

INTRODUCTION

Community members in Spence have long framed housing as an issue that has critical individual and collective impact. The better a home meets the needs of its in habitant(s) in terms of affordability, safety, size, accessibility, location, and quality, the better that home enables its inhabitant(s) to meet their goals.

A successful home is about more than bricks and mortar. Tenants and landlords have responsibilities to one another, and property owners have responsibilities to fulfill to community/government.

This includes how the upkeep, use, and purpose of housing properties impact the overall safety, feel and quality of life in a neighbourhood. Housing properties that are underused, in disrepair, or serve solely for income generation for a property owner negatively impact the physical and social health of a community.

A further consideration is scarcity of housing. When people in a neighbourhood are unable to find a place to live at all, it negatively impacts their health and ability to contribute positively to neighbourhood life.

Holistic housing work seeks to improve housing in a way that benefits individuals, families, and the community as a whole. Spence Neighbourhood Association has brought projects forward to impact each piece of a holistic view of housing, and the consultation involved with this plan has reemphasized the importance of continuing to embrace the many ways that housing is a cornerstone of building health in our community.

ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

The housing survey revealed a number of respondents who had lived in the neighbourhood for extended periods of time, and intend to stay in the neighbourhood into the future, but who have had unstable housing experiences. While the stereotype has admittedly come up less in recent years, Spence has been characterised as a transient place where people live for a little while and then move on. However, the housing, survey, and further anecdotal evidence show that commitment to the neighbourhood is strong. Unfortunately, affordability, safety, accessibility, and other factors continue to get in the way of many residents setting down long term roots in one place. And, while having to move is a challenge few actively desire, residents with the least means and the most challenges have the most to gain from a stable housing situation. Conversely, they experience the worst impacts from being forced to move.

Spence residents have lower incomes than other neighbourhoods. In 2013, Frontstep Resaerch surveyed resident incomes, and found a median income level of \$10,000 to \$20,000¹. Unfortunately, the fact of inequality, which places Spence at lower income levels than other Winnipeg neighbourhoods is getting worse. As a primary factor in determining whether someone is housed, and in what kind of housing, this matters. In a recent study examining urban inequality, income relative to census metropolitan area (CMA) declined to below average.² This observation was made throughout nearly all the inner city, while neighbourhoods at the south and north ends of the city are shown to rise relative to CMA over the period from 1980 to 2011.

Increasing inequality exacerbates a common understanding of the causes of inner city decline in Winnipeg-being that those with higher incomes have tended, since the post war period to seek new or newer housing on the outskirts of the city where infrastructure is also in better shape. Government investment also tends to go towards services and infrastructure to serve these new neighbourhoods, and upkeep of older infrastructure lags. Of course, those with greater incomes also have greater ability to both secure their housing for as long as they need it, and make investments in upkeep. This ensures a healthy home environment for themselves and their families, and contributes to maintained/increasing property values in their neighbourhood. These aspirations are less possible for people with low income. What's more, housing for those with the lowest incomes has been disappearing.

In another study by the Institute of Urban Studies it is noted that from 2002 to 2014 there was a 40% decrease in confirmed rooming houses in the Spence Neighbourhood.³ We also hear from residents that there is concern about competition for low income housing in the neighbourhood between students coming into the neighbourhood to study and long time residents, as well as the potential for additional conversion of rental housing to condos.

The stress of housing scarcity highlighted in statistics compiled by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives Manitoba in 2015. They note that at the time, 10.3% of Winnipeggers lived in core housing need, yet 23.1% of renters lived in core housing need. In other words, housing seems to be more precarious for people who rent than homeowners.⁴

^{1.} Noted in People and Housing, A Plan for Spence 2014-2016. Spence Neighbourhood Association, 2016.

^{2.} Distasio, J and Kaufman, A. The Divided Prairie City. Institute of Urban Studies, University of Winnipeg. 2015.

^{3.} Kaufman, A and Distasio, J. Winnipeg's Vanishing Rooming Houses: Change in the West Broadway and Spence Neighbourhoods. Institute of Urban Studies, University of Winnipeg.

