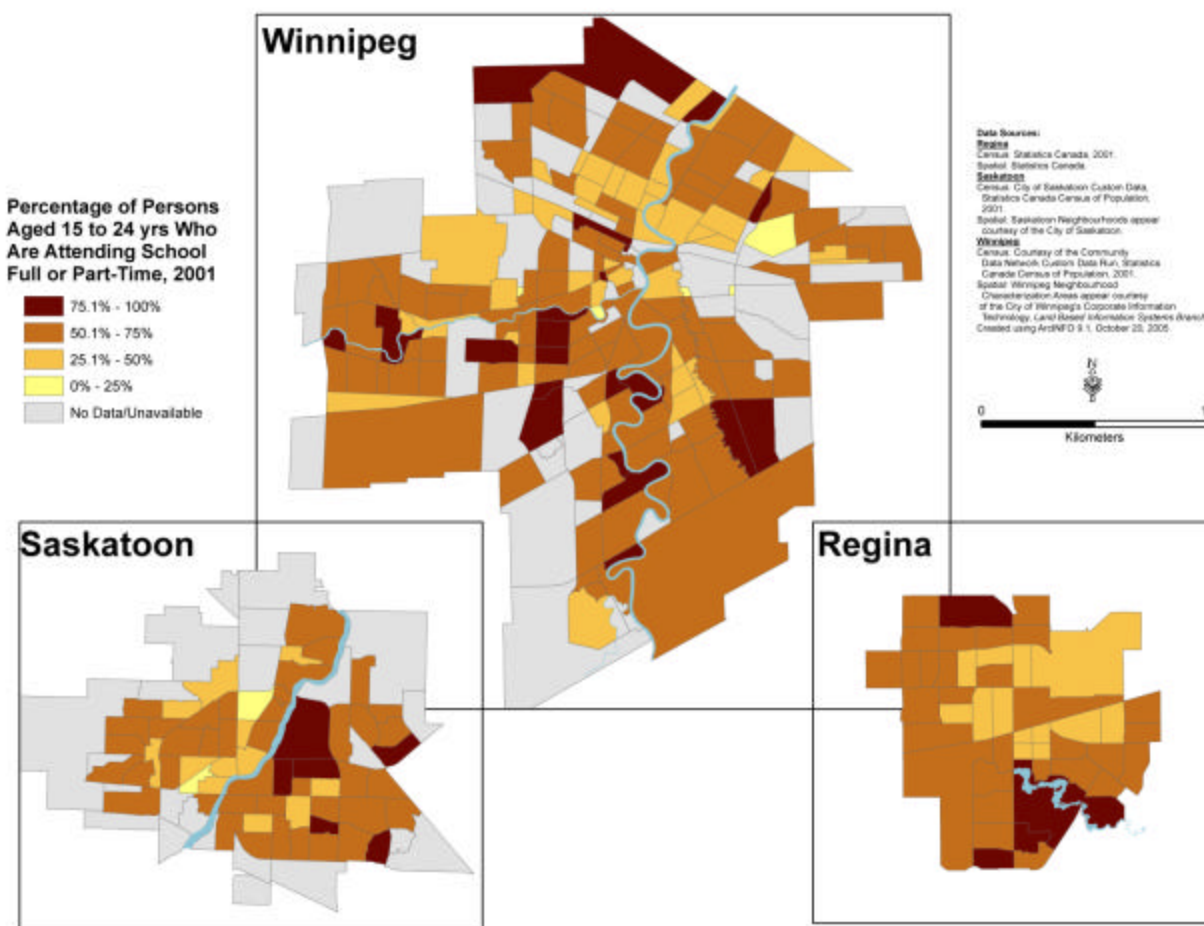


Figure 6

Percentage of Persons Aged 20 yrs + with Post Secondary Education, 2001

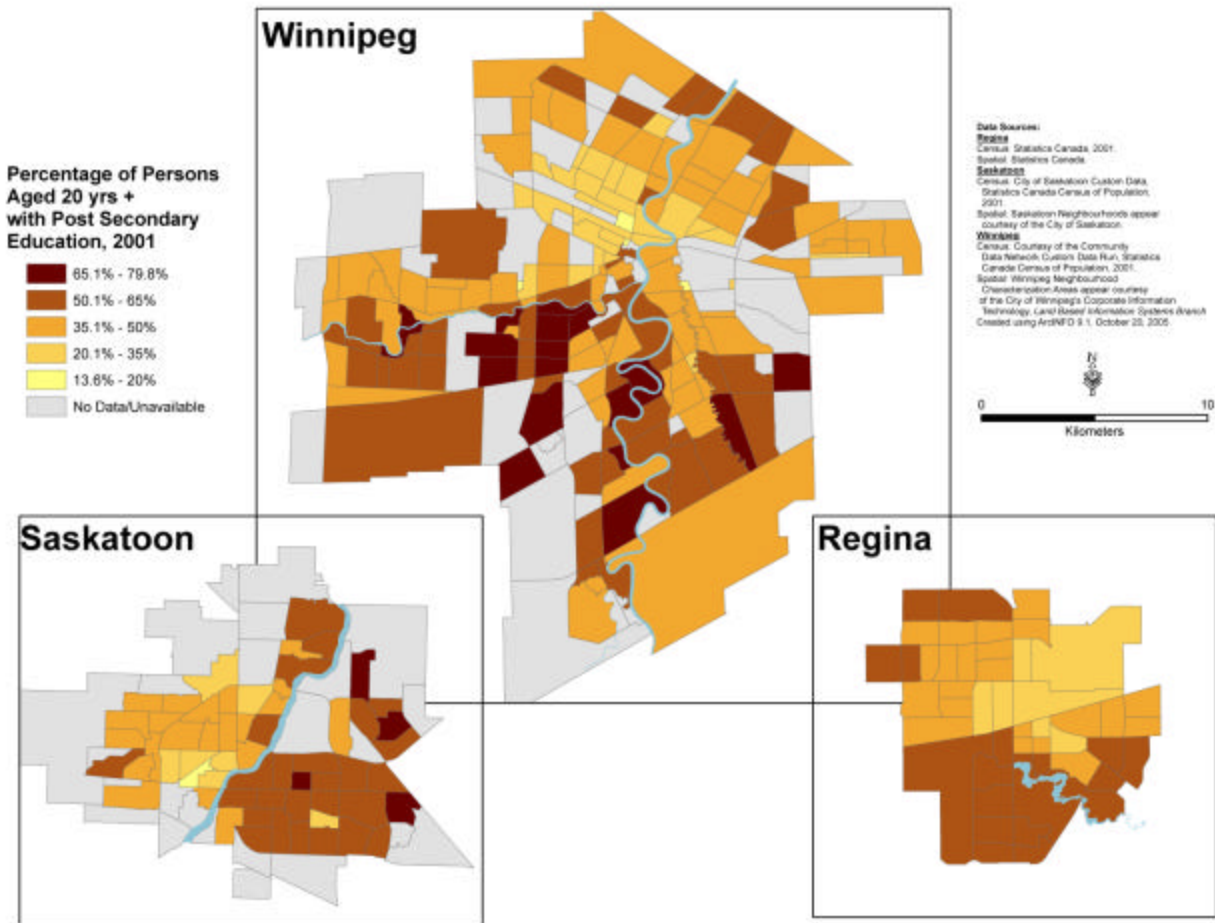


Figure 7

Average Family Income, 2000

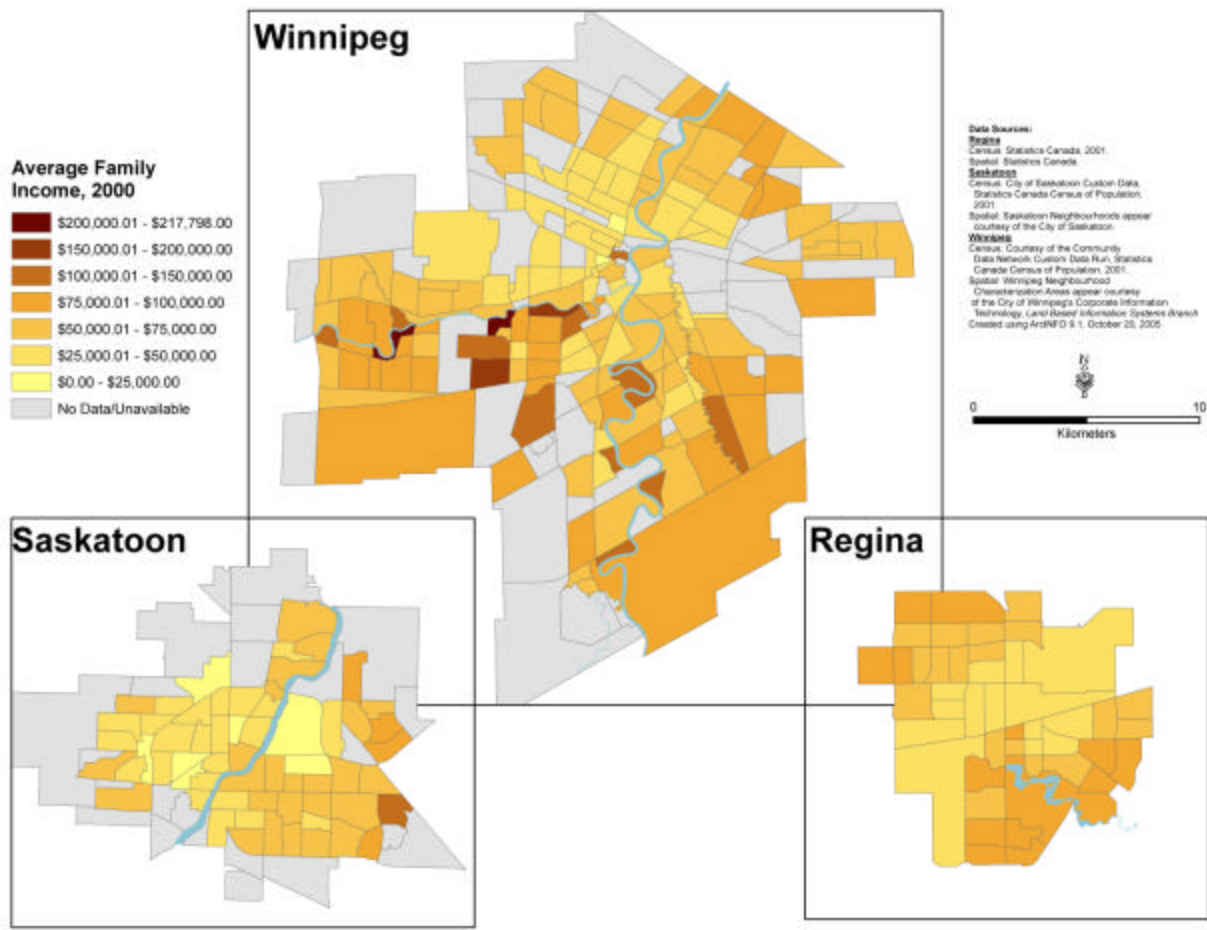


Figure 8

Median Family Income, 2000

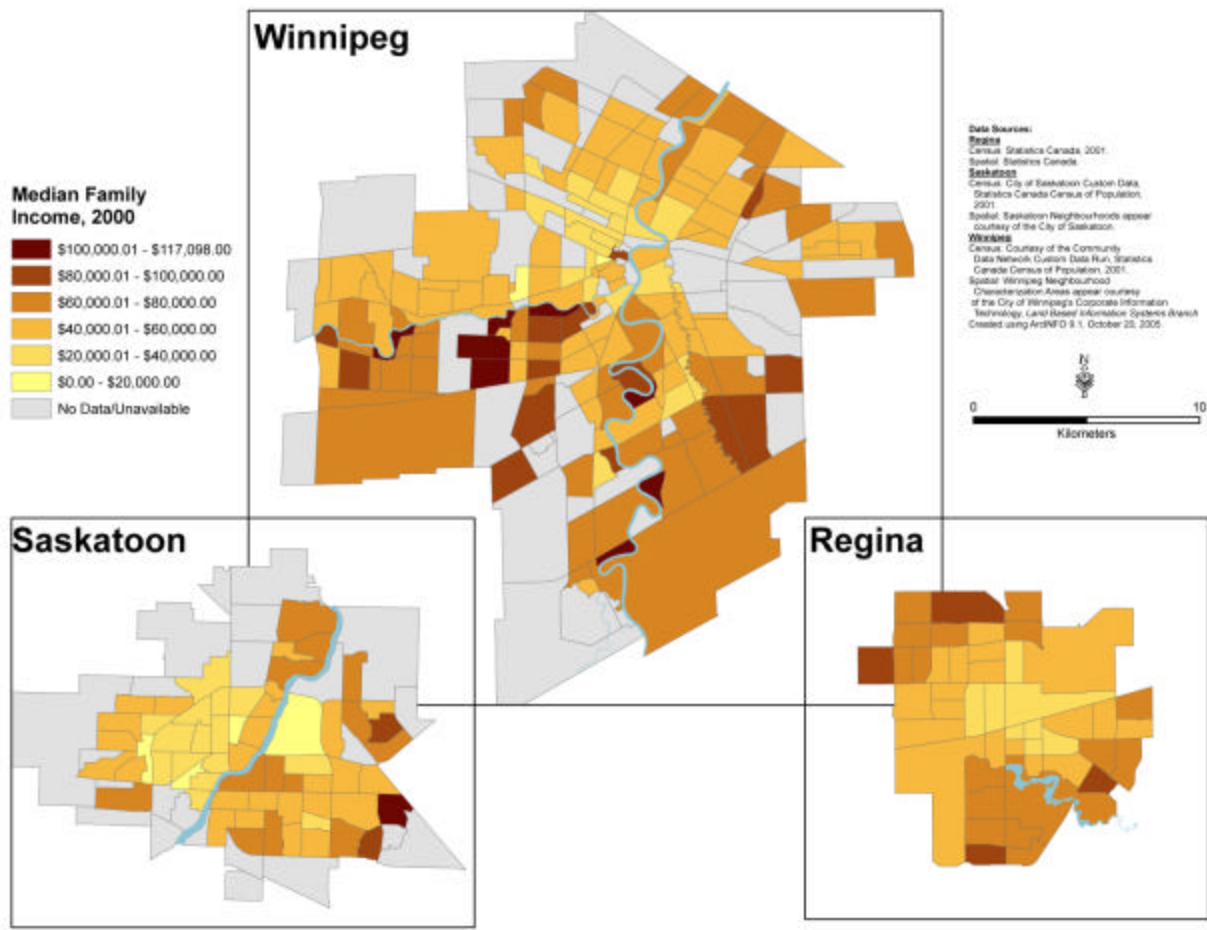


Figure 9

Incidence of Low Income: Total Population, 2001

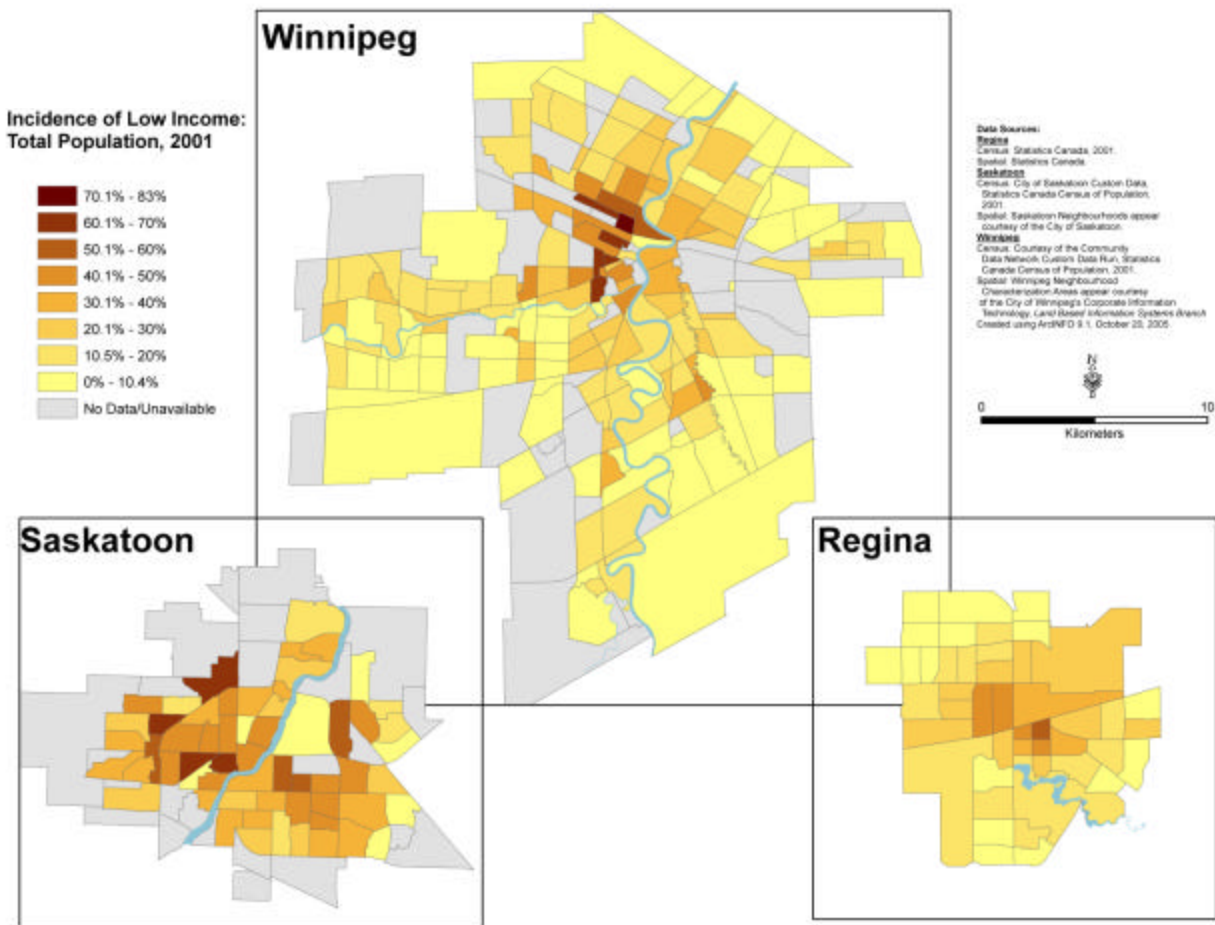


Figure 10

Aboriginal Identity Population (%), 2001

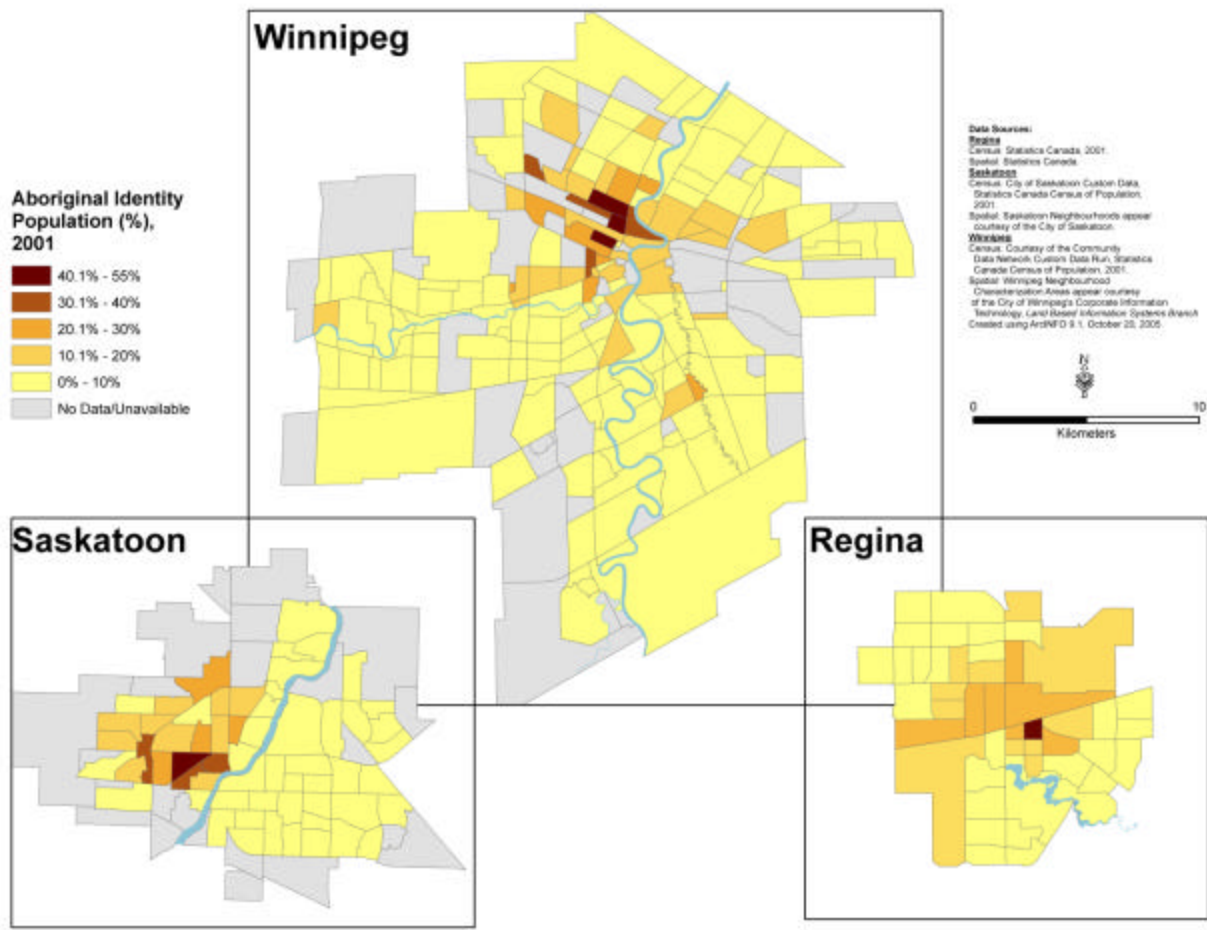


