



**ENHANCING CULTURAL CAPITAL:
The Arts and Community Development in Winnipeg**

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Contents

Abstract	6	2.2.4 Street Culture Kidz Project Inc, Regina	31
Executive Summary	6	2.3 Literature Review: Summary	32
1.0 Introduction	9	3.0 Findings from Interviews: Art Organizations	35
1.1 Research Objective	10	3.1 Organization Profiles	35
1.2 Management of Report	10	3.2 Funding	36
1.3 Structure of Report	10	3.3 Collaborations	38
1.4 Philosophy	11	3.4 Users	39
1.5 Methods	11	3.5 Community Concerns	39
1.6 Winnipeg Context	13	3.6 Assets	42
1.7 Limitations	17	3.7 Programming	44
2.0 Literature Review	21	3.8 Aboriginal Values	45
2.1 Thematic Review	21	3.9 General Themes and Values	45
2.1.1 Community Dividends	21	3.10 Conclusion	46
2.1.2 Arts and Education Dividends	22	4.0 Findings from Interviews with Community Development Organizations and Funders	49
2.1.3 Cultural Participation and Community Development	23	4.1 Building a “Culture of Culture”	49
2.1.4 Organizational Issues	24	4.2 The Need for More Formal Connections	50
2.1.5 Models and Evaluation	25	4.3 Funding Challenges and Measures of Success	51
2.1.6 The Need for Mentoring	26	4.4 Conclusion	53
2.1.7 Policy, Racism and Community Development	26		
2.2 Case Studies	28		
2.2.1 Regent Park Focus, Toronto	28		
2.2.2 Gallery 37, Chicago	29		
2.2.3 Art Start, NY	30		

5.0	Case Study: Minneapolis, Minnesota	55	7.0	Recommendations	73
5.1	Northeast Minneapolis Arts Association	56	7.1	Funding Models	73
5.2	Minnesota Citizens for the Arts	57	7.2	Maintaining and Enhancing Arts-Based Curriculum in Public Schools	74
5.3	Arts Midwest	57	7.3	The Need for Coordinated Advocacy	74
5.4	Minnesota State Arts Board	58	7.4	The Need for Organizational Mentorship	74
5.5	Mayor's Office, Minneapolis	58	7.5	The Need for a More Formal Network	75
5.6	"The Artistic Dividend" Project	59	7.6	Institutional Cooperation	75
5.7	Conclusion	60	7.7	Evaluation	75
6.0	Synthesis: Art is Essential	63	7.8	Further Research	76
6.1	Community-driven = Asset-driven	63		Appendix 1: About Art City	77
6.2	Addressing Poverty	63		Appendix 2: Interview Questions	78
6.3	Collaborations	64		Appendix 3: Foundation Document	81
6.4	Support for Emerging Artists	65		Appendix 4: Contributors	85
6.5	Culturally appropriate teaching and environments	65		Bibliography	88
6.6	Funding Issues	66			
6.7	Art Education in Schools	67			
6.8	Identifying the Benefits of Arts-Based Programming	67			
6.9	Conclusion	70			

Abstract

This research highlights the contribution that community-based arts organizations are making in Winnipeg 's inner city. The project reveals that there is not only a wealth of artistic and cultural resources in the inner city, but that these resources make an enormous contribution to building community capacity, energizing community-based revitalization efforts, educating young people, improving our public spaces, and invigorating local economies. Through a broad-based consultation process, including a case study of the arts scene in Minneapolis Minnesota, the project provides a basis for an enhanced integration of arts-based policies and programs aimed at supporting inner city communities.

Executive Summary

A review of the relevant literature shows that art-based programming offers numerous benefits to its participants, and can help to empower groups that otherwise feel marginalized. There is no one model of success, yet those agencies that we selected for review have some important thing in common: they are rooted in, and engaged with, their communities; they are open to community ownership and participation in their operations; and they allow diversity to flourish, not just in terms of what they do, but who walks in their doors.

Interviews conducted locally with community-based arts organizations reveal that poverty is the most powerful influence in the neighbourhoods in which they are active and presents an ongoing challenge for their operations. All of the organizations we spoke with see value in arts programming as a means with which to address myriad factors compounding poverty. Unemployment, education, health and skill development, community connections, individual self-worth, communication skills, trust and so on — all can be altered and improved in some way by access to arts programming.

Like the neighbourhoods in which they operate, many community-based organizations face financial problems. Funders are more likely to make dollars available for programming than for core operating funds. As a result, highly visible and productive community-based organizations are working without sustained core operating funds. In part because of the ongoing challenges in terms of resources, many of these organizations must collaborate with others in order to meet their objectives. Programming in inner city community organizations is as diverse as the neighbourhoods in which it is offered. Much of the programming is free for drop-in classes and activities, or those done in partnership with other agencies.

The client base for community based arts groups may seem at first glance to be children and youth, but staff and volunteers hesitate to categorize their base in this way, as the impacts are multigenerational. This sense of community is one of the many assets identified by our participants. Children know who their neighbours are. There is no shortage of will in these neighbourhoods, and people are very attached to them.

All of the organizations consulted were unanimous in their conviction as to the powerful role that access to art activities plays in activating and strengthening bonds and that these dynamics contribute to the overall assets in their communities. The degree to which an organization and its programming are community-driven influences greatly the "buy-in" on the part of the community for that organization. Organizations need to be able to respond flexibly to the needs and desires in a community, and arts-related programming provides an excellent means to respond to variables in age, literacy and interest. What we heard repeatedly is that creating an environment for art making creates opportunity for connections of all kinds, connections that directly serve the goals of increasing neighbourhood stability and community capacity.

The report concludes with recommendations, including: the need for greater and more flexible funding; the need to maintaining and enhancing arts-based curriculum in public schools; the need for coordinated advocacy on the part of community-based arts organizations; the need to mentor organizations that are in a position to offer leadership to others; the need for more formal networks and sharing among community based arts organizations; the need for more effective institutional cooperation; and the need for more appropriate means to evaluate the success of programming.



“There is not only a wealth of artistic and cultural resources in the inner city, but these resources can make an enormous contribution to building community capacity, energizing community-based revitalization efforts, educating young people, improving our public spaces, and invigorating local economies.”

1.0 | Introduction

In recent years, creative, cultural and entertainment activities and industries have been recognized for their contribution to the development and maintenance of vital cities and communities; now many believe they can also be the instigating force behind revitalization. Studies have shown that neighbourhoods with high concentrations of cultural organizations and/or access to arts activities are more likely to undergo economic revitalization, and to overcome barriers relating to class and ethnicity (*Stern 2000*). However, most work in this area concerns the revitalization efforts of larger initiatives and arts institutions, while there has been less attention paid to the neighbourhood and community-level work of small and mid-sized arts organizations and individual artists (*"Arts Impact on Community Revitalization"*).

At the community level, artists, performers and writers all over the world have been involved in community development work, using their talents to mobilize their communities to address social and environmental problems, invigorate community-level activism, enhance educational projects, influence policy development, and facilitate community dialogue.

There is a lot of art, art-making and many artists in Winnipeg. We are considered by many to be the "cultural capital" of Canada. Yet, Winnipeg struggles with a range of social and economic problems, especially in its inner city neighbourhoods. Our research will examine the ways that access to art activities can enhance inner city revitalization and quality of life, and acknowledge the myriad of community-based activities and programs that are presently at work.

In a country where child poverty has increased over the last decade; a Province (Manitoba) that has the highest rate of child poverty in the country (“*Little Change in Poverty Rates*”); and where budget cuts to social programs and cultural initiatives at all levels of government have been justified over the last decade in the interest of debt reduction, this kind of research seems particularly relevant, and more importantly, of some use.

1.1 **Research Objective**

The purpose of this study is to investigate the role arts activity plays in building community capacity in Winnipeg’s inner-city communities. Through interviews and library-based research, an asset-based account of existing art-based programs and initiatives in Winnipeg’s inner-city was established, and findings were analyzed in terms of major emerging themes. The project reveals that there is not only a wealth of artistic and cultural resources in the inner city, but that these resources make an enormous contribution to building community capacity, energizing community-based revitalization efforts, educating young people, improving our public spaces, invigorating local economies, and contributing to general well-being.

1.2 **Management of Report**

This report was prepared by the research team of Michelle Kuly and Etoile Stewart on behalf of the Institute of Urban Studies. Michael Dudley of the Institute acted as project coordinator and editor. The community partner for the project is Art City represented on the project Steering Committee by Jason Granger (*for more on Art City, please see Appendix 1*). The research was guided by a community-based steering committee made up of members of the core area community, university faculty and the research team, as well as the staff (and users of) art-based community organizations in the core area. The Steering Committee assisted with defining the areas of research, vetted research findings and provided all matter of feedback. Final analysis, data input and all interviews and writing were completed by the research team.

1.3 **Structure of Report**

This report is broken into seven chapters, each devoted to a particular facet of the research, including a literature review, demographic information pertaining to the core area, a case study of work being done in Minneapolis, findings

from our local interviews with community organizations and community development agencies, and analysis of what all of this information might mean. The report concludes with recommendations for further research, policy directions and actions that could benefit community driven arts activities, organizations, funders and policy makers.