^{4.} Brandon, Josh. Manitoba Housing Stats, February 2015. Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, Manitoba

Spence Neighbourhood Association undertook consultations with residents in the spring and summer of 2016. Residents were asked to pick 3 priorities from five options. The top three that were chosen are:

- ✓ Increase Housing Affordability
- Improve the Experience of Safety in Local Rooming Houses and Apartments
- Improve and Support Relationships between landlords, tenants, and homeowners

A major housing consultation and report was completed in 2014, which mapped out a plan for the 2014-2016 period. This plan should be understood as an extension of that work, as the priorities laid out there remain relevant.

We can report a number of significant improvements on housing since Inner City Home Ownership (Spence Neighbourhood Association's parent organization) was initiated.

- Vacant and derelict properties being rebuilt or renovated for use,
- Critical repairs completed that have helped residents remain, safely in their homes, or ensured that landlords were able to make improvements without increasing rental costs.
- Landlords taking increasing responsibility for ensuring successful housing for tenants, including partnerships and collaborations.
- Tenants (especially in rooming houses) becoming more active in supporting one another to build safer, more accountable living environments, and more positive relationships with landlords.
- More positive external appearance of many properties, increasing a feeling of care and adding visual beauty to the

- neighbourhood, as well as increasing perceptions of safety.
- Homeowners taking increased, active interest in contributing to neighbourhood life.

This consultation and planning process reinforced and revealed ongoing and new challenges:

- Homelessness (including hidden homelessness) continue to affect residents. In particular, there is concern for youth and women who are homeless, however, homelessness affects many more populations in the neighbourhood. Mental health is a critical piece that needs more attention in the neighbourhood.
- Affordability remains a problem for many residents, and reports of being pushed out of the neighbourhood due to financial barriers are ongoing.
- ✓ There is still (physical and social) work to do to make rental accommodations safer
- Tenants, landlords and homeowners in the nieghbourhood see potential strength in increasing collaborative work on housing towards meeting local challenges, and there was interest in continuing to build on this trend.
- An emerging awareness of the difficulty seniors have in transitioning out of their current housing into more accessible options, and need for support. Connected to this are the specific challenges that seniors who are homeowners have in maintaining their homes, and staying in their homes affordably. While Spence granting programs have long supported seniors in this effort, there seems to be intensifying concerns for this cohort of people.

HOLISTIC HOUSING

- Increasing emphasis among respondents on the need for housing for residents with disabilities.
- Residents and landlords reemphasized the need for government to continue to support increased housing stability in the neighbourhood, and to listen carefully to neighbourhood needs in terms of increasing accessibility, safety, and affordability, and decreasing homelessness.

The holistic housing director worked with the Holistic Housing committee, steering committee, and community members to come up with strategies and outcomes that will address these concerns.

HOLISTIC HOUSING CONSULTATION

The following goals were prioritized for the SNA five-year planning process:

- 1. supporting people with mental health challenges to become more stable in their housing
- 2. increasing safety in rooming houses and apartments
- 3. advocacy and problem solving to keep housing affordable in Spence
- 4. increase investment to maintain and add affordable housing stock
- 5. build community between homeowners and renters

These goals were ranked through a community-wide survey to offer three main goals. The following tasks were completed to inform the housing portion of the five-year plan:

- Participant surveys at
 - West Central Women's Resource Centre
 - Mamawi (Spence location)
 - 615 Ellice Ave. office
 - · Housing Committee meeting
 - · Ellice Street Festival
- Housing inventory
- ✓ Focus groups with Service Providers
 - Tenants
 - Mamawi
 - West Central Women's Resource Centre
 - Seniors
- Interview with key housing workers in the neighbourhood
 - Mamawi (Spence location)

Document review

The plan will also be informed by relevant research and policy direction issued by governments, boards and research bodies including

- Our Winnipeg (City of Winnipeg)
- Winnipeg's Vanishing Rooming Houses: Change in the West Broadway and Spence Neighbourhoods (Institute of Urban Studies)
- 2014-2016 SNA Housing Plan