Figure 11

Aboriginal Identity, Labour Force & Unemployment Rate (%), 2001

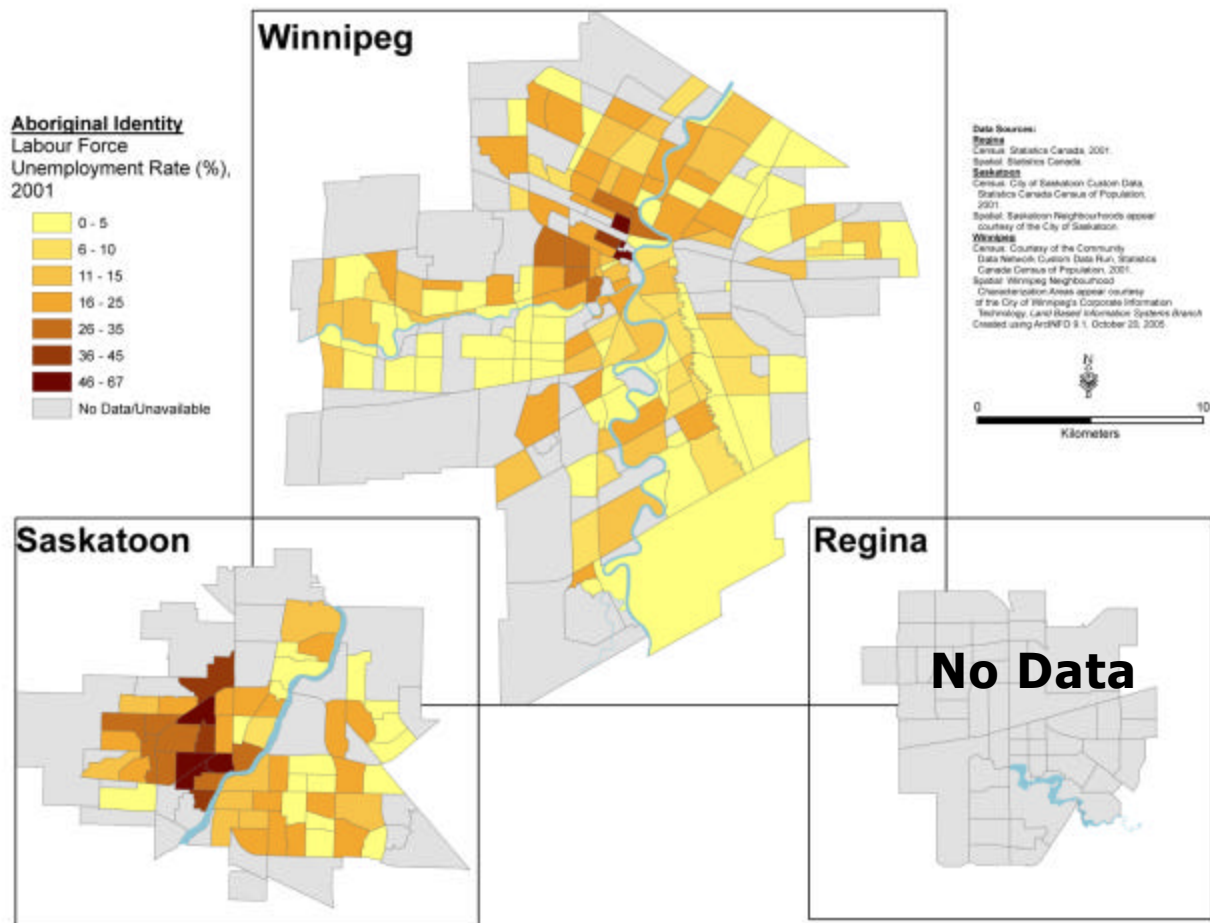


Figure 12

Aboriginal Identity Labour Force and Participation Rate (%), 2001

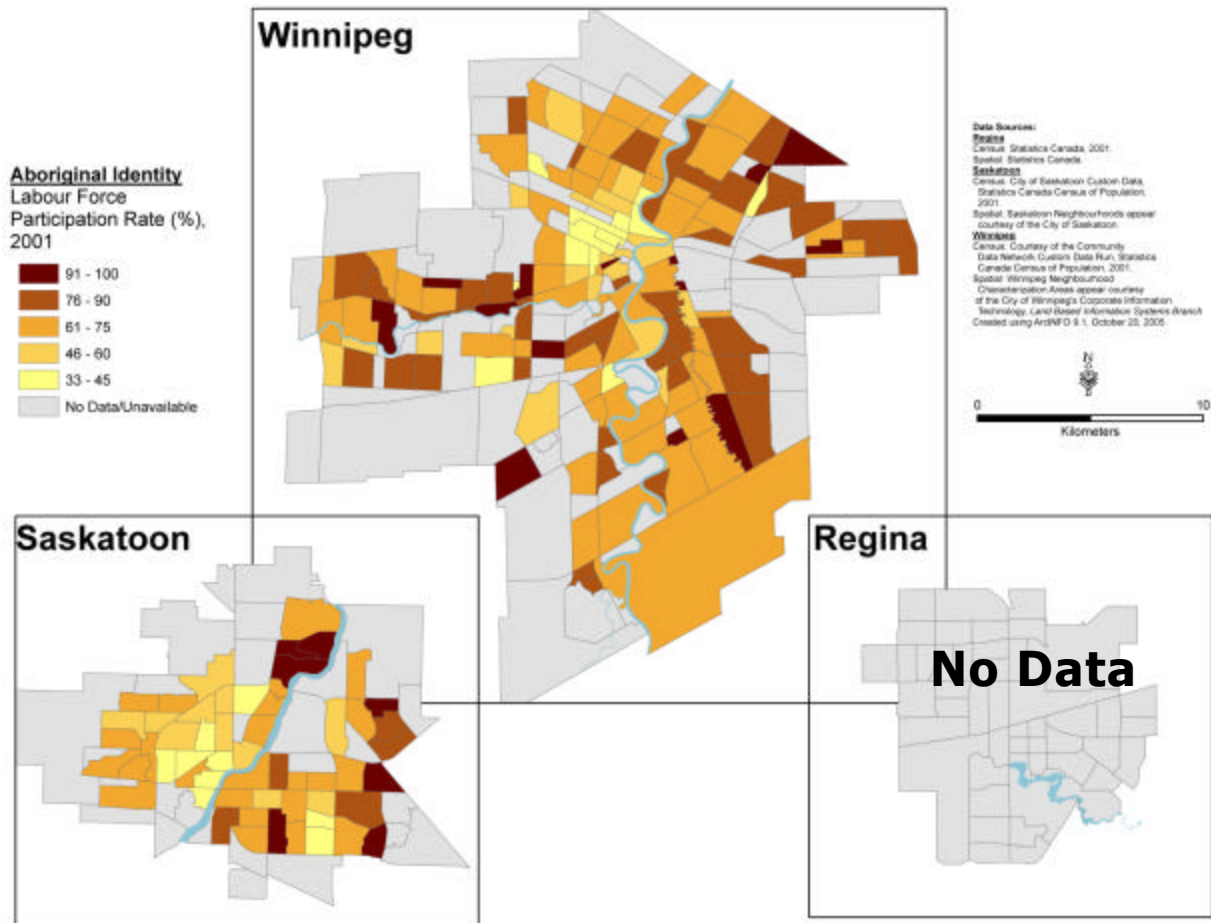


Figure 13

Aboriginal Identity Percentage of Persons Aged 15-24 yrs Attending School Full or Par-time, 2001

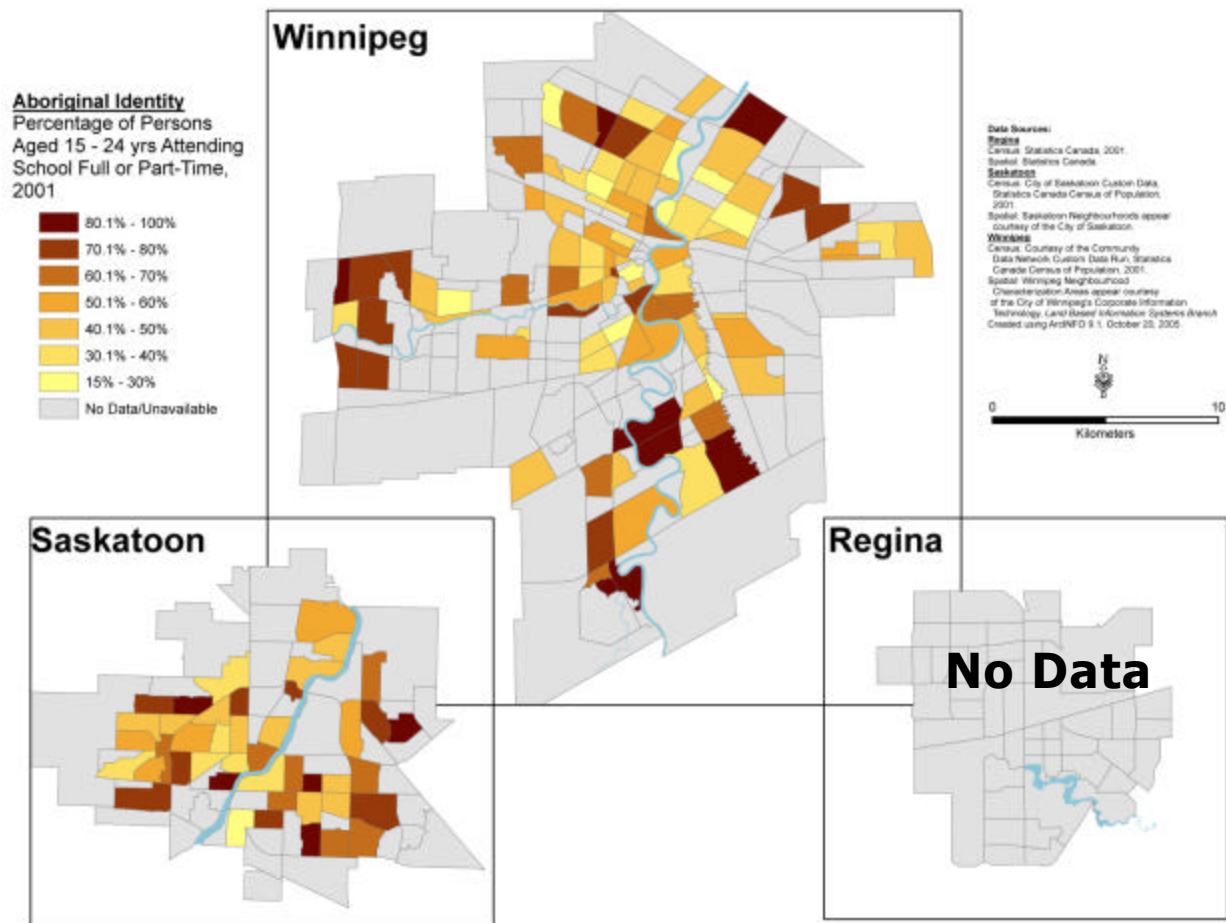


Figure 14

Aboriginal Identity Percentage of Persons Aged 15yrs + with Post Secondary Education, 2001