1.4 **Philosophy**

It is important to recognize that definitions of art and culture can be culturally-specific and contingent upon the preferences and realities of community residents; that the concept of cultural participation is a broad one and that creative expressions “are infused with multiple meanings and purposes simultaneously” and that opportunities for participation in creative endeavours are contingent on a variety of factors that are both “arts specific and non-arts specific” (*National Neighbourhood Indicators Partnership USA*). In addition, it is also critical to approach this research with an understanding of the systemic conditions (such as poverty and racism) that hinder access to education, training and employment.

The means by which communities are strengthened through culture must therefore be considered using broad and flexible terms of analysis. It cannot simply be a mere inventory of the presence of arts activities or compilations of economic statistics. It is necessary to look at the fabric of the community, from demographics to anecdotal evidence, in order that we may begin to comprehend how and why art is such an effective tool for social, economic and community capacity development.

It is worth stressing an important theme that is repeated below: that it is essential to acknowledge the weight of poverty and the systemic forces which underlie it, and how these are constant barriers in the day-to-day lives of the majority of the constituents making use of the programs considered in this research. The research team undertook the project under the assumption that the principles of community development and capacity building cannot be contextualized outside of the power dynamics perpetuating racism and exclusion locally and beyond (*for a further discussion of this theme, please see Section 2.1.7*).

1.5 **Methods**

The research team and the Steering Committee began by working out the themes, values and terms of reference to guide our study. Working definitions of “community,” “community-based” and “revitalization” were discussed. A list

of nine emerging themes and values emerged from that discussion (see *Appendix 3*) which provided the parameters for defining the interview questions. We compiled a “community inventory” a list of what organizations/programming is currently available within the project’s geographical boundary) using outside contacts, community members, the steering committee, Art City contacts and our own knowledge of the core area community.

Our first step after compiling an inventory of inner-city community based organizations that offered some form of art programming, was to send a mail-out that included the project description, a map, an ethics release form and the list of interview questions. Within a few weeks of the mail-out we followed up with phone calls and emails to the organizations asking if we could set up interview times.

Twenty-two interviews were completed; each interview took about an hour to complete. Respondents were asked to reply to a variety of questions pertaining to programming, funding, users, areas of concern, assets, challenges and so on. Some questions had specific parameters; others were intentionally open-ended in order to garner as comprehensive a picture as possible of the role arts activities play in community capacity development.

The information gathered in the interviews was analyzed via categorized in order to determine common themes, goals, assets, and challenges faced by core area arts and community organizations. Using the spreadsheet helped us to identify common themes and disparities in the collected data.

Anecdotes and opinions are a crucial part of this research, providing the context through which to evaluate all else. Throughout we have pulled out and highlighted quotes from community participants, for it is their voices that are the driving force in this research. These groups draw on the strengths present in the community first as means to respond to the needs and issues in the community. In other words, we have used an asset-based approach to discussing programming and administration.

All interviewees were asked the same set of questions divided into three categories. The first, “Organization Profile” included questions pertaining to funding, partnerships, users, community and programming. The second category, “Emerging Themes and Values” asked the respondent to comment on how their organization responds to certain values. The third category “Unique Role” asked for commentary and opinions as to how arts programming and arts organizations serve community needs differently than other community-based agencies or events. We were conscious to orient these questions towards determining assets, as much as the challenges, found within the community and the organization.

At the conclusion of the interviews, we undertook a field trip to Minneapolis to do a case study. We conducted interviews with other researchers working in the field of arts and revitalization, arts advocates, funding bodies and policy makers. Our goal was to gather innovative ideas and strategies from these sources, to better inform our perspective in formulating the next steps and recommendations for policy, action and further research as to the role arts play, and could conceivably play, in enhancing cultural capital in Winnipeg's inner city.

It is important that we acknowledge that the experiences of some organizations were privileged over others. This is not because we decided that their "data" was more valuable, but simply that it spoke to active capacity building outside of a membership base. Our concern was more oriented towards what a given organization was doing for the larger community, rather than for a membership body, (e.g., an artists' collective or a professional group), and in terms of broader functions and goals rather than those that were specific and time-limited (i.e., supporting a writer's festival or offering a particular kind of instruction).

Some direct quotes from these interviews are used to preface some of the sections of the report, and are not attributed to the speakers in question.

Finally, and most importantly, we synthesized all of the data, determined the themes, assets and challenges, uncovered similarities and differences, and have organized it in such a way that it will hopefully be of use to arts and community advocates, grant writers, organizations, funders and policy makers.

1.6 **Winnipeg Context**

"What is it about this extreme-weather Prairie city that produces an overflow of creative talent?"

— Amy Cameron (*Cameron 2003*)

"If you look hard enough in the midst of Winnipeg's sprawling and decaying inner city, you will see scattered islands of remarkable creativity and collective action: innovative community development initiatives battling the seemingly relentless spread of urban poverty.

—Jim Silver (*Silver 2004*)

Winnipeg's inner city is characterized by an aging and deteriorating housing stock, negative socioeconomic conditions, inadequate services and programs, and fewer creative opportunities open to other, more affluent populations

(Manitoba Centre for Health Policy, 2004, p. 3). High incidence of poverty is an overwhelming reality in Winnipeg's inner city neighbourhoods: The median household income in Winnipeg's inner city is \$26,362, compared to \$49,291 in Winnipeg's non-inner city areas (See Figure 1, HOUSEHOLD INCOME) and four out of ten households in the inner city fall below the poverty line (Research Highlight no.1, 2003, p.3).

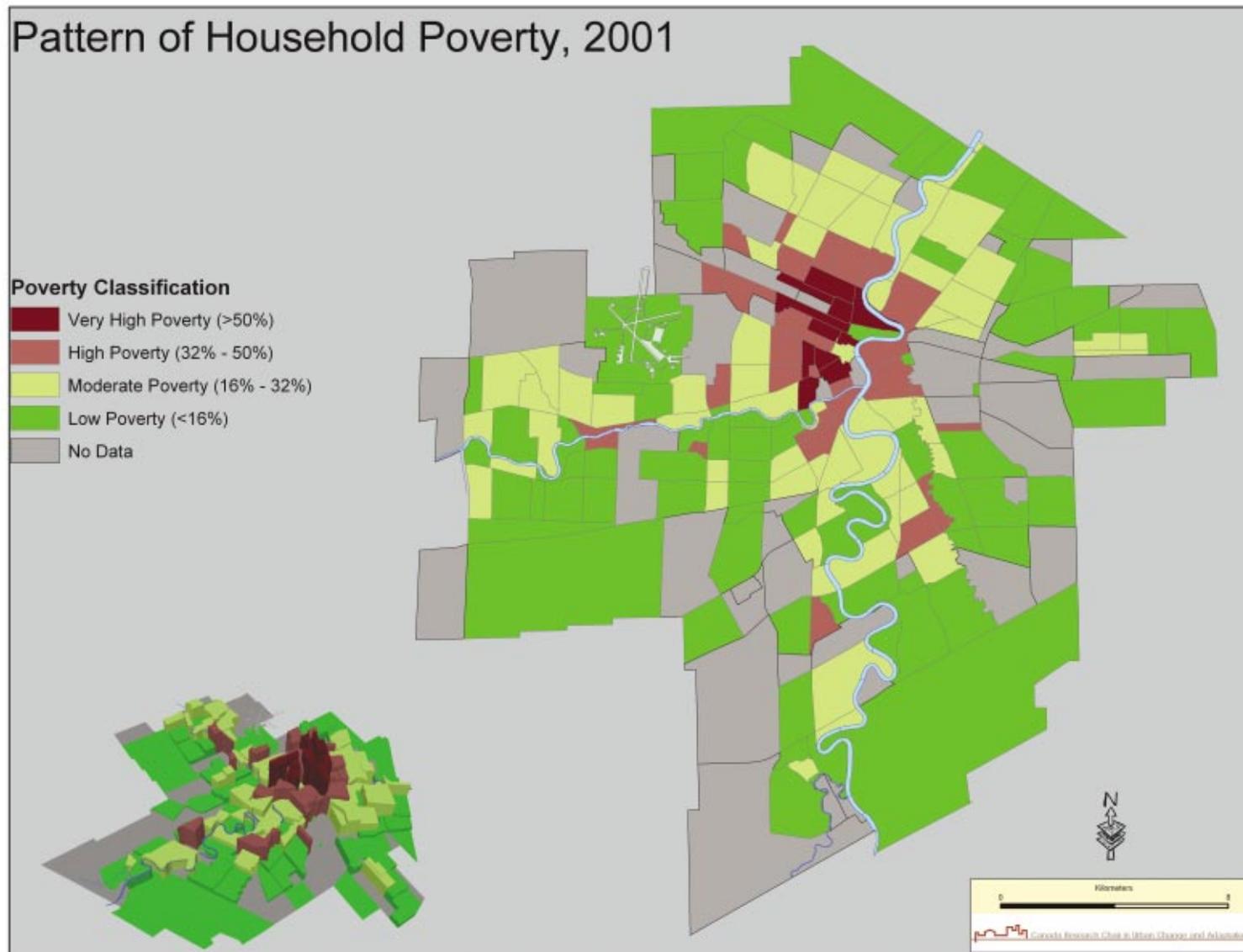
Figure 1 HOUSEHOLD INCOME		
	AVERAGE	MEDIAN
Inner-City	\$34,364	\$26,362
Non-InnerCity	\$58,680	\$49,291
Winnipeg Census Metropolitan Area (CMA)	\$54,225	\$44,562
Manitoba	\$50,756	\$41,661
Canada	\$58,360	\$46,752

The majority of residents in the inner city are renters, with only 37 percent rate of homeownership, compared to 71 percent in non-inner city areas (Research Highlight no.1, 2003, p.3). In the inner city, school mobility rates are in the range of 50 to 60 percent, in sharp contrast to rates in elsewhere in the city, which do not exceed 30 percent. In other words, "a 50 percent turnover rate means that half of the students at the end of the school year were not there at the beginning." (Skelton, 2002, p.134). Finally, single parent families account for 30 percent of total families in the inner city, compared to 16 percent in non-inner city areas. Most of these are headed by a female (Research Highlight no.1, 2003, p. 2). Lower levels of educational attainment are also common in inner city neighbourhoods — there are almost twice as many people who have achieved grade nine or less in the inner city than in other neighbourhoods across the city (Research Highlight no.1, 2003, p. 2). In turn, lower levels of education have significant implications for the health of inner city residents, as well as negatively affecting their ability to find work and participate in the labour force.