EVENT	DATE	LOCATION
Provided an update on the current housing plan and an opportunity to ask questions and comment.	March 2016 May 3, 2016	615 Ellice Ave. and via email
Ellice Street Festival	June 11, 2016	On Ellice
Service Providers Focus Group	May 5, 2016	West End Cultural Centre
Housing Committee Meeting	Various meetings starting April 2016	615 Ellice Ave.
Tenant meetings		430 Langside St.
Volunteer meetings	Once a month - starting April 2016	430 Langside St.
MamaWi	May 16, 2016	443 Spence St.
West Central Woman's Resource Centre	May 2, 2016	640 Ellice Ave.
Steering Committee	March 9, 2016 April 13, 2016 May 11, 2016	615 Ellice Ave. 586 Ellice Ave. Via email
Seniors' focus group	September 24, 2016	615 Ellice Ave.
Individual interviews Acting director at Mamawi (Garry Richard)	May 16, 2016	443 Spence St.



HOLISTIC HOUSING

Туре	McGee	Agnes	Balmoral	Furby	Langside	Sherbrook	Young	Maryland	Spence	Total
Single Family home	14	128	9	79	88	73	53	88	41	573
Duplex	13	19	4	30	17	14	12	35	23	167
Triplex	0	3	1	2	3	1	3	5	2	20
fourplex	0	3	1	4	4	3		4	0	19
Rooming House	1	9	2	25	28	14	10	9	19	117
Apartment building	3	9	8	11	3	25	12	14	4	89
Row housing	0	0	0	0	14	0	0	6	0	20
Boarded-up apartment buildings	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Boarded-up houses	0	0	0	0	2	0	3	2	0	7
Boarded-up businesses	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Empty lots ready to build	0	0	1	1	2	5	0	4	2	15
Empty lots, not yet cleared	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Business and housing	0	4	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	6
	31	175	26	154	162	136	93	167	92	1036

HOUSING SURVEY ANALYSIS

RESPONDENT DATA: 61 respondents total

SURVEYS COMPLETED AT: 615 Ellice (17), MamaWi Spence Location (22) and West Central Women's Resource Centre (22)

LANGUAGE

First languages other than English:

Cree: 2 French: 1 Ojibwe: 3 Oji-Cree: 2 Spanish: 2

Other languages spoken:

Cree: 3 French: 4 Korean: 1 Inuit: 1 Ojibwe: 2

Oji-Cree: 2 Salteaux: 2 Sioux: 2

ETHNIC BACKGROUNDS IDENTIFIED

Northern Indigenous Identities

Aboriginal: 6 Anishinaabe: 1 Cree: 1 Eskimo: 1

Metis: 4 Ojibwe: 1 Native: 3 Shawnee: 1

Traditional: 1 First Nations: 9 Status Indian: 1

Other Ethnic Identities

British: 1 English: 2 French: 1 German: 1
Irish: 1 Korean: 1 Latino: 1 Mayan: 1
Scottish: 1 Swedish: 1 Ukranian: 2 White: 1

IMMIGRATION

Ten respondents self identified as an immigrant. Of these:

- 7 came in the family category
- 1 was a refugee
- · 2 were students
- 1 identified as "other"

MARITAL STATUS

- 47 respondents reported being single, divorced/separated or widowed
- 2 reported being married
- · 8 are common law

AGE

- 2 respondents were under 18
- 7 respondents were between 18 and 24
- · 20 respondents were between 25 and 44
- 30 respondents were between 45 and 64
- 4 respondents were over the age of 65

GENDER

female: 37male: 13n/a: 1

TYPES OF HOUSING

- 10 respondents live in rooming houses
- 5 in a non profit housing unit
- 24 rent from private landlords
- 2 live in privately run group homes
- 4 are in Manitoba Housing
- 1 is in a non profit group home
- 1 said they were living with a friend
- · 6 stated "other"

EMPLOYMENT, INCOME, AND AFFORDABILITY

Including yourself, how many people are working in your household?

- 21 respondents said: 0
- 12 respondents said: 1
- 2 respondents said: 3
- 3 respondents said: 3

8 of these are full time, the rest are part time.