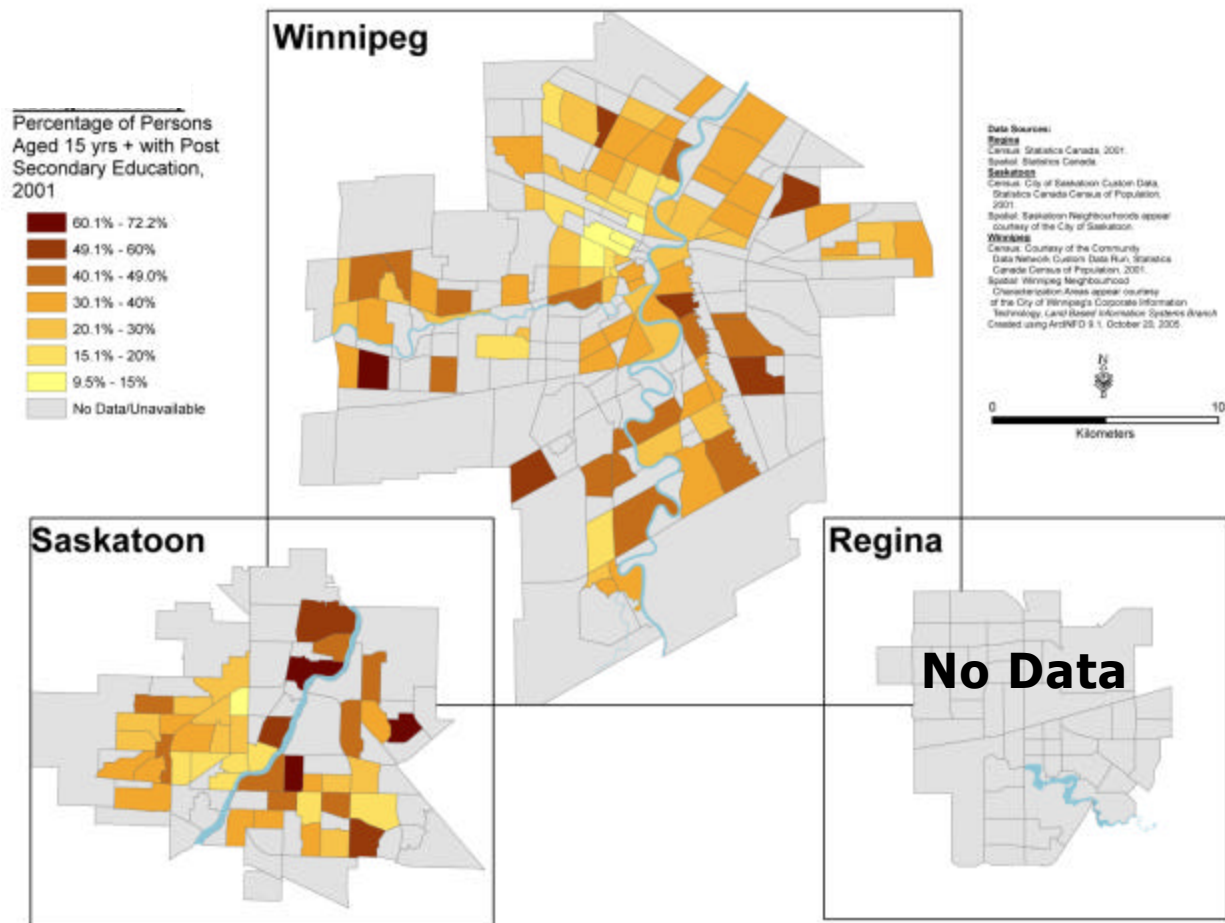


Figure 15

Aboriginal Identity Average Household Income, 2000

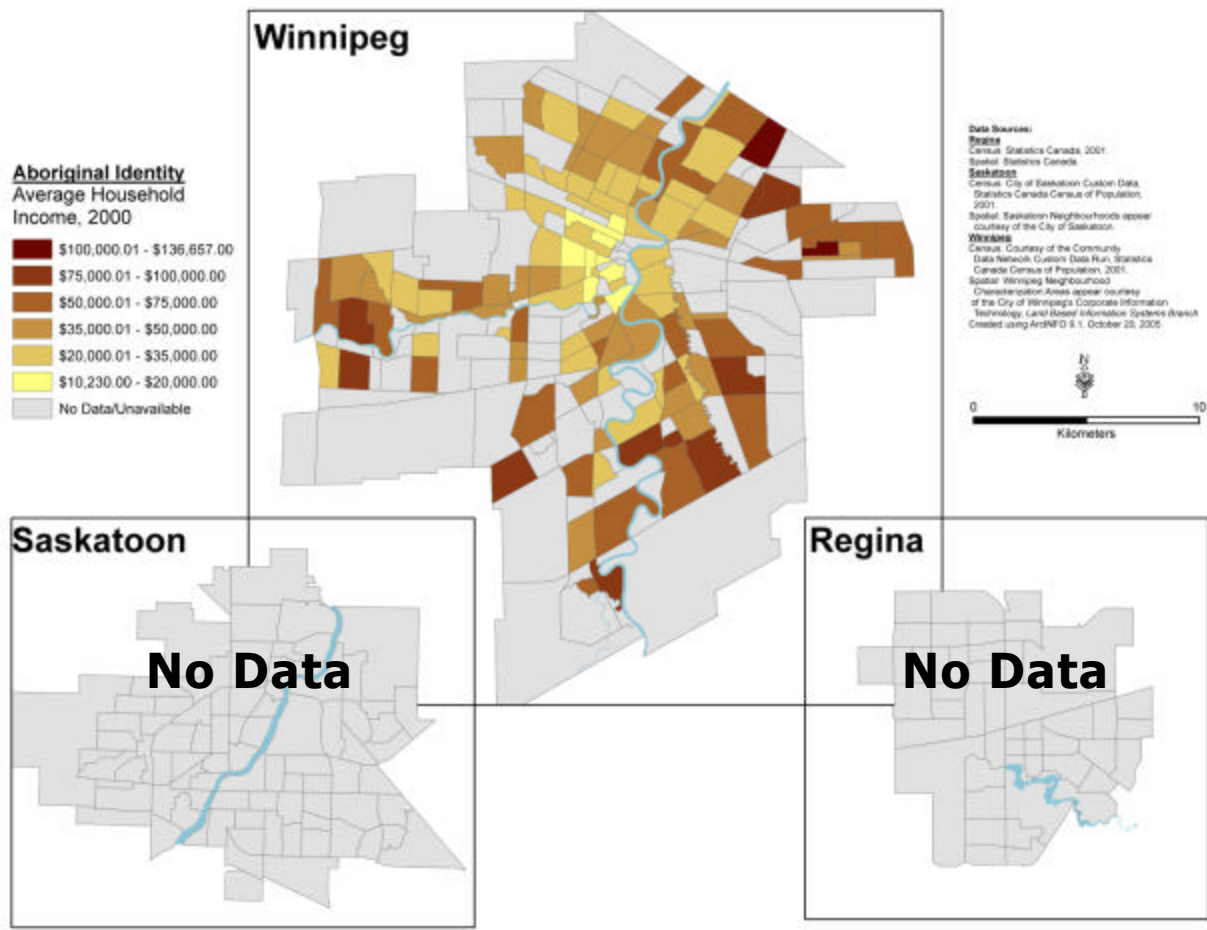


Figure 16

Aboriginal Identity Incidence of Low Income, 2001

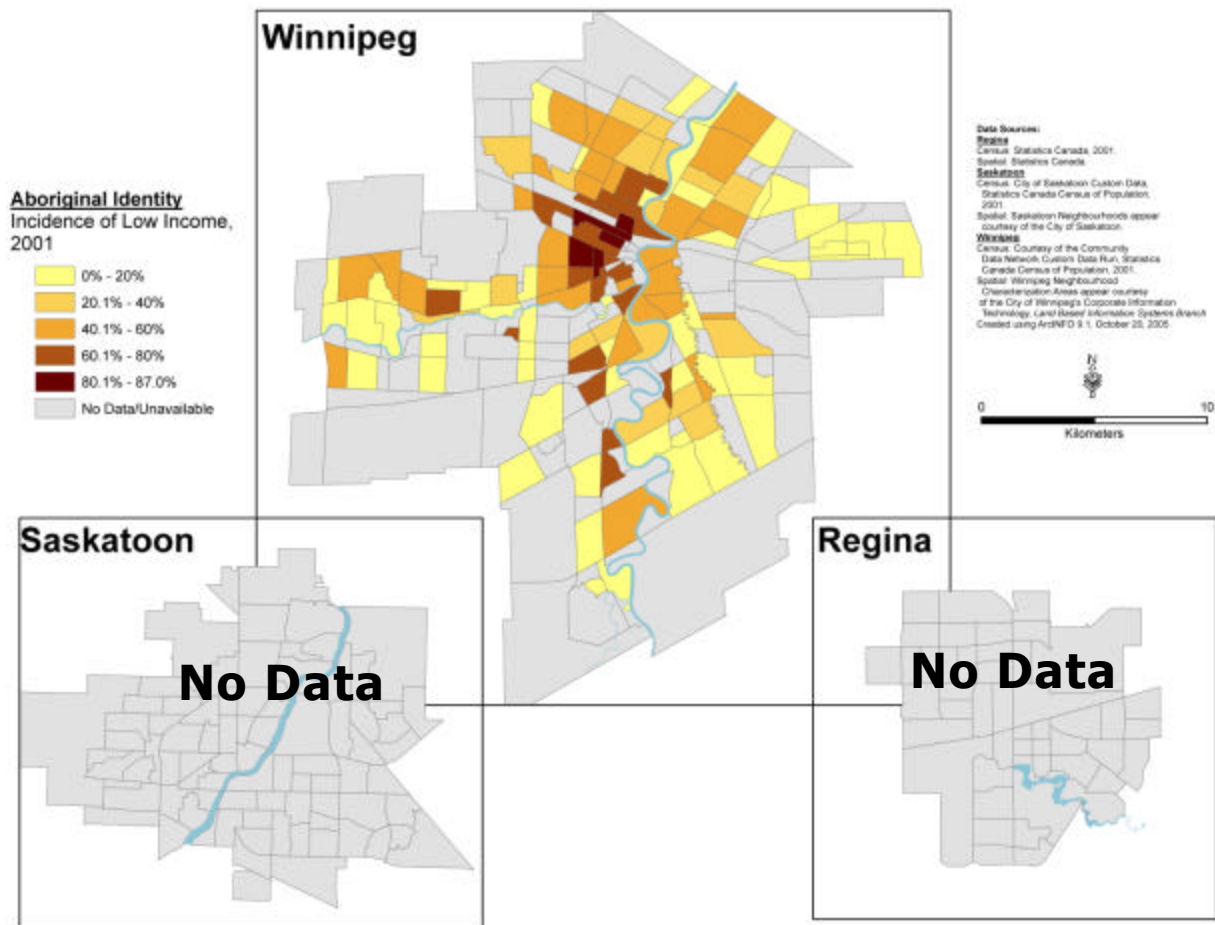


Figure 17