Pattern of Household Poverty, 2001

Poverty Classification

- Very High Poverty (>50%)
- High Poverty (32% - 50%)
- Moderate Poverty (16% - 32%)
- Low Poverty (<16%)
- No Data



Carter, Polevychok & Sargent 2005

Winnipeg is also home to the largest urban Aboriginal population in the country. (“*The Aboriginal population includes First Nations, Métis and Inuit people, three separate peoples with unique heritages, languages, cultural practices and spiritual beliefs*” [Eagle Eye View, Executive Summary, p. 1]). Moreover, almost 20 percent of inner city residents identify themselves as Aboriginal, compared to less than 6 percent in non-inner city areas. (Silver, p. 5, Research Highlight no.1, 2003, p. 1). (See Figure 2: Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Population) As Aboriginal people continue to move to Winnipeg for family reasons, employment opportunities and education, accessible and culturally appropriate services will become an even more urgent concern (Distasio, iv, p.22).

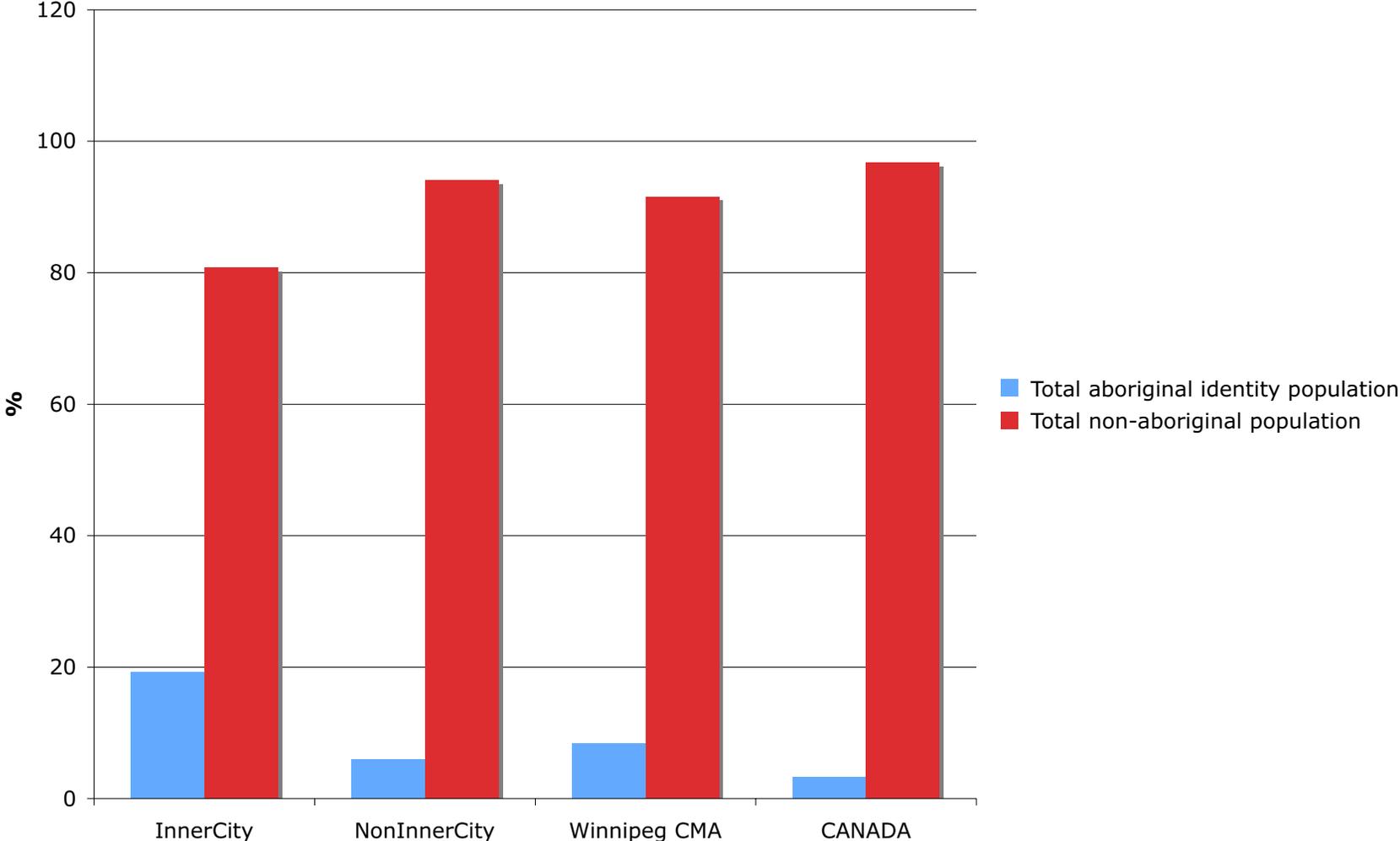
Winnipeg's inner city is also home to the highest percent of recent immigrants and foreign-born residents (Research Highlight no.1, 2003, p. 1). Approximately 4 percent of inner city residents have moved to Winnipeg within the last five years, and 22 percent of residents are foreign born, bringing a rich cultural diversity to the city's core areas. The establishment and growth of these new cultural communities within the city has meant the formal and informal establishment of cultural centres, festivals and parades that have also enriched the city's arts community.

Another overwhelming challenge for Winnipeg's inner city residents is crime. In fact, 30 percent of violent crime reported in Winnipeg occurred in 3 percent of neighbourhoods, and 30 percent of reported property crime occurred in 7 percent of neighbourhoods — and the neighbourhoods most heavily affected by this criminal activity are located in the inner city (Fitzgerald, Wisener and Savoie, 2004, pp. 22-24).

In general, however, the social indicators demonstrate that the inner city areas of Winnipeg are places of high need and few resources. There remains much work to be done to address the many issues facing this part of the city of Winnipeg, and our interests here are the ways in which creative activities can contribute to this project.

Part of the response to the conditions identified above has been the strong arts community established in the inner city. In our research, we identified more than fifty community-based arts organizations working in the inner city. In addition to this research, there are and have been other studies and initiatives that have looked at Winnipeg's arts and cultural sector and its ties to the inner city. In 1998, Trudy Schroeder authored a study on the potential for artist live/work spaces in the Exchange District. The Arts and Cultural Industries Association of Manitoba (ACI) wrote Creative Manitoba, an economic development strategy for the Province's cultural sector. Originating in Winnipeg, Arts Engagement looks at inclusive art programming for people with disabilities. The United Way recently released Eagle's Eye View, a holistic, culturally-based inventory and exploration of the growing Aboriginal population in Winnipeg. Manitoba Theatre for Young People (MTYP) was recently included the National Arts & Youth

Population by Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Population



Demonstration Project, which considered the connection between community-based arts and youth engagement. All of these documents speak to the importance of arts and cultural programming and opportunity in Winnipeg, and specifically to the role art plays in addressing or alleviating social, economic, and cultural disenfranchisement.

1.7 **Limitations**

While this research focuses on community-based programs and utilizes the feedback provided by individuals associated with them, it should not be construed as an evaluation of those programs. Instead we are concentrating on the program area in which they operate (the arts) and the linkages that this program area has with positive neighbourhood outcomes.

As well, although this research did not purposely focus on organizations that cater exclusively to youth, many of the examples of arts programming provided by the organizations interviewed herein are either intentionally or unintentionally geared towards youth. The interrelated themes of youth services, issues facing urban youth and the mental, intellectual and social development of young people are undoubtedly important ones with which to gain a greater appreciation of these programs, but are beyond the scope of this study.

This report should also be considered a first step towards a larger research agenda. After many discussions pertaining to the breadth of this research and the wealth of information to be gathered, we decided early on to frame our work as a first step towards a greater understanding as to how access to art, artists and arts programming develops community capacity. A logical next step would be to carry out a similar project with the users and participants of the organizations and programs interviewed in this phase in order to uncover why they participate, and what the challenges and benefits are associated with their participation.