Combined household income before taxes:

- 35 respondents: under \$10,000
- 12 respondents: \$12-20,000
- 4 respondents: \$30-40,000
- 1 respondent: \$40,000+

25 respondents said they do not receive rental subsidies. 19 stated they did receive subsidies.

16 respondents said that others in their household helped to pay for rent.

LIVING ARRANGEMENTS

- 18 respondents live alone
- 18 respondents live with one other person
- 6 respondents live with 2 other people
- 4 respondents live with 3 other people
- 4 respondents live with 4 other people
- 5 respondents live with 6 or more other people.

9 people reported having one or more seniors in the household.

WHAT STREET DO YOU LIVE ON?

There was at least one respondent per street in the neighbourhood, however no respondents said that they live on McMicken or Notre Dame.

LENGTH OF TENANCY/TIME IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

Respondents had lived in their current home for an average of nearly 3 years, with the longest reported time in a current home of 10 years.

Respondents had lived in the neighbourhood for an average of 6.5 years, with 2 respondents saying they had lived in the neighbourhood their whole lives, and 8 respondents saying they had been in the neighbourhood 10 years or more.

PLANNING TO STAY?

34 respondents (out of 62) said they were planning to move within the next 3 years. More than half of these safety, liveability, affordability and accessibility concerns regarding their current housing as a reason for needing to move.

HOUSING AVAILABILITY

Out of the 39 respondents who said they had moved in the last five years, and had difficulty finding housing, 29 (or 74% of respondents) said they had had trouble finding housing.

HOW WELL ARE RESIDENTS' NEEDS MET BY HOUSING IN SPENCE?

Strongest responses show that respondents believe that single people, single parent families, people with disabilities, renters, seniors, and students are not getting their housing needs met in the neighbourhood.

More than half of respondents believe that the neighbourhood needs more of the following types of housing:

- · Transitional housing
- Social housing
- Subsidised rental housing
- Subsidized home ownership
- Rental Housing
- Seniors housing
- Two- and three-story apartment buildings
- High rise apartments
- Single family homes, duplex, triplex and fourplexes, and row housing.

On balance, there was a call for more student housing, and group homes.

There was not a strong call for more homeownership, and there was a call for decreased numbers of condos.

Near equal numbers of people called for "more" and "less" rooming house units.

REPAIRS AND RENOVATIONS

Referring to their own homes, seven respondents offered examples of critical repairs that they would take care of first before anything else, while the rest of the respondents offered more cosmetic priorities.

In terms of home exteriors, five priorities were mentioned that were specifically safety related (for example, lighting). The rest were cosmetic.

LOCAL HOUSING CHALLENGES

In terms of local housing related challenges, a third of respondents said that boarded up buildings, feeling safe in your home, rising house prices, gang activity, and sex trade activity are a significant problem. Nearly half identified apartments needing repairs as a big problem. In addition, nearly half of respondents said that rising rents, feeling unsafe outside at night, backlanes, and bed bugs and other pests are a major problem.

RENT OR HOME OWNERSHIP?

Renters were asked what stops them from purchasing a home. 29 said they either prefer to rent or haven't considered purchasing. The 22 other responses all mentioned finances as a barrier to purchasing a home, including challenges qualifying for a loan, not having a down payment, having a low credit rating, no affordable options locally.



HOLISTIC HOUSING PLAN

GOAL ONE: Increase Housing Affordability

COMMUNITY STRATEGIES	COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS	FIVE-YEAR COMMUNITY RESULTS
Development of affordable and low income housing — develop investment in new and renovating existing low income housing, and increasing the choice of quality, low income rental housing available in the neighbourhood	City of Winnipeg Province of Manitoba Government of Canada Tenants and other residents Landlords and developers Housing Stakeholders Group	 SNA achieves official buy in from City of Winnipeg to protect housing affordability in Spence through concrete measures/policy Creation of a Spence housing development plan 20% increase in affordable, low income housing 30% renovations of existing units of low income or affordable housing
National Housing Strategy — Work with the federal government and stakeholders to create and implement a national housing strategy	Housing Stakeholders Group Landlords Tenants and residents	 National Housing Strategy announced Steps taken towards implementation, including tangible neighbourhood results/impacts
Find ways of increasing affordability, safety and accessibility for all people isolated from stable and supportive housing	City of Winnipeg Province of Manitoba Government of Canada Tenants and other residents Landlords and developers Housing Stakeholders Group	 2016 develop baseline for current levels of affordable safe housing Improvement measure will be developed once baseline is established with the goal of a 50% improvement in 5 years Provide 4 workshops per year educating tenants on eligible benefits and supports