Aboriginal Identity Percentage of Total Income Derived From Government Transfer Payments, 2001

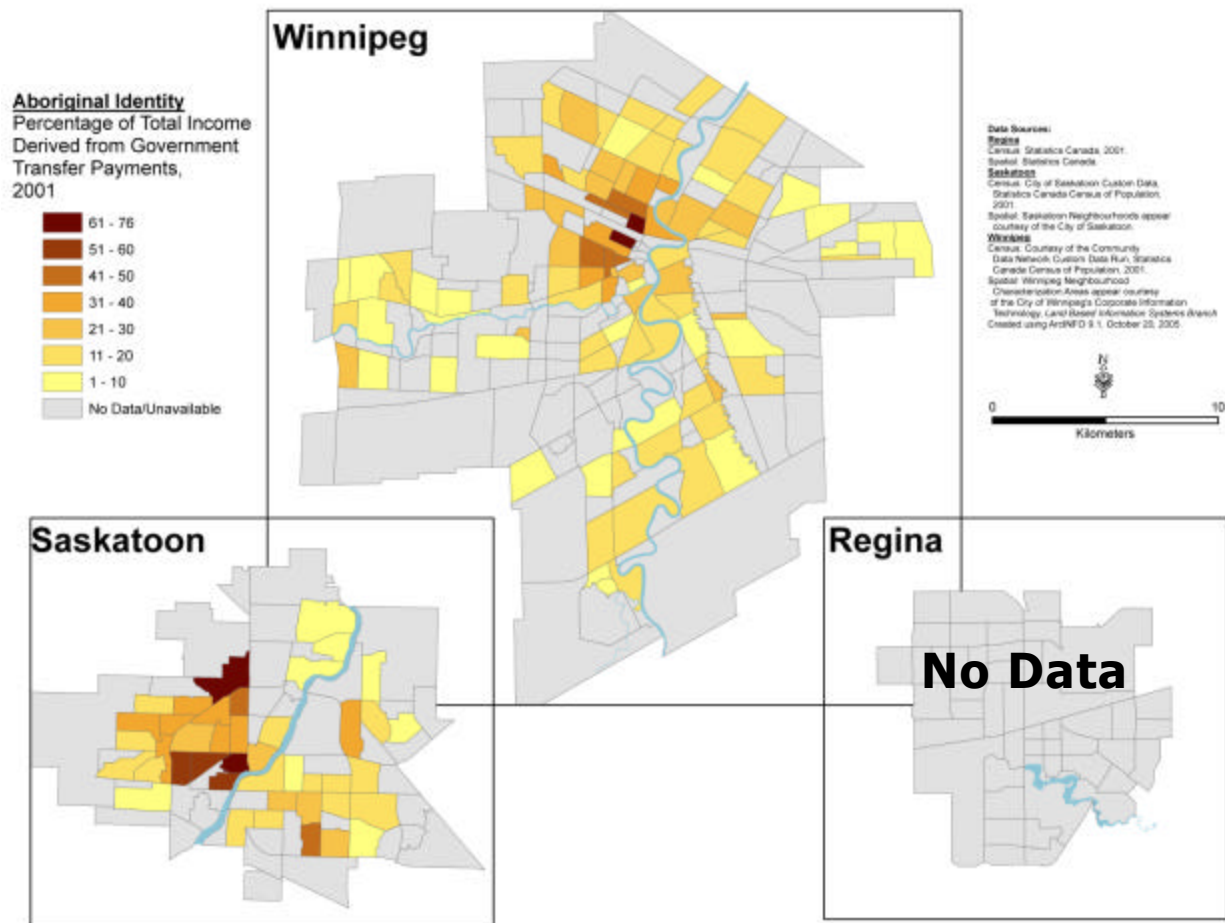


Figure 18

Aboriginal Identity Percentage of One Year Movers, 2001

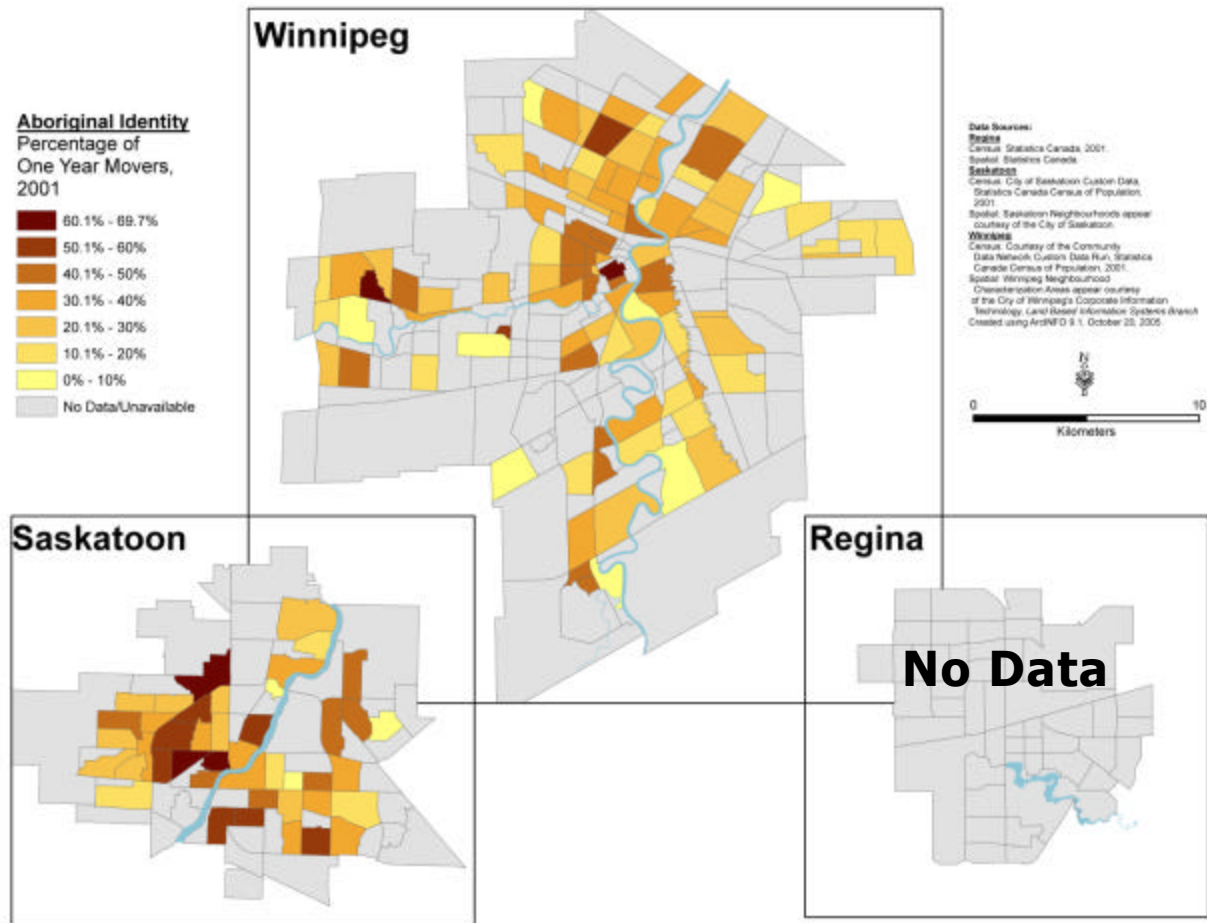
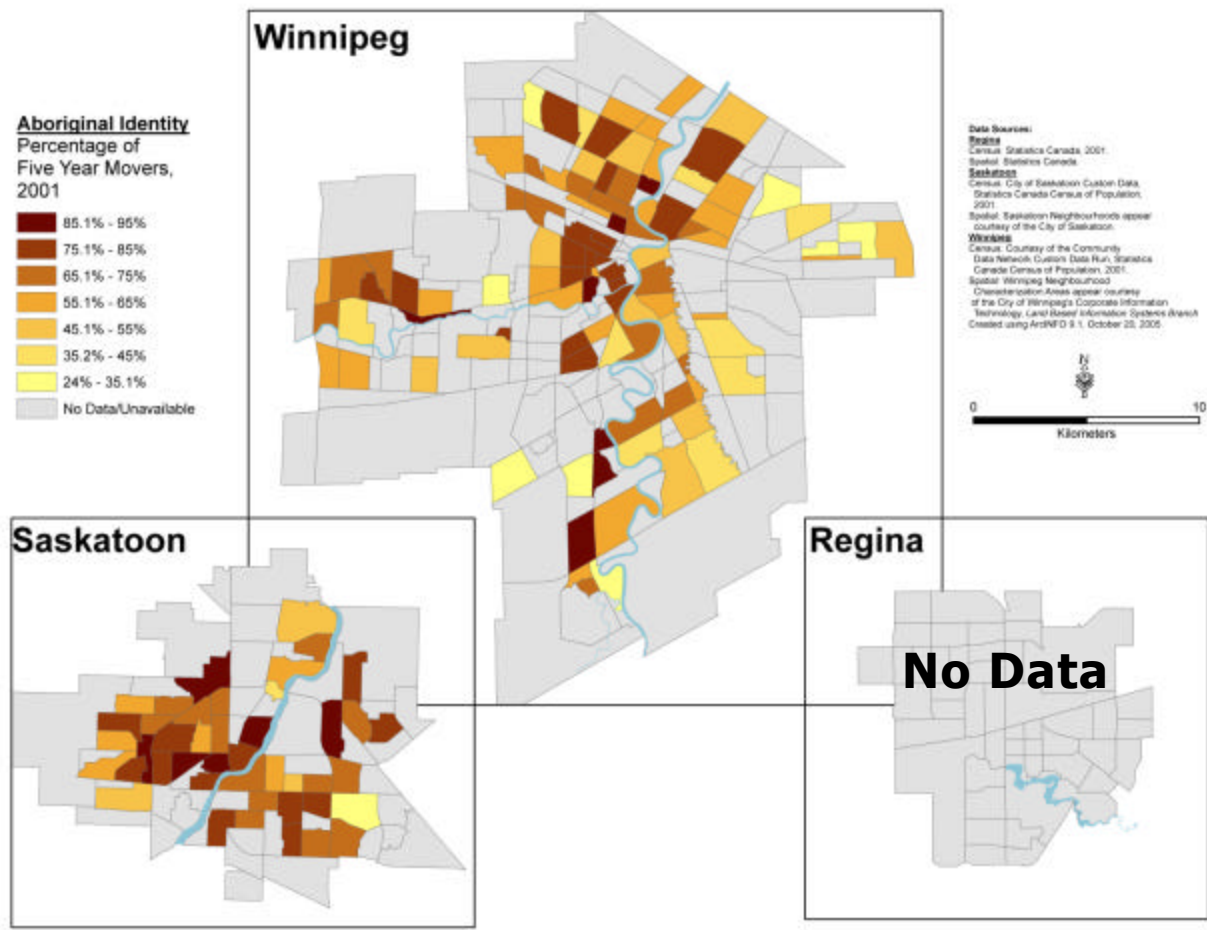