The inventory list of arts-based organizations developed for this report was by no means exhaustive. Not all of the organizations on our initial list could participate for a variety of reasons. There were also some organizations that never made it onto the list, or were discovered too late in the study to participate.

The term “capacity” also deserves some further comment. Among the many terms that proliferate through the community development, social sciences and business literature, perhaps the most elusive is the word capacity, which can mean many different things depending on the perspective from which it is being employed. With this in mind we have used the word as sparingly as possible. In the context of this research it refers to the ability on the

part of the organizations, communities and individuals involved to participate in (or work towards) various acts of development — itself a problematic term — but one that denotes desirable progress towards human, social, economic or community goals.

Finally, we should clarify the most important terms used in the report: Is it a community-based organization that offers art, or an arts organization that is community-based? Sometimes the answer to this question was clear, and other times not. We decided to get comfortable with the grey area when making a distinction between the two categories of organizations. Yes, one could argue that there might be a difference in instruction/delivery when art is a “by-product” of some other goal, as opposed to learning “art for art’s sake.”¹ For the first phase of research, it was felt to be important not to get too hung up on semantics or attempts to define perfect categories; but in the context of access to art activities in the inner city, we decided, as the saying goes, that “it’s all good.”



“There is room for more cooperation between these organizations and community art programmers, resulting in, among other things, much needed employment for member artists”

2.0 | Literature Review

Across North America and Europe studies have been undertaken on a variety of scales to determine the relationships between art, community development and quality of life. This literature review surveys two approaches to evaluating art and community. The first looks at data and research done on the impacts that art activities, and the presence of artists and art organizations in a community, have upon the overall capacity of the community ("*thematic review*"). The second approach references specific successful community-based arts initiatives in Canada and the United States, and identifies the key program components and characteristics that appear to encourage community building and contribute to social, economic, and environmental well-being ("*case studies*").

2.1 Thematic Review

2.1.1 Community Dividends

Art and community development research indicates that the presence of arts, artists, art activities and programs in a community are means to enhance all manner of community capacity, from improving education levels and housing stock to increasing land values and population density (*communityarts.net, 2004*). Recently, the presence of the "creative class" has been identified as a primary factor in the economic development of cities, and that the presence of "creatives" is a factor in attracting more members of the broad "creative class" who play a significant role in sustaining and encouraging growth in cities (*Florida, 2003*).

The 2003 study, *Leveraging Assets: How Small Budget Arts Activities Benefit Neighbourhoods* offers insight into how community capacity can be measured and the indicators that the presence of arts organizations and activities make available for this assessment (Grams and Warr, 2003). This in-depth report focused on the City of Chicago and the role that small budget arts activities play in leveraging local and non-local assets for neighbourhood improvement. Their findings demonstrate that small budget art activities effectively help build social and cultural capital, and that they play a “unique role in building social networks in neighbourhoods, they enable access to new resources and they build civic dialogue” (Grams and Warr, 2003 p. 1). Art activities also provide unique opportunities to “build and incubate social capital” which then help communities “...mobilize resources to improve the quality of life” (ibid). Networks created through participation involve “mutual obligation,” and therefore facilitate reciprocity. Grams and Warr’s research demonstrates that this reciprocity exemplifies how art activities leverage assets in the community and works to create new networks, supplement and improve existing networks, urban neighborhoods, and the lives of those who live in these neighbourhoods.

These findings illustrate the values and empowerment that are and can be promoted and sustained through arts programming. Kids have a place to go to get a decent snack, high quality art instruction, and the opportunity to be creatively engaged and rewarded for their participation. As Grams and Warr point out, access to drop-in art classes offers the potential to forge new relationships with peers and neighbours; to supplement and improve on existing relationships, and to improve the neighbourhoods that are home to these relationships (Grams & Warr 2003).

2.1.2 Arts and Education Dividends

In the early 1990s, Dr. James Catterall analyzed U.S. Department of Education data that surveyed 25,000 students over several years. His research, published in the report *Involvement in the Arts and Success in Secondary Schools* (Catterall 1998), demonstrates that access to art activities and education in the student’s “early years” contributes strongly to higher academic performance in later school years. Catterall found that access to art activities and education led to increased test scores, greater community participation, lower drop-out rates and higher self-esteem. In addition, his research demonstrates that all of these benefits occur regardless of the socio-economic status of the student, and that those who have higher rates of arts involvement are more likely to participate in their communities and to have positive attitudes about being involved in providing community service (Catterall 1998). Additional research by Catterall and others supports the contention that arts education can make a positive difference for students’ academic performance, particularly those from low socio-economic backgrounds:

Economically disadvantaged students often do not have the same opportunities to become engaged in the arts. But,

as this study shows, those low-SES children who do participate in the arts also perform better, academically and socially. Therefore, from a policy perspective, it may be beside the point whether arts instruction is the fundamental cause of increased performance, or instead is one of the conditions of superior schools. Either way, economically disadvantaged youngsters should have the same opportunities as others to partake in the benefits that the arts can bring, through either improved academic performance or improved schooling (*Catterall, Chapleau & Iwanaga 1999*).

2.1.3 Cultural Participation and Community Development

Much of the literature pertaining to community cohesion and the benefit of arts to community development promote the concept of inclusiveness and the importance of “community buy-in” as tenets of any successful strategy or community program. It is these elements that contribute to community capacity building.

Community capacity is made up of human, social, economic and cultural capital. All of these elements contribute to what is often called “social cohesion” (*Jeannotte, 4*). Social cohesion is the overall strength of the connection between individuals and the spaces they occupy (*14*). In *Singing Alone? The Contribution of Cultural Capital to Social Cohesion and Sustainable Communities*, the author M.S. Jeannotte writing on behalf of the Department of Canadian Heritage, looks at how the networks and relationships that take place in a community affects its strength. Her research demonstrates that these relationships and networks are in some part created, reinforced and supported by access to the arts. She offers a model of the causal links between social cohesion and social outcomes and determines that:

The evidence so far seems to suggest that cultural participation helps to connect individuals to the social spaces occupied by others and encourages “buy-in” to institutional rules and shared norms of behaviour. Without this “buy-in”, individuals are unlikely to enter into willing collaboration with others and without that cooperation, civic engagement and social capital — key components of social cohesion — may be weakened (*14*).

This “willing participation” helps to empower communities as it brings people together and fosters new networks, partnerships and bonds. These relationships offer the possibility of information-sharing, skill-building, and the promotion of cultural awareness as well as reducing boredom and crime (*8*) — all of which increases community pride, buy-in and individual and collective capacity. Jeannotte states, “As individuals invest in their own cultural and human capital and participate in various types of cultural events and activities, they also appear to increase the social capital within their communities” (*13*).

Previous work done in Winnipeg supports the conclusions found in the general literature. In 1999, Front Line Art Forum on Community Art was held in Winnipeg, organized by Art City and the St. Norbert Arts and Cultural Centre. The forum brought together 20 artists, funding representatives and social service personnel for a roundtable discussion concerning the value of community arts and arts projects, and the reasons why these programs must be supported. The Forum concluded that the process of making art participatory —

- ✦ encourages an involved, action-based society;
- ✦ facilitates healthy interaction;
- ✦ increases pride, responsibility, and energy towards building healthy communities Increases social capital;
- ✦ increases openness to outside communities;
- ✦ leads to positive engagement in community development and change; and
- ✦ increases ability for complex decision-making and conflict transformation (*Front Line Art, 1999,p.6*).

2.1.4 Organizational Issues

Laverack's (2001) work in the community empowerment literature suggests the following "operational domains", or factors that influence the success of community empowerment initiatives, and in terms of this discussion, those initiatives related to art:

- ✦ Participation
- ✦ Leadership
- ✦ Organizational structures
- ✦ Problem assessment
- ✦ Resource mobilization
- ✦ Asking "why"
- ✦ Links with other people and organizations
- ✦ The role of the outside agents
- ✦ Programme management (*Laverack 2001, p. 138-141*).

These "domains" are intricately connected, but they also individually influence the ability of a community to empower itself. Art is empowering, both personally and politically; at the community level, it can engage and mobilize disadvantaged populations. However, for a variety of reasons, art organizations are often unable to adequately address each of these organizational aspects of community development and empowerment. Laverack's work takes a first

step towards this deficit in community-based arts operations by providing a concrete framework on which to hang the more ambiguous social components of community that make effective program development and management difficult.

A second and integral application of Laverack's research in relation to community arts stresses the specific organizational components necessary for community buy-in, particularly in relation to cultural barriers and differences. Although the concept of community-based organization connects the need for culturally representative community builders, Laverack notes that: "In a program context, leaders are often introduced as external organizers because they are seen to have the necessary management skills and expertise" (138). This practice, he continues, not only reduces the likelihood of buy-in by primary stakeholders, but also ignores the tradition of historically and culturally established community leadership. (This point is particularly salient given the documented growth of Winnipeg's inner city Aboriginal population and lack of programs and services that respond to Aboriginal people's realities [Silver et al., 2002, p. 4-6]). Laverack also suggests similar disenfranchisement often results if a lack of stakeholder involvement over all aspects of program management persists, and that outside agencies must share resource allotment, organizational and evaluative responsibilities (*Laverack 2001, p. 141-142*).

2.1.5 Models and Evaluation

Evaluation of arts-related programming is problematic.