Support housing transitions in the community — people in precarious housing, seniors, newcomers, people coming from northern or rural communities	City of Winnipeg Province of Manitoba Government of Canada Tenants and other residents Landlords and developers Housing Stakeholders Group	 Support 50-75 people transition to more stable housing per year Plan to support newcomers completed and implemented {lan to support people coming from the north completed and implementes
Develop and renovate new and existing homes to support accessibility, visitability and universal design, through working with developers and management companies	City of Winnipeg Province of Manitoba Government of Canada Tenants and other residents Landlords and developers Housing Stakeholders Group	 All landlords educated on universal design. 20 neighbourhood units have at least one new feature that makes the unit more accessible. All new developments will be encouraged to include visitability, accessibility and universal design into their plans
Advocate for affordable options for people with disabilities. Develop strong relationships with landlords and accessibility groups to find ways of supporting accessible renos to existing units.	City of Winnipeg Province of Manitoba Government of Canada Tenants and other residents Landlords and developers Housing Stakeholders Group	 All landlords educated on universal design. 20 neighbourhood units have at least one new feature that makes the unit more accessible. Advocate for 5 community members per year Residents connected to Residential adaption's assistance program,
Rent Assist — Encourage the provincial government to increase and expand the rent assist program. Educate community about rent assist	Province of Manitoba Housing Stakeholders Group	 All residents know about rent assist and how to apply. At least one petition submitted to government on increasing financial supports for housing for low income people. Minimum of 4 workshops on rent assist and other eligible benefits annually

Community-led guide- lines for affordable housing — work with the city to develop neighbourhood guide- lines around affordable housing	City of Winnipeg Tenants and other residents Landlords and developers	 SNA achieves official buy-in from City of Winnipeg to protect housing affordability in Spence through concrete measures and policy
Work to end homeless- ness — work with local housing strategies end homelessness ensuring they incorporate com- munity led solutions	Winnipeg Plan to End Homelessness Plan to End Youth Homelessness Housing Stakeholders Group	 Umbrella housing strategies articulate their partnerships with neighbourhood housing organizations in their digital/physical materials Synthesize homelessness plans and coordinate Spence Neighbourhood response
Affordable housing for Seniors — develop strategies to support seniors staying in the community.	City of Winnipeg Province of Manitoba Government of Canada Tenants and other residents Landlords and developers Housing Stakeholders Group	 Five homes vacated by local seniors serve to re-house local under housed family. Develop 1 unit of supported senior housing for each home vacated by a senior
Work with community youth programs to evaluate youth housing needs, and make steps towards meeting this critical housing gap	SNA youth programs Resource Assistance for Youth Winnipeg plan to end youth homelessness	 Investigate and summarize youth housing needs. Prioritize three solutions and complete them Develop action based plan for transitional youth housing Support 10 -15 youth per year transition out of homelessness
Increase local incomes by encouraging renovation and build work to be done by local companies or social enterprises that employ people with barriers to employment	SNA CED staff Manitoba Green Retrofit BUILD CEDNET	▶ 50% of renovations and new builds are being done through local companies and social enterprises

GOAL TWO: Improve the Experience of Safety in Local Rooming Houses and Apartments