Figure 19

Aboriginal Identity Percentage of Five Year Movers, 2001



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Appendix C Hidden Homelessness: An Overview of Winnipeg, Regina and Saskatoon

The following tables outline the results of the survey based on a comparison of the three Prairie cities included in the study. Information on the sample is presented in relation to demographic and economic characteristics, residential characteristics, reserves, social support, subsidized housing, emergency shelters, organizations and discrimination.

Demographic and Economic Characteristics

	Winnipeg % (n)	Regina % (n)	Saskatoon % (n)	Total % (n)
Gender				
<i>Male</i>	60.8 (48)	32.0 (8)	64.0 (16)	55.8 (72)
<i>Female</i>	39.2 (31)	68.0 (17)	36.0 (9)	44.2 (57)
Age (years)				
17-19	6.4 (5)	16.0 (4)	6.7 (1)	8.5 (10)
20-29	39.7 (31)	44.0 (11)	26.7 (4)	39.0 (46)
30-39	26.9 (21)	24.0 (6)	33.3 (5)	27.1 (32)
40+	26.9 (21)	16.0 (4)	33.3 (5)	25.4 (30)
Aboriginal Identity				
<i>First Nations</i>	77.2 (61)	40.0 (10)	87.0 (20)	71.7 (91)
<i>Métis</i>	22.8 (18)	60.0 (15)	13.0 (3)	28.3 (36)
First Nations				
<i>Status</i>	91.9 (57)	80.0 (8)	100.0 (21)	92.5 (86)
<i>Non-Status</i>	8.1 (5)	20.0 (2)	.0 (0)	7.5 (7)
First Language				
<i>English</i>	76.3 (58)	75.0 (18)	66.7 (16)	74.2 (92)
<i>Cree</i>	7.9 (6)	12.5 (3)	33.3 (8)	13.7 (17)
<i>Ojibway</i>	9.2 (7)	8.3 (2)	.0 (0)	7.3 (9)
<i>Seau</i>	6.6 (5)	4.2 (1)	.0 (0)	4.8 (6)
Employment Status				
<i>Employed*</i>	14.5 (11)	13.0 (3)	16.0 (4)	14.5 (18)
<i>Unemployed**</i>	77.6 (59)	39.1 (9)	84.0 (21)	71.7 (89)
<i>Student</i>	7.9 (6)	47.8 (11)	.0 (0)	13.7 (17)
Education Level				
<i>Grade 8 or less</i>	22.6 (14)	31.8 (7)	23.8 (5)	24.8 (26)
<i>Grade 9-12</i>	67.7 (42)	59.1 (13)	57.1 (12)	63.8 (67)
<i>> Grade 12</i>	9.7 (6)	9.1 (2)	19.0 (4)	11.4 (12)
Annual Income				
<i>No Income</i>	21.1 (12)	21.1 (4)	15.0 (3)	19.8 (19)
<i><\$10,000</i>	57.9 (33)	36.8 (7)	65.0 (13)	55.2 (53)
<i><\$20,000</i>	7.0 (4)	31.6 (6)	20.0 (4)	14.6 (14)
<i>> \$20,000</i>	14.0 (8)	10.5 (2)	.0 (0)	10.4 (10)
Economic Future				
<i>Much better</i>	31.7 (19)	35.0 (7)	23.8 (5)	30.7 (31)
<i>Slightly better</i>	45.0 (27)	20.0 (4)	9.5 (2)	32.7 (33)
<i>Stay the same</i>	13.3 (8)	25.0 (5)	61.9 (13)	25.7 (26)
<i>Worsen</i>	10.0 (6)	20.0 (4)	4.8 (1)	10.9 (11)

*Includes those in full-time, part-time, casual and seasonal employment.

**Includes the unemployed, homemakers and those looking for work.



Residential Characteristics

	Winnipeg % (n)	Regina % (n)	Saskatoon % (n)	Total % (n)
Number of Accommodations				
1	30.4 (24)	24.0 (6)	24.0 (6)	27.9 (36)
2	32.9 (26)	16.0 (4)	24.0 (6)	27.9 (36)
3 or more	36.7 (29)	60.0 (15)	52.0 (13)	44.2 (57)
Average Length at Each Accommodation				
2 weeks or less	19.2 (15)	17.4 (4)	20.8 (5)	19.2 (24)
0-3 months	21.8 (17)	30.4 (7)	33.3 (8)	25.6 (32)
3-6 months	24.4 (19)	26.1 (6)	25.0 (6)	24.8 (31)
6-12 months	34.6 (27)	26.1 (6)	20.8 (5)	30.4 (38)
Current Type of Shelter				
Housing unit*	73.4 (58)	52.1 (12)	72.0 (18)	69.3 (88)
Single room**	26.5 (21)	47.7 (11)	28.0 (7)	30.8 (39)
Length in Current Temporary Shelter				
2 weeks or less	14.7 (11)	13.6 (3)	24.0 (6)	16.4 (20)
0-3 months	36.0 (27)	22.7 (5)	28.0 (7)	32.0 (39)
3-6 months	21.3 (16)	31.8 (7)	32.0 (8)	25.4 (31)
6-12 months	24.0 (18)	31.8 (7)	16.0 (4)	23.8 (29)
1 year or more	4.0 (3)	.0 (0)	.0 (0)	2.5 (3)
Temporary Shelter Crowded				
Not Crowded	58.3 (42)	30.4 (7)	31.8 (7)	47.9 (56)
Somewhat	25.0 (18)	52.2 (12)	36.4 (8)	32.5 (38)
Very Crowded	16.7 (12)	17.4 (4)	31.8 (7)	19.7 (23)
General Shelter Conditions				
Good	40.3 (31)	37.5 (9)	24.0 (6)	36.5 (48)
Fair	36.4 (28)	50.0 (12)	44.0 (11)	40.5 (51)
Poor	23.4 (18)	12.5 (3)	32.0 (8)	23.0 (29)
Satisfaction with Shelter				
Very Satisfied	15.2 (12)	8.3 (2)	.0 (0)	10.9 (14)
Somewhat	54.4 (43)	58.3 (14)	48.0 (12)	53.9 (69)
Unsatisfied	30.4 (24)	33.3 (8)	52.0 (13)	35.2 (45)
Length of Time in City				
0-3 months	3.9 (3)	4.3 (1)	12.5 (3)	5.7 (7)
3-6 months	3.9 (3)	4.3 (1)	8.3 (2)	4.9 (6)
6-12 months	7.9 (6)	.0 (0)	4.2 (1)	5.7 (7)
1 year or more	84.2 (64)	91.3 (21)	75.0 (18)	83.7 (103)
Plan to Stay Permanently in City				
Yes	86.0 (49)	46.2 (6)	70.6 (12)	77.0 (67)
No	14.0 (8)	53.8 (7)	29.4 (5)	23.0 (20)
Unsure				

*Includes apartments, single-detached housing and row housing.

**Includes rooming houses, single-room occupancy hotels and transitional housing



Reserves

	Winnipeg % (n)	Regina % (n)	Saskatoon % (n)	Total % (n)
Have Lived on Reserve				
	68.8 (53)	47.6 (10)	54.5 (12)	62.5 (75)
<i>No</i>	31.2 (24)	52.4 (11)	45.5 (10)	37.5 (45)
Return to Reserve				
<i>Very Often</i>	7.4 (4)	10.0 (1)	6.7 (1)	7.6 (6)
<i>Often</i>	5.6 (3)	.0 (0)	.0 (0)	3.8 (3)
<i>Somewhat of- ten</i>	22.2 (12)	.0 (0)	13.3 (2)	17.7 (14)
<i>Not Very often</i>	50.0 (27)	70.0 (7)	73.3 (11)	57.0 (45)
<i>Never</i>	14.8 (8)	20.0 (2)	6.7 (1)	13.9 (11)
Receive Financial Assistance from Reserve				
<i>Yes</i>	11.3 (6)	9.1 (1)	8.3 (1)	10.5 (8)
<i>No</i>	88.7 (47)	90.9 (10)	91.7 (11)	89.5 (68)
Involved with Band/Community				
<i>Yes</i>	18.5 (10)	11.1 (1)	25.0 (3)	18.7 (14)
<i>No</i>	81.5 (44)	88.9 (8)	75.0 (9)	81.3 (61)
Live in City Seasonally				
<i>Yes</i>	21.7 (15)	16.7 (3)	9.1 (2)	18.3 (20)
<i>No</i>	78.3 (54)	83.3 (15)	90.9 (20)	81.7 (89)

Social Support

	Winnipeg % (n)	Regina % (n)	Saskatoon % (n)	Total % (n)
Social Support				
<i>Yes</i>	84.6 (66)	70.8 (17)	58.3 (14)	77.0 (97)
<i>No</i>	32.9 (26)	29.2 (7)	41.7 (10)	23.0 (29)
Support of Family				
<i>Yes</i>	78.2 (61)	76.0 (19)	66.7 (16)	75.6 (96)
<i>No</i>	21.8 (17)	24.0 (6)	33.3 (8)	24.4 (31)
<i>Yes</i>	70.7 (53)	75.0 (18)	72.0 (18)	71.8 (89)
<i>No</i>	29.3 (22)	25.0 (6)	28.0 (7)	28.2 (35)
Support of Friends				
<i>Yes</i>	62.8 (49)	64.0 (16)	79.2 (19)	66.1 (84)
<i>No</i>	37.2 (29)	36.0 (9)	20.8 (5)	33.9 (43)
Staying Temporarily with Friends				
<i>Yes</i>	68.5 (50)	75.0 (18)	96.0 (24)	75.4 (92)
<i>No</i>	31.5 (23)	25.0 (6)	4.0 (1)	24.6 (30)
Contribute Financially to Household				
<i>Yes</i>	76.1 (54)	95.8 (23)	83.3 (20)	81.5 (97)
<i>No</i>	23.9 (17)	4.2 (1)	16.7 (4)	18.5 (22)
Hardship if Left Household				
<i>Yes</i>	28.6 (18)	45.8 (11)	43.5 (10)	35.5 (39)
<i>No</i>	71.4 (45)	54.2 (13)	56.5 (13)	64.5 (71)
Contribute to Running of Household				
<i>Yes</i>	47.2 (34)	72.7 (16)	34.8 (8)	49.6 (58)
<i>No</i>	52.8 (38)	27.3 (6)	65.2 (15)	50.4 (59)