Approaches to increasing the social capital in inner city or disadvantaged neighbourhoods through the arts vary across Canada. Programs, instructors, users and even the physical space used to deliver arts activities differ according to the assets and needs of each neighbourhood. This often ambiguous combination of practices results in elusive definitions of community arts. These definitions, in turn, frequently translate into undervaluing and misunderstanding on the part of policymakers and potential funding bodies regarding the contribution of community arts to social cohesion and societal well-being. With the fundamental elements of community-based arts activities perceived as unclear, formal evaluation of these activities has been difficult.

Drawing these basic community connections is essential to determine best practices of successful inner city arts initiatives. However, community arts literature points out the danger of the wholesale importation of models or structures that have evolved outside each community's unique social, cultural and structural environment. Borrup (2003) suggests that, too often, government agencies and other funders dictate and define the components of "successful" initiatives, and that these practices respond to their own need to "hold these organizations and each other accountable and use consistent standards to track and define success" (*Borrup 2003, para. 11*). He further

suggests that a system of evaluation allowing for unique, community-driven cultural solutions that respond to their evolving assets and needs is necessary.

2.1.6 The Need for Mentoring

Jane Jacobs, in her book *Dark Age Ahead* (2004) concludes that cultural practices necessarily evolve from the sharing and mentorship of “living culture”. Building on Borrup’s reasoning, Jacob argues that the act of transcribing culture through print and the Internet has led to a false belief in the permanence of culture. Cultures, she says,

live through word of mouth and example...that is why we have apprenticeships, internships, student tours, and on-the-job training as well as manuals and textbooks. Educators and mentors, whether they are parents, elders, or schoolmasters, use books and videos if they have them, but they also speak, and when they are most effective, as teachers, parents, or mentors, they also serve as examples (*ibid*, 5).

A neighbourhood may have willing organizers, deserving participants, and a suitable facility, but most lack residents with experience in managing even the most informal of arts and cultural initiatives. Skill-sharing and program mentorship is a natural step in the development of community-based arts programs. The advising, sharing and networking that occurs between community arts groups informs program growth and success through the refining of desired program goals, and the shared understanding of the basic ingredients that combine to produce those outcomes. This kind of information sharing is common practice in arts networks, and indeed essential to the growth and sustainability of the community arts “community”.

2.1.7 Policy, Racism and Community Development

One of the interesting themes in this area of study is that the literature shows that programs making linkages between the arts and community revitalization have a long history. Gibson (2002) describes the American Federal Art Project (FAP) that led to the establishment of community art centers in “culturally needy” areas — including poor urban communities — in the 1930 and 40s (*Gibson 2002, p. 281*). Based on the statements of artists, Gibson concludes that the art centers were seen as addressing not only endemic discrimination against black artists, but also providing spaces for cultural production for ‘all the people.’ In this way, the black artist figured in community art center discourse as an artist-citizen who could contribute directly to the reconstruction of the nation by encouraging the development of an institutionally-based, participatory cultural process (*ibid, p. 284*).

However, the literature also shows that race and racism have been poorly integrated into the arena of community revitalization programs and policy-making, and as result, the piecemeal approaches taken — enterprise zones, community economic development, university-community partnerships etc. — have been unable to make fundamental differences in inner-city communities (*Taylor & Cole 2001*).

It is within the dimension and context of race and racism that many of the issues discussed in this report must be considered. As in the case of many U.S. cities, those communities most in need of investments, services and programs are populated disproportionately by a visible minority population — and in the case of Winnipeg it is Aboriginal people. However, the literature shows that the topics of race and racism enter the arena of community revitalization programs policy-making only rarely. According to Lawrence (*2001*), while a host of organizations, funders, governments and social scientists have developed various revitalization initiatives to address inner-city poverty and marginalization, they have in general, actually done little to reduce “the social and economic contrasts evident in many metropolitan areas” (34); they fail to take race into account in a meaningful way. Lawrence goes on to stress that many of the assumptions, institutions and practices pertaining to urban planning and community building perpetuate and reinforce systemic racism (35).

While community revitalization strategies have developed differently in Canada than in the USA, there are some common elements, including the erosion of the urban tax base as a result of “suburbanization”, the trend towards inner-city decline as a result of this erosion, as well as the lack of affordable housing and amenities for low income people in inner city neighbourhoods. Lawrence charts the evolution of community strategies from those organized around the principle of “empowerment” to more contemporary initiatives that are organized around “comprehensive community building.” “Comprehensive community initiatives” (CCIs) emphasize the need for community members to act individually and collectively to make change. In other words, the emphasis is on building community within the community in order to create the social capital required for sustainability and self-efficacy (42).

Lawrence, while recognizing the value of community based initiatives that are CCIs, is also critical that the practical, basic need support of these kinds of initiatives once again does not address race in a way that could assist in truly building community capacity. He argues, that in fact, CCIs that do not address the context of racism head on (and he adds that this is especially the case in terms of the funders), continue to reinforce the very dynamics that give rise to community instability in the first place (43).

Lawrence states:

Funders play a major role in how CCIs address race. Although the (private) foundations that sponsor

these initiatives advocate empowerment and community control — principles that, taken seriously, could not disregard race and power, they generally lack the inclination or institutional flexibility, to allow CCIs to follow race — conscious paths. [Furthermore], The challenge for community building as a whole in the post-civil rights period has been to understand race as a problem of context, rather than just a process. CCIs have been seeking ways to collaborate across racial and cultural lines without really taking on the responsibility of pushing for racial group empowerment. CCIs have not really explored how racial group position shapes community capacities in fundamental ways, and what is required to remove or counteract the society's racial hierarchy. (43).

The reality is that many of the issues that contribute to racism are systemic and reinforce circumstances such as poverty, high drop out rates and poor health. It does not matter how many work training programs, arts activities, and educational opportunities are offered in a community if they are not done so in a context that derives from the truthful experience of those who participate in them.

2.2 **Case Studies**

To enhance our examination of theoretical program literature, we also looked at successful arts programs across Canada and the United States. A brief look at four examples — Regent Park Focus in Toronto, Gallery 37 in Chicago, Art Start in New York and Street Culture Kidz Project Inc. in Regina — will highlight program characteristics that can lead to desired community-defined outcomes. These selections are not the result of a systematic review of all available programming, but were selected by the researchers because they embodied important characteristics in common that highlight the themes of the report.

2.2.1 **Regent Park Focus, Toronto**

Located in Canada's largest and oldest public housing community in Toronto, Regent Park Focus is a community-based arts organization that has, since 1991, offered programs that reflect the unique character of the community. Its goals include employment, civic engagement, promotion of health and effecting positive change. The range of programs offered includes a print and on-line newspaper, radio, video, photography and a host of after-school programming, from hip hop to yoga and "new media."

Regent Park Focus receives annual funding from the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long Term Care, and project

dollars from corporate donors and all three levels of government. It has evolved into a powerful example of what art can do for community; the organization has acted as consultant to municipal and federal governing bodies, as well as receiving several awards for programming initiatives (Huggins). Key to the organization's success is that many of its young staff members are rooted in the community. Most have been with the organization for several years and have graduated through several stages of program participation, instruction and facilitation. According to media program founder, Adonis Huggins, "the secret of the Regent Park Focus success, without a doubt, lies in our ability to engage young people and draw upon their talents, creativity and energy in the service of building a healthier community." (*Huggins, personal communication*).

Part of the success in the media arts activities of Regent Park Focus has been the result of the locating the media production facilities in the community, which has encouraged both resident participation and a sense of ownership. Newspaper articles, short videos and radio shows created by community youth deal with topics ranging from community events, to drug abuse, education, global politics and depression. The organization's programming encourages participants to use their own experiences and concerns as fodder for their creations. The art resulting from the organization's various programs highlights the cultural diversity of the neighbourhood.

2.2.2 Gallery 37, Chicago

Gallery 37 is a unique organization that is partly a non-profit corporation and partly a division of the Department of Cultural Affairs, City of Chicago. It was created in 1991 with a mission to offer quality arts programs that provide self-exploration, skill development, aesthetic awareness, and empower communities to achieve excellence. The result has been the creation of over 28,000 arts-based jobs for young people, and 2,500 jobs for professional artist-instructors ("frequently asked questions"). The well-established organization acts as an arts program centre, performance space, gallery, café, store and above all, a place for local artists and members of the public to come together and share their interests in the arts.

Gallery 37 Center for the Arts has over 30 instructional spaces where teaching artists work with apprentices to create visual, performing and culinary works of art through its many programs. Although the center's original target group was youth, adults are also encouraged to take part in programs and classes such as World Kitchen - affordable cooking classes designed to reflect Chicago's cultural diversity — or artScape classes, which offer anything from dance and drumming to furniture design and storytelling.