COMMUNITY STRATEGIES	COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS	FIVE-YEAR COMMUNITY RESULTS
Improve rental housing — continue to offer grants and incentives for rooming house and apartment repair and upgrade. With unique strategies for rooming houses and apartments	City of Winnipeg Province of Manitoba Government of Canada Tenants and other residents Landlords and developers Housing Stakeholders Group	 Rental grants continues More landlords access rooming house grants 150 rental housing improved Landlords are confident in the grant programs and strategies.
Improve rooming houses — work to increase safety in rooming houses while maintaining access and affordability.	City of Winnipeg Province of Manitoba Government of Canada Tenants and other residents Landlords and developers Housing Stakeholders Group	 Rooming house grant accessed by land-lords Tenants are supported and empowered to improve their common areas and have the resources to do it. 50 Tenants trained to support and improve rooming houses
Improve safety for women — organize project around women's safety in rooming houses and apartments.	West Central Women's Resource Centre City of Winnipeg Province of Manitoba, Government of Canada Tenants and other residents Landlords and developers	 4 Women (or other indentified) only rooming houses in the community 5-10 landlords engaged to improve safety for women in rooming houses
Continue to partner with landlords and tenants to ensure everyone understands their responsibilities and rights, and support collaborative problem solving.	Tenants and land- lords Residental Tenancies Board	8-10 workshops per year on rights and responsibilities and collaborative solutions to address rental issues.

HOLISTIC HOUSING

Continue engaging rooming house tenants in making physical improvements to their own units and buildings.	Tenants and landlords Province of Manitoba.	▶ 50 rooming house tenants have improved their own units and built skills by doing physical work on their own buildings.
Develop rooming house mentoring program where tenants support one another to perform tenant responsibilities and learn (and defend) their rights.	City of Winnipeg Province of Manitoba Government of Canada Tenants and landlords.	▶ 20% increase in stability in rooming houses, reducing economic uncertainty for tenants, and increasing community cohesion/ safety, which plays a compounding effect on stability.

GOAL THREE: Improve and Support Relationships Between Landlords, Tenants, and Homeowners

COMMUNITY STRATEGIES	COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS	FIVE-YEAR COMMUNITY RESULTS
Engage landlords, tenants and homeowners to work together to address local housing challenges and improve housing in the community.	Landlords Tenants Homeowners.	 Three groups are seen as collaborators with an interest in improving affordability, accessibility, and safety across all measures of housing in Spence. Groups work together to understand and address emerging issues, such as need for transitional housing and supports for seniors. 5 local housing challenges addressed annually
Create a strategy to address specific accessibility issues, and develop a action plan to address them.	City of Winnipeg Province of Manitoba Government of Canada Ttenants and other residents Landlords and developers Housing Stakeholders Group	▶ 20 units are made more accessible, visitable or incorporate universal design

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Support people through education and awareness to work together to address the causes of safety issues and mental health crisis.	Canadian Mental Health Association Winnipeg Regional Health Authority	 Everyone in the neighbourhood is well-equipped to care for their home and support their neighbours. Housing is well taken care of, and conflicts are quickly addressed through the support of neighbours, and local organisations. 4 Workshops or education sessions held annually on mental health issues 6 active partnerships with mental health or crisis supports ie HOC's or WRHA crisis services Partnership with Winnipeg Police to
		support housing safety
Maintain local housing improvement grants, and advocate together	City of Winnipeg Province of Manitoba	 Grant matching is affordable for prop- erty owners matched to their incomes.
for additional grants that help address neighbourhood priorities of making housing safer, and more accessible.	Government of Canada Tenants and other residents Landlords and developers Housing Stakeholders Group	▶ Barriers removed for accessing grants
Community led decisions, feedback and consultation on devel-	City of Winnipeg Province of Manitoba	 Community continues to shape the kinds of development that happen in the neighbourhood.
opment and zoning changes- ensuring community voice in civ-	Government of Canada Tenants and other residents	 Community is consulted on all zoning issues
ic decision making	Landlords	 Consultation is real- actual meetings with residents, surveys and options for residents to be informed and engaged in civic decisions
Coordinate collabora- tive approaches though the west end housing stakeholders to work on collective solution to	Housing Stakeholders Group	Stakeholders group shapes City, Provincial, and National housing policy, maintains a public voice on housing issues.
housing development issues and concerns.		 6 meetings per year of housing stake- holders group
		▶ 10 housing collaborations by 2021