Subsidized Housing

	Winnipeg % (n)	Regina % (n)	Saskatoon % (n)	Total % (n)
Have Received Subsidized Housing				
<i>Yes</i>	21.4 (15)	29.2 (7)	20.0 (5)	22.7 (27)
<i>No</i>	78.6 (55)	70.8 (17)	80.0 (20)	77.3 (92)
On a Waiting List				
<i>Yes</i>	15.5 (11)	33.3 (8)	12.0 (3)	18.3 (22)
<i>No</i>	84.5 (60)	66.7 (16)	88.0 (22)	81.7 (98)
<i>Yes</i>	61.9 (26)	75.0 (12)	33.3 (6)	57.9 (44)
<i>No</i>	38.1 (16)	25.0 (4)	66.7 (12)	42.1 (32)
Ever Denied				
<i>Yes</i>	11.9 (7)	27.8 (5)	15.0 (3)	15.5 (15)
<i>No</i>	88.1 (52)	72.2 (13)	85.0 (17)	84.5 (82)
Wait After Applying				
<i>0-3 months</i>	29.4 (10)	33.3 (4)	40.0 (4)	32.1 (18)
<i>3-6 months</i>	17.6 (6)	16.7 (2)	10.0 (1)	16.1 (9)
<i>6-12 months</i>	5.9 (2)	33.3 (4)	30.0 (3)	16.1 (9)
<i>1 year or more</i>	47.1 (16)	16.7 (2)	20.0 (2)	35.7 (20)
Name Ever Dropped or Moved from List				
<i>Yes</i>	11.4 (4)	.0 (0)	12.5 (2)	8.6 (6)
<i>No</i>	88.6 (31)	100.0 (19)	87.5 (14)	91.4 (64)
Barriers to Secure Shelter				
<i>Yes</i>	45.5 (30)	61.9 (13)	80.0 (16)	55.1 (59)
<i>No</i>	54.5 (36)	38.1 (8)	20.0 (4)	44.9 (48)
Preference for Aboriginal Run Housing				
<i>Yes</i>	30.7 (23)	37.5 (9)	59.1 (13)	37.2 (45)
<i>No</i>	69.3 (52)	62.5 (15)	40.9 (9)	62.8 (76)

Emergency Shelter

	Winnipeg % (n)	Regina % (n)	Saskatoon % (n)	Total % (n)
Stayed in Emergency Shelter in Past Year				
<i>Yes</i>	27.4 (20)	40.9 (9)	28.6 (6)	30.2 (35)
<i>No</i>	72.6 (53)	59.1 (13)	71.4 (15)	69.8 (81)
Stayed at Emergency Shelter				
<i>Often</i>	3.4 (1)	9.1 (1)	13.3 (2)	7.3 (4)
<i>Somewhat often</i>	17.2 (5)	36.4 (4)	13.3 (2)	20.0 (11)
			13.3 (2)	29.1 (16)
<i>Almost Never</i>	44.8 (13)	18.2 (2)	60.0 (9)	43.6 (24)
Treated Fairly/With Respect by Staff at Shelter				
<i>Yes</i>	56.7 (17)	70.0 (7)	45.5 (5)	56.9 (29)
<i>No</i>	43.3 (13)	30.0 (3)	54.5 (6)	43.1 (22)
Treated Fairly/With Respect by Others Staying at Shelter				
<i>Yes</i>	66.7 (20)	60.0 (6)	50.0 (6)	61.5 (32)
<i>No</i>	33.3 (10)	40.0 (4)	50.0 (6)	38.5 (20)

Organizations

	Winnipeg % (n)	Regina % (n)	Saskatoon % (n)	Total % (n)
Participate in Organizations				
<i>Yes</i>	56.0 (42)	52.4 (11)	54.5 (12)	55.1 (65)
<i>No</i>	44.0 (33)	47.6 (10)	45.5 (10)	44.9 (53)
Number of Organizations Participating In				
<i>None</i>	2.4 (1)	9.1 (1)	.0 (0)	3.1 (2)
<i>One</i>	59.5 (25)	27.3 (3)	36.4 (4)	50.0 (32)
			45.5 (5)	28.1 (18)
<i>Three or more</i>	14.3 (6)	36.4 (4)	18.2 (2)	18.7 (12)
Participation in Organization				
<i>Very Often</i>	8.9 (4)	27.3 (3)	18.2 (2)	13.4 (9)
<i>Often</i>	33.3 (15)	36.4 (4)	54.5 (6)	37.3 (25)
<i>Somewhat often</i>	46.7 (21)	36.4 (4)	27.3 (3)	41.8 (28)
<i>Not often at all</i>	11.1 (5)	.0 (0)	.0 (0)	7.5 (5)

Discrimination

	Winnipeg % (n)	Regina % (n)	Saskatoon % (n)	Total % (n)
Ever a Victim of Discrimination				
<i>Yes</i>	56.6 (43)	66.7 (16)	64.0 (16)	60.0 (75)
<i>No</i>	43.4 (33)	33.3 (8)	36.0 (9)	40.0 (50)

APPENDIX D: PARTICIPANT COMMENTS

The following are a list comments made by individuals who participated in a series of informal interviews regarding the context of hidden homelessness:

- * Having to stay with family and friends is very hard...no privacy.
- * There are not a lot of resources for single and older women like myself.
- * There is a lot of talent amongst Aboriginal people in the city who do not know how to access the right contacts.
- * There needs to be more groups to offer support to people in the community.
- * We need help and support to deal with peer pressure or with gang violence.
- * I would like to see more opportunities for Aboriginal people to get involved with community activities and groups in their neighbourhoods.
- * I would like to see some type of centre in the central areas of the city to help Aboriginals and new arrivals find decent accommodations and access to financial assistance. Sometimes we can not rent anything other than rooms because we can not afford the damage deposit.
- * There needs to be more support for people who can not speak for themselves, because they do not speak or clearly understand English.
- * I would like to have more support from social services in referrals to landlords.
- * I would like social services to help me secure my own home and have other agencies help me to secure employment.
- * Need more information about service locations and a better orientation to the city.
- * Would like social services to provide greater assistance in locating housing.
- * Need to have better relationships with landlords who are constantly raising rent levels beyond what social assistance covers.
- * I would like to see supportive groups and services, more in-home and outreach services, private and confidential services like counseling and small groups.
- * More activities for different Aboriginal groups, youth, women, and families.
- * The rental cost of housing needs to be made more affordable.
- * Cannot afford decent housing with a minimum wage, part-time job. Even with social assistance.
- * Had applied for housing and was given the run-around. Found it very discouraging.
- * The place where I stay is too small and crowded.

Comments from Survey

The following list contains the comments of participants in the survey. These are the voices of the hidden homeless.

What is the meaning of home to you?

- * My First Nation
- * Home is where someone could relax also to establish a warm and self-confident place in order to feel safe and secure and also to feel confident enough to achieve goals in life.
- * Home cooked meals, The Rez
- * Where you can stay relax do what ever you want, enjoy
- * Where my family grew up
- * Security, can be a lot of things
- * Where my family grew up on the reserve
- * Where you were born and raised
- * Where my family grew up, loved ones in one place, somewhere you can go to get out of the outside environment as long as my family and friends are there
- * No home, you have no relatives, no where to go. A place where the landlord does not discriminate
- * Family
- * A long term place to stay
- * Comfortable and clean
- * Where you are loved and cared for, you or one another
- * Where I eat and sleep
- * A place to feel comfortable with family
- * Safe
- * To have a secure home a nice home a place where there are no bugs a roof over your head.
- * Safe
- * Wife and children
- * Comfortable home, home in a better area
- * Permanent residence
- * Nice warm bed, roof over your head, clothing food.
- * Love, care, responsible
- * Having a stable place to live
- * Where there is no drinking/violence
- * Safe place, my own home, yard in a good neighbourhood

- * Shelter
- * Happy family
- * A place where you can always have a feeling of security. A place that is yours. Somewhere you can go home to anytime. Somewhere you can feel safe and not having to worry about violence. A place where you where you won't get kicked out on the street. * Home is supposed to be a safe place where you can go. A home is supposed to be yours and it is supposed to be a special place where you can have some privacy. It's supposed to be your temple.
- * A place that belongs to me, a safe haven.
- * Having a place to keep your stuff safe/ with family, somewhere comfortable
- * My own place
- * A safe place, a comfort zone.
- * A place that you have people around you that love you, but both my parents are dead
- * My own place with my own belongings
- * A house where you live everyday with your family, ie spouse, kids sleep & eat.
- * Lovable & respect
- * Shelter for me and my family. A place to keep warm.
- * Home is a place where you can live and be yourself and feel comfortable.
- * A place that is safe, comfortable. Somewhere I can raise my child.
- * A place of safety and comfort.
- * A permanent place of residence, somewhere that makes you feel safe, stable and secure.
- * Somewhere you feel safe and secure.
- * Somewhere to go and have stability.
- * Someplace that you can call yours, a place where your stuff is. Also a place where you feel comfortable. Some place that you pay for.
- * A safe place which is yours where you live with your children
- * A comfortable, warm, cozy place with a low stress environment, privacy and a place that is your space.
- * The meaning of my home would be just to have your name on a rent receipt and your own mail...just your name on it for that address
- * Home is somewhere you could relax, also to help establish a warm self-confident place. * In order to feel safe and secure and also to feel confident enough to achieve goals in life
- * A roof over my head and a place to sleep
- * A sense of belonging some place safe and warm somewhere so I can have a good place to eat, and lay my head.
- * My home here is perfectly fine (YWCA transitional shelter-Regina)
- * Stereotypes, hopeless, helpless
- * Comfort and security
- * A place to stay, comfortable, relaxing clean. And affordable on a fixed income, ie. Social assistance
- * Home is a shelter/a place to go

- * A safe place where friends and family can come to see me and be able to enjoy the basic comforts, (hot water, good plumbing, heat security, laundry).
- * Renting an apartment for around \$395.00
- * Renting an apartment for around \$385.00
- * A place I can say is my home, place of residence
- * A home for me would be someplace where I can rest and forget about the world and my problems.
- * It would be a place where I don't have to listen to other people's problems for a while.
- * A home is where you can sleep, eat, even just sit down and relax and not having being told to leave and look for someplace else to go
- * Someplace comfortable, safe.
- * A place to feel comfort, security
- * A nice house, nice furniture, a car, my boyfriend, daughter, pets, clean house.
- * A proper place to call home.
- * Being left out in the cold with nowhere to go
- * A home is a warm place with furniture, a bed, a couch etc.
- * Home is where you eat, sleep and be with your family of choice.
- * Home is a meaning where you feel secure and at peace.
- * A place for myself to kick off my shoes and kick back and do as I please.
- * A place where you are supposed to feel comfortable without any worries such as decent living conditions (i.e. leakage problems, rats or mice infestations, etc.)
- * Where there's a place you can feel comfortable with family and friends, place I can sleep, eat etc..
- * Home for me is where the heart is at and right now that is nowhere so I am homeless.
- * I feel safe

Do you receive financial assistance from your reserve? If yes, what is the assistance related to?

- * Too lengthy of a wait, had to move on....
- * Medical

In what way are you involved with your band/community?

- * Family, feast, Bingo, some employment
- * My family members (sisters, brother and so on) run it
- * Voting on reserve

Why do you live in Winnipeg on a seasonal basis?

- * Friends and family
- * Go to family in winter

How do you contribute to the household?

- * No, because I need the money for my move.
- * Child care, phone service in my name
- * Groceries, chores
- * Groceries
- * Just financially when I can
- * One reason I can't move out welfare pays only enough for me to contribute to food, leaving me little chance to save and move out
- * Food, phone bill
- * Cleaning, cooking, babysitting and laundry
- * Groceries, cable
- * I clean up everyday and watch the children while the mom goes out all night. I also get food requisitions and I'm like the main supplier for food. I would also sell myself for sexual favours just to get money for food, smokes and whatever else we needed.

In what way do you contribute to the running of the household? (House repairs, childcare, etc)

- * When my cousin needs help if I have time when not looking for work
- * Chores
- * When I get a chance to
- * Childcare
- * Basic repairs
- * Clean and cook
- * Groceries, laundry

When applying for a housing subsidy, were you treated fairly and with respect?