There are four youth programs offered through Gallery 37:

1. The Advanced Arts Education Program is a year-long program designed to give artistically inclined high school students in-depth instruction, development and mentorship in the arts. This program operates for two hours during the afternoon five days a week throughout the school year, and results in school credits towards each student's graduation (<http://www.gallery37.org/youth/aaep/>). The program also tries to eliminate potential barriers to participation like transportation by providing free bus transport to and from the classes.
2. Connections is a first-step program for youth ages 10-13 at Gallery 37. The program is designed for inclusion, connecting typically developing youth with students with moderate to profound disabilities.
3. The Downtown Program is the Gallery's most visible program, taking place in a variety of spaces in the downtown neighbourhood year-round. The program is a youth artist apprenticeship, aligning participants with professional artists who guide and mentor them. The program is open to the broader public as well, who are encouraged to wander through project sites, observing the young artists at work (<http://www.gallery37.org/youth/downtown/>). Program streams include painting, broadcast and video, culinary arts and operatics.
4. The last program coordinated through Gallery 37 is the Neighbourhoods Program. Open to youth aged 14-21, this summer program is located in community-based organizations in participating neighbourhoods. The program is an outreach initiative between Gallery administrators and neighbourhood arts organizations designed to improve neighbourhoods with the creativity and sharing of residents.

The center's programming success is due in large part to its multi-generational and inclusive approach to public arts programming and participation, and not surprisingly, to its mission to keep public programs affordable, if not free. Moreover, Gallery 37's unique administration — part government, part non-profit — has earned it recognition as a model for government innovation. As a result, its success has been an example in the creation of arts organizations in two-dozen U.S. cities and abroad (ibid).

2.2.3 Art Start, NY

In 1991 a team of volunteers began working with homeless children in New York shelters, offering them art workshops as part of a program called Arts in the Shelters. Since then Art Start has expanded to work with seven shelters across the city, reaching children through music, film and one on one art mentoring. The organization's mission, to "value and nurture the voices, hearts and minds of under-served children and teenagers and help them transform their

lives through the creative process" (*"Art Start: Mission"*), has led to well-supported and youth-driven programs that have brought tremendous results to New York's neighbourhoods.

Art Start's Arts in the Shelters began with three programs aimed at three age groups. Story Hour, for three- to six-year olds focused on literacy. The Studio and Performing Arts Workshops were designed for seven- to twelve-year olds, and include a variety of arts projects implemented over the course of a year. The participants also create and publish a newsletter called Art Start Paper to highlight their work. Similarly, youth in the Teen Project create a magazine featuring art and writing from current projects. Kids from all three programs are given opportunities to present or perform their work with the cooperation of Art Start's partners (*"Art Start: Programs"*).

Mentoring plays an important role in Art Start programs. Recognizing that children living in shelters often miss the close personal relationships and guidance kids need, the organization provides artists with training in mentoring, and in their most recent program, The Mentoring Project, they encourage one-on-one arts-based mentoring relationships. These relationships build some consistency and routine into the lives of children living in otherwise unstable conditions. Art Start offers two other programs for older teens who have recently left prison or who may be struggling in so-called "last chance" high schools (*"Art Start Programs"*). Using pop culture as a means of engaging youth, the Media Works and Hip Hop projects teaches participants to think critically and develop a public voice. They are responsible for researching and creating marketable music, film and print projects.

With countless awards, and government, foundation and private funding, the program has created meaningful opportunities for kids in New York shelters. According to the Art Start web site, 93 percent of youth in their teen programs have remained in school, received equivalency degrees or went on to post-secondary education (*"Art Start: People"*). By bringing free programming to the participants, Art Start has eliminated potential barriers to youth participating and transformed an otherwise difficult and sometimes harsh environment into a place where they are respected, cared for and encouraged.

2.2.4 Street Culture Kidz Project Inc, Regina

From its beginning as a summer program for kids in one of Regina's inner city neighbourhoods in 1997, Street Culture Kidz has grown into a permanent community development fixture in the city. Attracting between twenty-five and forty teens who participate regularly in the organization (up to half of whom participate at least four times a week), and over 100 children to their noon-hour and after-school programs, Street Culture Kidz reaches many of Regina's youth considered at risk because of addiction, poverty or unstable family life.

At Street Culture Kidz, youth are truly empowered. Programming is centre on what the youth involved are interested in pursuing, while building learning, skill development and employment training into every activity (Simpson, 2000). Most of these youth-driven activities involve the arts, from festival face painting to culinary arts, but programming also gives at-risk youth training in administration and business skills, through participation in the design and delivery of the program. Teenagers assist with young children by facilitating after-school programs and learn mentorship and leadership skills. One of Street Culture Kidz popular programs is a weekly open art night at MacKenzie Art Gallery. Here youth learn about various painting, sculpting and textile techniques.

Program founder and executive director Kim Sutherland believes the program's success lies in the environment of support Street Culture Kidz creates that allows the troubled, difficult kids who participate to choose "personal change" In fact, almost all of the 33 full-time and part-time staff members is a former program participant ("*It's an Art*", 2002). As the program grew, other signs of its success began to develop as well. For instance, kids participating more frequently, made more progress, with up to two thirds of participants making positive personal changes and developing healthier family relationships. Moreover, youth participants showed signs of recognizing Street Culture Kidz as a reliable support source, by bringing report cards in to share with staff (Simpson, 2000).

Street Culture Kidz has been lauded as a successful crime prevention program for youth and has received funding from Human Resources Development Canada, and the National Crime Prevention Centre. The program continues to expand within Regina with many regular activity sites. Street Culture Kidz is also gaining attention nationally, as other cities show interest in their youth-directed approach.

2.3 **Conclusion**

As we have seen, art-based programming offers numerous benefits to its participants, and can help to empower groups that otherwise feel marginalized. At the same time, there is a recognition that standard evaluative measures are not always appropriate to gauge these successes, and that more "creative" tools are required. There is no one model of success, yet those agencies that we have selected for review have some important thing in common: they are rooted in, and engaged with, their communities; they are open to community ownership and participation in their operations; and they allow diversity to flourish, not just in terms of what they do, but who walks in their doors.

**“Is it a community-based organization that offers art,
or an arts organization that is community-based?”**



For
KIAYA

3.0

Findings from Interviews: Art Organizations

“Art offers alternative communication and transferring of ideas. A good way to think about things. Put up artwork and the circle of communication extends to everyone.”

— Project participant interview

3.1

Organization Profiles

All of the respondents identified their organizations as community-based. About two thirds of the organization are arts and cultural organizations first, such as the West End Cultural Centre, and the other third are community organizations that offer many services, among them access to arts and cultural activities such as the Ndinawe Resource Centre. It is important to note however, that the distinction between the two types of organizations is often a grey area. The reality of community-based organization in the inner city is that they are many things to many people; one arts organization we spoke to called itself the “community living room,” meaning that it is open to all of the people in the community beyond access to art activities. On many days this means offering all kinds of assistance from the use of a phone to contacting social services agencies on behalf of residents in crisis. Hence, using the term “community-based organization” is the most inclusive means to describe all of the organizations that participated in this study.

The organizations consulted are located in the following areas (see Map):

- ✦ Burrows Keewatin,
- ✦ Dufferin West,
- ✦ Daniel McIntyre,
- ✦ Spence
- ✦ Colony
- ✦ North Portage
- ✦ South Point Douglas
- ✦ Old Financial District
- ✦ William Whyte
- ✦ Alexander/Centennial,
- ✦ St. Matthews,
- ✦ Broadway
- ✦ South Portage
- ✦ North St. Boniface
- ✦ Main Street North

All of the organizations are governed by Boards of Directors, and all are not-for-profit. There is disparity between the average annual budgets for the organizations we consulted. More than half the groups operate with budgets of \$250,000 or more (the majority of these coming in at around \$300,000). However, a significant number of organizations we consulted operate with less than \$25,000 each year (see table on page 53). All but 2 of the organizations depend at least in part on the efforts of volunteers. The average number of full-time staff varies depending on whether the organization is dedicated solely to arts programming, such as Martha Street Printmakers, or whether it is a larger community service centre such as Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata. In the former, the average number of full-time staff per organization is 3, in the latter, it is 38. The presence and number of part-time staff varied greatly depending on whether or not the organization does seasonal festival programming. For instance, both the Fringe Festival and the Festival du Voyageur augment their staffs with part-time employees and volunteers around the time of the actual festivals.

3.2 Funding

“ There is no money for infrastructure, to fix the roof, to fix the furnace. It is a scramble for the organization and a scramble to concentrate on what we do.” — Project participant interview

“General operating dollars are harder to get than project specific dollars. The time factor of applying for money years in advance is contrary to creativity and producing which is spontaneous. Funders are determining the direction of the grants, which ghettoizes people and groups. This is not good for longevity...funders are not the cultural animators.” — Project participant interview

Almost all of the organizations included in this study receive some combination of federal, provincial and municipal funding. In addition, many receive or have received dollars from the United Way, and/or The Winnipeg Foundation. A few organizations also receive some sort of corporate sponsorship. When asked about the challenges in obtaining funding, many cited the difficulties in getting dollars for non-program related expenditures such as fixing the roof or paying for administration. The research team heard many times that there is less and less money available for arts programming overall and more and more competition for what is available. Funders are more likely to make dollars available for programming than for core operating funds. As a result, highly visible and productive community-based organizations are working without sustained core operating funds while providing crucial programming to underserved communities. Based on interview responses, it is clear that this funding formula is a disaster, resulting in overextended staff and staff burnout, sub-par facilities and inconsistent programming environments, inability to properly train new staff when necessary, and above all, no safety net for the organization itself.

Unfortunately, this program-centric approach to funding community-based organizations often necessitates a patchwork approach to administration, human resources and building maintenance. This patchwork approach weakens the overall infrastructure of the organization and the ability to deliver effective and relevant programming.

Why is there so much disparity between funding for programs and funding for infrastructure? More than a few respondents cited the challenges of quantifying the effect that fixing the furnace has on the users of the organizations, whereas being able to cite the numbers of participants who attend a given arts program is a more attractive measurement for funders. Every funder has different parameters in terms of accountability. Some funding bodies require answers to a lot of invasive questions concerning the participants, so as one Executive Director pointed out, "it also becomes a question of how you build trust when you are supposed to ask very personal questions. Invasiveness is disguised as accountability."

Another issue facing community-based organizations is the inability of many funding bodies to commit to sustained funding no matter what the success of the program. This makes it very difficult for organizations to plan ahead, and to provide continuity within the organization and in the programming delivered. One interviewee spoke of how entire programs "just disappear" when a particular funding program or allocation is terminated. The lack of consistency at the funding/bureaucratic level directly impacts on the ability to maintain consistency at the programming/community/individual level.

3.3 Collaborations

“There are results especially in the collaborations with schools. It works well for students interested in non-traditional methods of education. Programming is very open and the students are open. Program takes place on-site at the studio as well as in other galleries to expose the students to different art forms and environments. This method works because art learning tends to be more lateral, less didactic and offers learning in a non-conventional way that students really respond to. Students are engaged, and often come into the studio in their off-time to use the facility.”

— Project participant interview

All of the community-organizations we interviewed collaborate in some manner with other community-based groups. These collaborations range from other community arts groups, to local businesses or social service agencies to neighbourhood schools. In some cases, an organization partnered with the provincial or federal government to deliver a local program. Everyone cited collaborations with other community members as crucial to the process of creating allies, sustaining services and sharing resources — in other words, to the success of the organization. Many, when asked if they would do more collaborations in the future, were emphatic that they would.

When asked whether or not they collaborated with established art organizations in the city, most groups responded that they did not, despite the fact that they offer arts programming. There seems to be two reasons for not seeking out partnerships with more established arts institutions like the Winnipeg Art Gallery or the Royal Winnipeg Ballet. First, community-based organizations are often skeptical as to the relevance of programming and resources when they are offered by institutions they see as completely removed from their own community and its needs. An art instructor at a large and community-driven organization pointed out that “structured connections” between more established organizations and those in the community may not have the flexibility necessary to meet the diverse needs in the community. Secondly, it became clear that many of these organizations were unaware of collaborative opportunities/possibilities with established arts organizations and that given their generally under-supported infrastructure, do not often have the resources to initiate relationships with organizations that do not share some of their daily and/or immediate concerns.

Many organizations would like to increase the number of collaborations with other community-based arts groups in order to improve programming and offer more events. In some cases, more established community arts organizations are asked to help start art programming by other community organizations.

3.4 Users

The majority of participants in a variety of arts programs offered by inner city community-based organizations are youths, ranging from very young kids to older teens and young adults. Yet, when asked what the median age was of people attending arts programs most respondents were uncomfortable doing so because even though the majority of arts activities offered appeal to youth, the impact is multi-generational. In some instances, this is because adults asked that programs that were initially provided for youth also be provided for adults. In others, because of the nature of some drop-in classes, anyone of any age group is welcome to participate. More than one respondent pointed out that babies and young children are often present during these programs, as they come along with their caretakers or parents. The audience for these activities is also multi-generational, for everyone in the community (and beyond) is invited to experience the work created via open houses, outdoor murals, and exhibitions.

The question as to whether any special needs (and we left the definition of special needs up to the respondent) groups participated in arts activities elicited a variety of responses, from “no” to identifying a variety of oft marginalized groups, from those with mental health issues to the physically challenged. Interviewees often cited poverty as a disability. One respondent stated that “those considered special needs somewhere else, aren’t special needs here, they’re part of the community.” Anyone can be a member of the community, and therefore everyone is incorporated into that which is offered by the organization.

3.5 Community concerns

“The crux of everything is poverty.” — Project participant interview

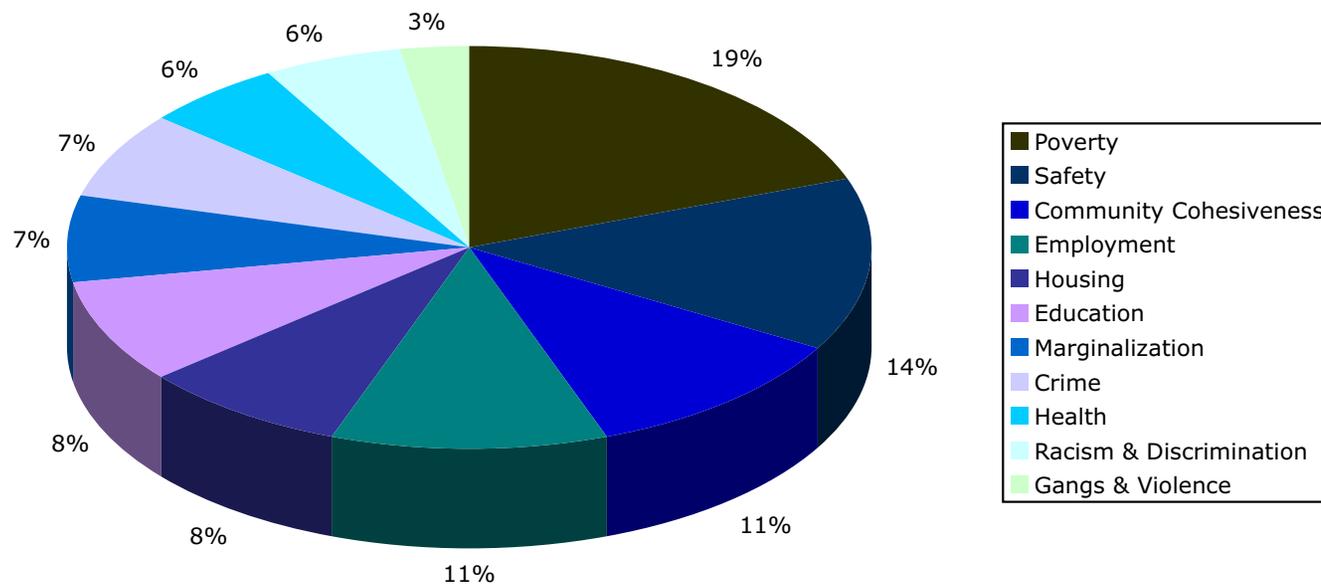
A large part of each interview was devoted to the questions about community concerns and the relationship between these concerns and the ability to deliver programming. This section included a list of eleven areas and each interviewee was asked to comment on whether or not a particular category was an area of concern. After going through the list, they were asked to identify the three “most urgent” areas of concern (see *Figure 3: Community Concerns*). The respondent was then asked to identify some of the assets in their community. Following this, using the same list, each interviewee was asked to discuss how their organization’s programming responds to or addresses the issues raised in each area of concern. They were also asked how these community concerns affect programming and whether any of these areas limit the organizations’ ability to meet goals and objectives. Finally, returning to the

list of assets identified earlier, the respondents were asked to elaborate as to how these assets affected programming and if they strengthened the organization's ability to meet goals and objectives.

Without question, the number one area of concern identified is poverty. As one Executive Director put it, the impact of poverty on these neighbourhoods "weigh[s] heavy on the heart." Safety, crime, unaffordable housing, racism, marginalization, and employment issues were cited as major areas of concern in the course of the interviews, and all were recognized as being related to poverty.

All of the organizations we spoke with see value in arts programming as a means with which to address myriad factors compounding poverty. Unemployment, education, health and skill development, community connections, individual

Community Concerns



self-worth, communication skills, trust and so on — all can be altered and improved in some way by access to arts programming. For example, Graffiti Gallery not only provides youth with art instruction, but also teaches commercial painting skills, offers mentorship possibilities, and the opportunity to be seen as making a positive contribution to their community via mural art making. At the Andrews Street Family Centre, art is a component of virtually every offering, so while participating in the Adult Healthy Relationships program, access to art resources is part of the experience. At Mondragon Bookstore and Coffeehouse, art is used as a political tool to empower marginalized groups.

Safety, crime, unaffordable housing, racism and marginalization, and employment issues are all tentacles of poverty. Another issue discussed in a variety of contexts by our participants was street gangs. Gangs are a reality in Winnipeg, especially in the inner city. One Executive Director stated that other arts groups in the city need to address the growing numbers of active gangsters in this city, many of whom are recruited at a very young age. The Director cited his organization's somewhat unconventional approach in providing opportunities for ex-gangsters, who are encouraged to help out in the organization in order to create more possibilities for themselves and to demonstrate to younger kids that there are alternatives to the street. Art can be used as a vehicle, and those offering these programs can see the "impact that art has on young gangsters, given the chance."