- * Stereotyped from government workers
- * No, the suite was poorly kept, holes in the walls, moldy smell
- * No furniture advance e
- * Prejudice cause no job –welfare
- * They just wanted to get rid of us you know how they are as long as there doing good they don't give a dam about us
- * Treated unfairly -rejected because of discrimination
- * I applied for subsidized housing but got bumped for people who were working
- * I don't know how to go about it, and I just never hear back form the housing company
- * Wpg regional housing takes forever to answer back 6 months to have first interview, treated fairly when I had a job
- * They were quick to respond waited about a month

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- * They treated me fairly and asked reasonable questions
 - * As long as I met welfare criteria
 - * I was listened to by the person assisting me about my situation
 - * Yes, the staff treated me nice by being honest about no available units and long waiting lists
 - * Yes, racial discrimination
 - * No, mean caretakers and landlords
 - * Regina housing does have an apartment complex but there's only one in the city and it's still not affordable. I felt that they didn't want to look at a person who was on social assistance they even explained that it was a point system for instance; preference would be given to those who were students or who had a job.
 - * I have never applied because they give priority to people with children and families, never applied too worried about not getting in and getting my hopes up.
 - * Being a single parent with a child is hard to get a house right away because everyone thinks that it is easy to stay with friends and family. This is why I am at the bottom of the waiting list.
 - * All of the subsidy housing programs you have to get a job and not social services, I think this is wrong. They handed out forms and prefer you to have a job not be on social services, some people do have disabilities and little children and should be allowed to get these housing units as well and not be treated differently. With my eldest son, (I live now) till I apply for low rental which is hard to get around Regina. Most low rentals you can't get if you are on social assistance, and the houses that are for rent is too high and the house is run down (two answers combined here)

Why have you been denied subsidized housing?

- * Lost my job
- * Every 6 months you must reapply (Dakota Ojibwa Tribal council) Hard to have an address on the application form. Had kids with me when applying but had a house on the reserve so I was not a priority.
- * Had problems with wpg housing in the past, bad tenants list
- * Yes because of my last name
- * Never applied because I was alone
- * (barrier) It took so long for them to give me a rent form, knowing that I had to move.
- * Yes, being too young, I am 18 now I have been on my own since 13.
- * Because I wasn't Métis
- * I was on social assistance and I'm a single mom
- * Only one dependent, people with 2 or more kids and whose parents are working were picked over me.
- * No good references
- * They needed families with younger children

What were the reasons that your name has been removed, or moved further down on the subsidy housing waiting list?

- * No calls back so I gave up
- * Change of address, lost application in office
- * Maybe from my nagging at them I expected quicker results

In general, do you experience any barriers when trying to secure shelter?

- * No damage deposit, rotten caretakers who don't like you
- * References
- * Mostly because I am native they look at me and think I am a bad person
- * Son is not young enough because he is over 18
- * Drugs and alcohol
- * References, they are no good
- * I have no references, some landlords are hidden racial people
- * Rent damage deposit, hook ups
- * I only get \$ 210
- * I never had the money for damage deposits
- * No damage deposit, social services letter of guarantee is not really appreciated by landlords and most are racist on some level
- * Because I'm native I often feel caretakers are very cautious to rent to me. Look at me and I feel (very often) that they are judging me
- * No damage deposit
- * No cash deposit
- * No damage deposit
- * I have three small children and sometimes they damage the house an drugs and I can't afford to fix it or wash it
- * No damage deposit a landlord blacklisted me because my house where I was staying with my step mom was broken into and the window got smashed. He wanted us to pay for it
- * No damage deposit, bad tenants list, no furniture
- * Past evictions, security, bad tenants list, not enough money
- * Financial, unemployed and on SA and young and Aboriginal
- * Shortage of money
- * Bad tenants list no damage deposit, alcohol caused me to be evicted before
- * Damage deposit. Landlords ask you if you are well enough worry about you cooking at night
- * No damage deposit. First come first serve basis, discrimination, racist attitudes
- * Just no damage deposit
- * No damage deposit

- * My criminal record, my past as a tenant, my appearance (rough looking native man with tattoos) obviously the mistrust is threat the first meet, over the phone everything was all good though
- * No money, lack of motivation, feeling down don't feel like doing anything
- * Can't go home late at night
- * Yes, but I keep things to myself
- * References and bad tenants list
- * Only because our paychecks don't fall at the right time
- * Had to change worker, she was very rude and ignorant
- * Shortage of money
- * I was denied subsidized housing because my partner owed money, need money for damage deposit to secure housing
- * Young, Aboriginal, roommates, no subsidized housing for single women with no dependents
- * People out there that are racist and judgmental landlords

Why or why not do you have a preference for Aboriginal run housing organizations?

- * Only know of one, never applied heard they were expensive
- * A feeling of belonging instead if discriminated
- * All housing organizations seem to have something wrong, low efficiency
- * Have not done any research
- * I really don't think anyone cares, just out for themselves 1
- * Yes, they are more biased
- * Yes, more jobs more natives
- * They look after your problems with more care
- * Yes, run by aboriginals who know about racism and poverty
- * Yes, run by aboriginal who know about rage and poverty
- * Yes, they seem to understand our situation more
- * No, I think they are just as lazy with the repair work as any other housing organization. * If there is ever a complaint against you like form a white neighbour they feel they have to keep you down to impress them
- * Never used one
- * I would want this simply because natives, some natives know what it is, how hard it is to be native
- * No, the one that treats with the most respect and wants to help you
- * Signing up for SA was enough
- * Yes, easier to get placed into a house, don't have to be exposed to racism
- * Just never tried
- * Never heard of them

- * I think that some low rentals that belong to reserves should also give others the opportunity rather than if they belong to a reserve or not
- * Just whatever is available I move in
- * Fear too long of a waiting list because I am single those with kids would come first
- * Friendly atmosphere
- * I would rather give my money to an Aboriginal run housing than to a white slum landlord
- * No, I see myself as an equal person so I don't have a preference
- * Doesn't make a difference or matter
- * Well, when it comes to family, Aboriginal people tend to listen and understand each other
- * I am aboriginal and I find I have better luck with finding decent housing with aboriginal orgs
- * I think everybody can treat you the same
- * I prefer to Aboriginal owned and operated
- * Waiting lists too long
- * Yes, beneficial to aboriginal families, help people get into proper homes, respect the home if its clean, should have single parent home to help parents cope, should have homes for mentally challenged people, should have counselors on site support staff
- * Yes I prefer Aboriginal run because I don't like government handouts
- * Yes, safer, more comfortable with our own people
- * No, too many gangs in that area
- * I don't know about them
- * Never heard of them
- * Yes, others are too nosey
- * Yes, Aboriginals are nicer than white people
- * Doesn't matter
- * Yes, my baby is treaty and I want her to know her background and culture
- * Heard bad things about them
- * Doesn't matter as long as its quiet and clean
- * I will take anything offered
- * Yes, friendly atmosphere
- * No, I don't qualify to live in them so it doesn't matter to me
- * No, corruption
- * Yes, to be understood, treated fairly

Has EIA ever posed a barrier for you when trying to improve your situation?

- * Had no job experience and no training program they are for 18-25 years old I don't fit
- * Saying I was never allowed what I am entitled
- * It took so long for them to give me a rent form, knowing that I had to move

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- * Yes, all the time, some workers go by the book despite reason, some are racist, and some don't give a fuck one way or the other
 - * If you don't have a roof over your head how can you look for work or even maintain the job
 - * They act like the money is coming out of their pockets. Going to school for training would not help for accommodation (cost or tuition or nothing). For crying out loud, if we didn't need money we would not be going to social assistance and I often feel that you are not worthy of them renting to you
 - * Feels cheap brings me down
 - * Landlords don't like social assistance guarantees of damage deposit
 - * No support in trying to make things better for myself
 - * Wouldn't subsidize rent when employed
 - * Except only \$275.00 for a run down houses where they put me
 - * Social services does not help too much with bills or enough rent. Landlords take advantage of damage deposits and claim the deposit rather if the house was not damaged or they take the deposit for fixing the house and cleaning it up
 - * Depends who you talk to, prevented from going to school assumed I was with child in order to not get a job
 - * I was charged for a broken window that was already broken. Not listening to what I am saying and telling me what I need
 - * When I get a job somehow I end up owing them money and have to pay it back when I'm just starting out, kind of struggling for my first paycheck or I get cut off right away and have to go a full month struggling
 - * They don't allow enough rent, always holding your check. Constantly accusing you of not trying to get ahead, denying phone calls
 - * It seem to me that people who do the renting look down at you for being on assistance
 - * Steady employment, legal problems interfered with work
 - * Yes, required a job search every week when I only have grade 8 education with minimal skills, either meet requirement or get cut off
 - * Yes, cannot afford to move to a decent neighbourhood
 - * No damage deposit but SA gave me a second opportunity I had to pay them back after the first check. They also impose sanctions, ie % taken off check to go to work
 - * I was once asked to leave and was given no notice.
 - * Yes, I was denied
 - * They try so hard to make it unpleasant than it really is, you more time trying to get help than actually getting it
 - * Yes, because they won't give me a damage deposit
 - * Yes, got to get a job and they put me on EIA on a month basis
 - * Sometimes they put a hold on my check
 - * They separated my cheques because I wouldn't go to solvent abuse courses
 - * Yes, being on welfare is a hindrance, when applying for work it's a stigma

-
- * My first worker belittled but my present worker is really good. Force you into a minimum wage job, not giving a damage deposit, being denied clothing for your family, gets worked out if you talk to the right people
 - * Steady employment, legal problems interfered with work
 - * Need orthopedic shoes
 - * Yes, denied
 - * Yes, no help with furniture
 - * Being too young they think I could be doing something else finding money other ways

If you used an emergency shelter in the past year, do you feel that you were treated fairly and with respect by staff members?

- * Try not to go there
- * Very supportive and helpful
- * Chores were given, some people were angry about that, I appreciated it, just like at home, you help out
- * Staff are very supportive
- * The staff didn't take time to listen to me
- * They were kind, gentle caring people who help people in times of trouble
- * I used emergency shelters to have a place to sleep except for the MSP it is too noisy
- * People that work there are evil
- * No, because I went to a shelter for young men and at the time I had my son and they wouldn't accept me because I had him with me, now whats up with that. Please tell me
- * Yes and no. Because there are people who genuinely care but other people don't, they just do their job. Some are racist with assumptions and stereotypes of native people
- * I was on methadone so eventually they kicked me out

If you used an emergency shelter in the past year, do you feel that you were treated fairly and with respect by members of the community who were also staying the shelter?

- * Yes we were in the same boat and were there for each other
- * Not as supportive as the staff
- * Everyone got along fine, no-one was fighting or yelling at each other
- * Really nice friendly people
- * We all were in the same shoe a lot of these people I already know or are related to them
- * Other places (other than the YWCA) I was treated differently because I wasn't on welfare no income coming in at all
- * Yes, they couldn't say nothing they had to stay there too

What does social support mean for you?

- * Family and friends, utilize their accommodations
- * Social support helps motivate me to work, to pick myself up when people put me down, to keep going on with life, even when I don't want to anymore
- * It means that assistance should be given, enough rent, enough basic allowance and becoming more aware of certain programs that should be given to get you self-sufficient
- * It means co-dependency
- * Accessibility to resources within the community whether it be friend's family or food banks
- * A way to survive, not live
- * For me it would have to be somebody who didn't judge me. Someone who wants me to do good and gives me a little push or motivation to get me started
- * Social support means to me that there is support such as food banks, friend, family and shelters
- * I don't know, don't get any except from daughter once in a while
- * That they look at your issues holistically, our situation with more compassion and not just another number
- * Like I have people who help me out in all ways shelter food if I need it I have a few positive friends who I look up to especially my Kokum (grandmother)
- * My family helping with food and job searches
- * Someone I can go to when I am not doing so great
- * Family and friends helping me to live
- * Friends and family
- * Having help to make a better life and community around you
- * Getting health needs met
- * For myself, it means caring mostly
- * Relief and help
- * Being or getting help
- * Help you feed your kids when you can't
- * Your helped out time to time with a check for your family
- * Support from family
- * Good
- * To better ourselves to get a job and housing
- * For myself, it means caring mostly
- * When I can't pay my own way someone comes and bails me out

In what ways does your family support you?

- * Financially, morally
- * They let me bunk (stay) at their place and feel welcome

- * Financially to buy things when low on dollars
- * Somewhere to stay can ask them for things I need
- * Mother gives advice
- * Emotionally and financially
- * Shelter wise
- * Emotional
- * They take time to say hi and ask how everything is. I have my honesty, so they lend me money when they have it
- * No, not close to them
- * They say keep up the good work I love you and have a safe and good day
- * With food if I need it a cigarette sometimes my Kokum helps me keep my faith traditional
- * When I need help they are there for me
- * Lots of help/love
- * They congratulate me on my successes, tell me about different opportunities I might be interested in
- * Food and shelter
- * No family expect one brother and he has a family, I am a grown man and pride gets in the way
- * Encouragement
- * They take me in when nobody else will

How do you have the support of friends?

- * With laundry, I go over with a couple of loads
- * They give me things here and there, pots, pans, blankets, etc....for when I do find a place
- * Get back into school, and whatever programs are out there
- * It is just asking for it, feel guilty I try to help others too
- * Information on various programs, trying to get into school
- * Shelter
- * Coffee, communication, information on programs, food banks for bread
- * Talking to me, walk around have coffee
- * There for me
- * They have understanding of what it takes to be me. They always ask me to stay with them they ask me to hang around they tell me things about jobs and ways to make cash, sometimes quick cash
- * Just being there in time of need
- * When I need help they are there when I need it
- * They help with day to day things
- * Well they give me a meal or a place to stay every now and then

* I stay with friends when they can help me they do. I don't like looking like a bum. If I couldn't get paid for school, I'd be in big trouble

How do you not have the support of friends?

- * Money
- * Never asked

If you do not participate in any organizations, why not?

- * Aid Saskatoon, they treat me like a human
- * I try to be self sufficient on my own
- * Addictions, drug and alcohol
- * Pride-example, not being able to admit I can't take care of myself
- * Not enough research
- * Never thought of it, or didn't know
- * Not like too much people
- * My drug habit constrains me
- * Not aware of a lot of them, when aware too embarrassed to ask for help, did not want to go through the discrimination
- * Grandchildren keep me busy
- * Don't know
- * Lack of transportation and self-confidence
- * I don't have the time single mom going to school full time
- * Have children at home
- * I'm always looking for work or taking care of needs that I have to fill right now so I have a sense of stability. In the future I'd like to be part of an organization
- * I am more involved in my school work and my son is 8 years old
- * Don't have time for everything
- * Health reasons
- * Never thought about it
- * No time my son needs medical attention all the time, in remission of cancer
- * Don't know of any
- * Don't really associate
- * Have children at home
- * Too busy, my only income is PTA and if I don't keep up with my studies I'll get kicked out and then what

What are some of the most common examples of being a treated with discrimination?

- * Being native

- * The looks, treated as an outsider when your trying your best to fit in, job situations
- * Being passed over even though its clear that I'm next in line, people call me names, people throw bottles at me when they are driving by in their vehicles. I guess I can go on and on but this won't change anything, not in this life
- * I find it hard to receive help from any source if you are Aboriginal. They think oh great another bum looking for a handout, yet 90% of the time, they just need some support to get them back on the straight and narrow
- * Being looked down on, seeing the hatred of people in their eyes toward you, almost like your subhuman
- * Authority figures giving you the short end of the stick
- * When you are in a store floor walkers follow you around thinking you are trying to steal, jobs racist employers
- * Gender, culture, age
- * Racial discrimination, cause when we look for homes the white people get them before us
- * Bus rides, people that your drunk all the time or every Indian drinks, I don't
- * Some of the people in general public and police
- * Not really, except self-esteem
- * Being native, being a woman , being single and pretty, being a call girl
- * Applying for a job. I dressed nice and a white guy said we do not hire natives and I told him to shove his job up his ass, there will be a lot of people who will hire me
- * When I go for a job interview, I have experience, but I feel like I'm disadvantaged at the fact that I am aboriginal . Sometimes when I walk down the street being a native person who is female people think that I'm a prostitute and yet I am just walking to the store. Being in a store, I get treated like a thief.
- * I felt welfare made me feel bad for living. Even suicide thoughts but family and friends helped me through, being treated like an outcast, being ignored
- * Judged for how you appear (that's my biggest beef)
- * In stores, treated like a thief. Cops treat me like a suspect or criminal because a lot of natives are on the street I'm associated with a lot, I get looked a like a gutter creature, * Prospective employers, see my tattoos and then doubt my skills
- * Being native!! Big issue, being a single mom, having too many kids, no references
- * Winnipeg police (# 1 on my list) correctional officers, the majority of them use derogatory comments, people in general, by my own people
- * Discrimination, don't want to rent to me because I have two brown kids
- * Gang unit, I have long hair and am stereotyped by police
- * I try to phone about a place they told me "no" because I was on SA and a girl and they hung up on me.
- * Being Indian
- * In the past 4 years I have been treated with discrimination because of being a Métis single parent. A short story to explain... I found a part time job last year to

make ends meet. I was waiting for a bus to take me to work when two police officers pulled up and asked me what I was doing? I told them I was waiting for a bus to go to work. They asked who I was working for, which was a cleaning company and they asked my boss's name. After that they pulled way and parked across the street to make sure I got on the bus. I couldn't believe it and I was hurt. They thought I was working girl and because of being a half-breed waiting for my ride, all I did that night was cry because I was cleaning toilets to get extra money but being accused of being a hooker.

- * Cars follow you and stereotype you as a prostitute
- * Everyone, in Ontario was accused of buying hairspray for the wrong reason at age 15
- * Treated stereotypically as a prostitute
- * People think I am a "working girl" I get solicited
- * The people seem very fed up and rude. They also assume that we are all just scrubs and hopeless so they treat us like garbage
- * Housing- they asked questions of the past i.e. where you have lived. I have lived in not in decent places, ask for a dresser they put in a couple of nails in the walls. They don't ask for a reference, they know what to expect
- * Racism
- * At school, white kids calling me "jigaboo" and being told to stay away because I wasn't married
- * They see an Indian and think all Indians are the same, its like Indians and cowboys I just say there not worth it white shit its like there shit don't stink
- * Put down for being "native"
- * Looked down upon for being a recovering addict (drug)
- * White people giving me attitude, don't show respect, bad tone
- * I get looks because I am not very attractive, weight problem and being native
- * Not getting jobs because of being Aboriginal, being called names
- * Older sister takes my money and sells my food vouchers
- * Racist remarks
- * Being watched as if I am going to do something when they try to deny me, being brushed off, being looked at what I wear and being asked why I got nice shoes and clothing
- * By welfare
- * Cops stop me because of the way I dress and look, you fit the profile
- * Customer service, government services
- * Insecurity, stereotyping, worried about racism, lack of education
- * Looking for an apartment landlords look at you because you are young and Aboriginal and they assume you want to party. In all actuality I have a job
- * Basically, judgmental, people don't understand your morals, judge you by the way you look especially when I was younger
- * Kicked out of homes and left alone on the streets

If unemployed, do you feel there are barriers in finding employment at the present time? If yes, what are the barriers?

- * Yes, people don't want someone with no experience, and there are people who discriminate
- * Addictions, drugs
- * No transportation to job sites can't afford a bus pass and eat at the same time have to sacrifice bus pass to eat during the month 122 being native is a big one
- * My drug /alcohol habit
- * Lack of references and lack of experience
- * Doing time
- * No jobs in Sask unless you have a degree
- * Being native, discrimination
- * No grade 12 certificate
- * Race, female
- * Disability due to past injuries
- * Racial issues
- * Steel toed boots and housing
- * When you find a minimum wage job they hire you for 6 months, later they let you go so they don't have to give you a raise or benefits
- * Yes, there is just a lot of discrimination in this city, most won't hire you cause of your appearances
- * No laundry services and no transportation
- * Yes, because I'm native they feel I will let them down or automatically think I have a criminal record and try to push me to admit I do
- * I feel that I would be discriminated, I feel that I have not tried have been a mom most of my life and in school
- * School, lack of education
- * Health
- * Laziness, medical condition
- * Where do I apply for instance?
- * No resumes poor work history
- * Yes, being an Aboriginal, not having proper work skills, no education, only getting temporary work
- * Yes, being a single father, raising an 18 month old child
- * Lack of experience, transportation
- * Yes, no grade 12, native, recovering drug addict

What changes would you like to see as a result of this study?

- * Need a lot of stuff for this city. When they come from the reserve people come to see me for help-we need to provide them with information
- * More affordable housing, better housing for single people rather than one room housing and shared washrooms, kitchen facilities
- * More Aboriginal housing

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- * More support from off reserve
 - * Urban reserve such as Saskatoon
 - * Higher shelter support for housing. People come off the reserve and have fear and low communication skills, low self-esteem
 - * We need to be stabilized medically. I am without family doctor or support, I feel depressed
 - * See more housing for Aboriginals
 - * Improvement
 - * Just to give living conditions more respect as you would give an elder
 - * More friendly people
 - * Better rates for accommodations, tell EIA to raise rent
 - * Help
 - * To have more housing and jobs for our people instead of rooming houses and hotels which is bad for us and thinking its OK
 - * Better treatment for Aboriginals, stop stereo-typing and racism
 - * Better housing and honest landlord
 - * This survey brings out a lot of answers, more programs are needed that don't cost money to get into
 - * More and better housing
 - * Better housing
 - * To make welfare more fair for people
 - * More shelters, out of the elements and more respect for the homeless
 - * Help people, get more people into different programs
 - * Easier access to housing
 - * Emphasize and eliminate racism, raise the rent in this area, because the rent is so cheap anyone can move in – drug dealers, alcoholics etc...
 - * Better housing more benefits for people
 - * Better treatment from welfare and housing orgs
 - * More employment, training programs, better housing
 - * See more housing for Aboriginals
 - * Better housing for disabled people
 - * Better living condition
 - * Better and equal access to services

Is there anything else you think is important with respect to the issues and topics we covered today?

- * More programs, programs that don't cost money to get into
- * We need cheaper housing for singles and families
- * Everybody should have a safe place to call own home. People should not be living on the street no matter what. If there wasn't so much racism and/or stereotype towards each other then everyone can be safe in their "own" homes.

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- * Need more transitional housing for youth to help them get out of unhealthy homes. Social Services need to change the way they deal with Aboriginal people.
 - * If I don't do anything it will not improve. Men have pride, don't want to take help when they know that they need it. Agencies should be discreet and compensate for this.
 - * What about values?
 - * Landlord's need to stop renting out slum houses. They should be up to standards.
 - * I'm just glad to live in the best country in the world
 - * Not everybody is treated the same
 - * I think that subsidized housing should be more accessible to single people with no dependents. Like I don't have children because I grew up struggling. I don't want that for my family.
 - * Enough is enough. You can't find a home for \$365.00 for a single parent with one child. You can't pay all your bills with just \$178.00 when your energy bill can be \$200.00. It is hard to stay in school with this still going on.
 - * Dealing with street people, I feel heard from this survey
 - * Think the survey was very good and important that the government should be dealing with these issues.
 - * Good cheap affordable housing. More training to get off assistance but it all goes back to cheap, affordable housing.
 - * For homeless people, there should be a shelter
 - * To get affordable housing
 - * These kinds of surveys where people can voice their opinions
 - * Poverty, racism, and bad cops
 - * Changes in poverty and racism
 - * They should have places where rent included power, water etc...in one sum so that the bottom line is known
 - * There are a lot of homeless people and I think that the government should really think about the way these people live. Personally I think its bullshit
 - * For people to listen
 - * Good survey
 - * They need to up the rent and basic allowance
 - * I think the most important issue would be decent living conditions. People wouldn't have medical problems from the moldy (not maintained), animal infestations
 - * Giving me this info will come in handy for people who need some info on where to go and how to go about it, you know what I mean. Thank you for giving me this info, I can share it with friends and family
 - * Stop racism and discrimination God created people just as he created flowers, many beautiful flowers

What changes would like to see as a result of the study?

- * Better housing
- * More and better housing
- * This survey brings out a lot of answers
- * More housing, shelters and respect
- * The way the government addresses the issue of homelessness and more shelters in Regina
- * I would like to see housing better for teens who don't have any support, get houses, good clean safe housing
- * I hope that everyone can have a decent home to live in and not feel homeless
- * Jobs for people (youth) who get out of jail recently
- * Make more places into homeless shelters. Make the public know more about shelters
- * No, I just hope that the government money from taxes goes where it is supposed to go.
- * More homes
- * More affordable decent houses to live in. Less people living in one house, ie. 3 families in one house.
- * More programs for youth
- * Social Assistance treating everybody fairly and realizing that if we didn't need the money or help we probably would not be coming to them.
- * I would like to see more subsidized housing because of long waiting lists and slum houses.
- * Better housing, more affordable.
- * For other people to see how hard it is to succeed.
- * Better housing
- * More housing and to be treated equal, not being judged
- * Lower costs of housing for low-income families
- * More opportunities for the homeless. I would like more homeless family out-reaches
- * A little more money for housing
- * Better housing, social services should give more for rent and food. More with today's prices.
- * Cheaper housing
- * I would like to see homelessness abolished, and more centers to access food.
- * About social assistance, I wish they could help me or anyone more, I only get a little like that a week
- * I would like to see a homeless shelter in Saskatoon
- * I'd like to see everyone, regardless of race at least have a roof over their head since I'm on the verge of being homeless myself.
- * More housing, more assistance, less discrimination, more programming/services
- * Changes in social assistance
- * Easier access to community resources and more government help

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- * Changes in poverty, racism and bad cops
 - * Changes in poverty and racism
 - * Better housing and better apartments
 - * Some action some kind of change for the better
 - * More affordable housing. People trying to take poverty out of Canada
 - * More interest in these types of studies
 - * That there is more focus on the slumlords with the way they treat tenants who are less fortunate
 - * Help everyone equally, not the way it is
 - * More questions in more depth with the people
 - * Increase welfare dollars
 - * Racism change
 - * People getting treated fairly whether or not they are employed also if they need shelter or accommodations
 - * That our social assistance goes up
 - * More programs not only for the single people but also for families. More availability for the families to get to events, free bus tickets etc. for those with limited incomes

Additional, non-requested information

- * I think that it is important to get everybody's ideas and concerns out so that we can make a change.
- * I would definitely like to see the results of this survey as well as any changes that may occur as a result of this study.
- * I would be willing to discuss everything
- * Interesting with helpful information
- * I enjoy the information 100%
- * Glad to be a participant
- * Finding the information very helpful. I know more about the situation at hand than I did yesterday.
- * I needed to know some information so I can tell people that are moving to Saskatoon who need help with housing and living arrangements and so on.