Another individual spoke of the stabilizing effect that employment has on the overall community, and that the cycle of unemployment takes so long to break. Many male youths are approached by gangs, which provide an alternative to this cycle. He stated that gangs are getting better-organized and harder to resist, and that by taking youth "out of the mainstream" they become even more entrenched in a cycle of limitations. For young women recruited by gangs it can be even harder to "get out" once forced into prostitution and all of its attendant difficulties. Providing safe and free access to art programming helps kids resist the lure of the streets in a variety of ways including providing them with a safe alternative place to be and allowing them to find a release, or outlet for the many social and economic pressures that are a reality in the inner city. The cyclical nature of poverty means that any forces that combat that cycle by increasing self-esteem, reducing marginalization and isolation, job, education, training opportunities etc., provide systemic benefits to the individual and the community at large.

3.6 **Assets**

After identifying and discussing areas of concern, respondents were then asked to identify the assets in their community. In direct contrast to how inner city communities are portrayed in the mainstream media, everyone we interviewed spoke of the strength and community cohesion within their neighbourhoods. Everyone is realistic about the

challenges within their neighbourhoods, and they accept these realities for better or worse as part of the fabric of the community. Most felt that their community is misunderstood or misrepresented by those outside of the inner city area. Several people pointed out community members willing to help out in whatever way they can. Children know who their neighbours are. There is no shortage of will in these neighbourhoods, and as one participant stated, “people are very attached to their neighbourhoods, to the projects and volunteer activities available to them. It is ironic given our reputation but people are attached.”

Neighbourhood associations were often cited as an asset in their ability to co-operate in capacity-building efforts. Qualities such as sharing and communality go a long way in “high-needs” communities towards fostering caring and collaboration. One respondent pointed out that when a community is made up of a ‘non-driving public” there are many more opportunities to get to know each other on the street. This is one aspect of a shared experience that produces community cohesion or “a sense of family.”

Other identified assets were of a more physical nature. In several cases, respondents noted that community infrastructure was an important asset for their organization. Examples ranged from the University of Winnipeg, for its research in surrounding communities, to nearby neighbourhood restaurants that would accommodate meetings and provide catering when needed. Still others mentioned that the concentration of business, media, and government services in the downtown area were a boon when fundraising, launching a new art show, or attempting to connect users with other social services providers.

3.7 **Programming**

“Art does so much.”

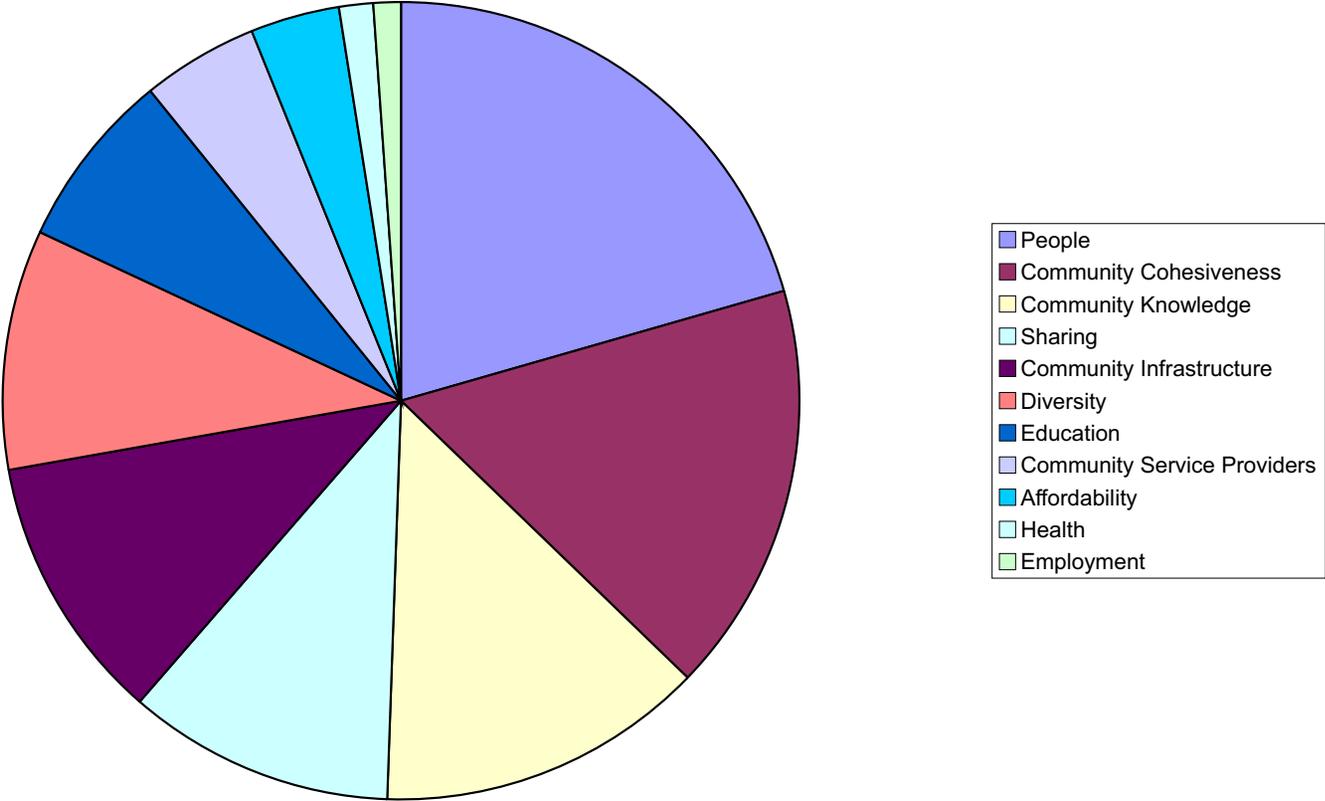
— Project participant interview

“One of our major teachings is that we are all related. These are all our kids and families in a culturally appropriate way.”

— Project participant interview

Art is attractive for many reasons. It can be anything — visual, aural, musical, textile, performance-based, literary, multi-media, abstract, political, and so on — created by anyone who is interested and given the opportunity. All art forms are represented at the community level, from after school drop-in art lessons to collaborations with local schools. Access to art and art skills has the power to transform so many things, expanding definitions of one’s self and surroundings. “Art for art’s sake” can be encouraged while simultaneously teaching skills that can be used for

Community Assets Identified By Arts Organizations



employment. Furthermore, art activities are an alternative to many negative influences. There is no criteria as to who can make art at the community level, there is no “good or bad,” and arts-based programming is in such high demand at the community level precisely because art is open to everyone. There are no “try-outs” or team selections, no required levels of literacy. It can be a highly cost-effective means to organize and engage groups of people. Anyone can make art. As one director of programming stated about his organization’s music programs, “Art is not pragmatic. Music goes to the heart and soul; it speaks to a different part of humans.”

Programming in inner city community organizations is incredibly diverse, and in many cases naturally culturally relevant. All of the people we interviewed were emphatic in their belief that access to art helps build self-esteem and provides means for people to express themselves in a positive and public way. There are drop-in art lessons, high-school accredited art instruction, singing classes for new mothers and their babies, leadership development, pow-wow dance clubs, large and small scale mural painting, writing and poetry workshops, d.j.-ing, breakdancing and m.c.-ing lessons, artist-in-residence placements, story telling, film and video programs, mentoring and teaching opportunities, structured and not-so-structured art programming, the list goes on. Much of the programming is free for drop-in classes and activities, or those done in partnership with other agencies.

The high levels of participation in many of the programs offered can be attributed to the overall level of community involvement in its implementation: such involvement can range from articulating what kind of programs are desired in the first place to helping to deliver these programs within the organization. It cannot be stated enough: programs that are community-driven engender community buy-in, which fosters community cohesion. Because engagement in art making is so simple it is a very effective means to support and encourage community cohesion.

3.8 **Aboriginal Values**

“Enjoyment of aboriginal cultural realities are built throughout the neighbourhood. This makes racism harder. The sense of isolation that comes with poverty is decreased when you come here and see support and other neighbours.”

— Project participant interview

According to the organizations surveyed, when community-driven momentum is in place and is supported, culturally relevant content is naturally integrated into all of the programming. While some organizations are geared specifically to aboriginal peoples, many organizations simply by virtue of being community-driven offer instruction in all sorts of aboriginal arts because it speaks to the knowledge and experience within the community, for both aboriginal and

non-aboriginal residents alike. Enjoyment of traditional aboriginal arts and crafts serve the community and city at large, and the community residents able to share them. Many organizations formally recognize the seven teachings: honesty, humility, truth, wisdom, love, respect and bravery. Other organizations, while their allegiance to these principles may not be overt, are driven by members for whom these seven teachings are inherent, making them an intrinsic part of the organization. Other organizations are still learning how important programming that responds to the cultural realities of constituents can be.

3.9 **General Themes and Values**

All of the organizations were asked to respond to a list of emerging themes and values (see *Appendix 3*). They were asked how (or if), communication, opportunity, openness, diversity, inclusiveness and sharing are promoted within their organizations. They were asked to identify any additional values that guide their organization. The major themes identified in this area were community connectedness, consistency, culturally appropriate teachings, the opportunity for more than one chance, flexibility, and that art and community both give voice to people.

Open communication, whether within internal administration or through art making, is valued highly and seen as the foundation success. Drop-in programming helps to increase communication because it facilitates a more informal and therefore accessible approach to sharing and inclusiveness.

Art offers an alternative way to express feelings and thoughts. The alphabet, color wheel, and creative problem solving may all be taught through art-making, as are identifying objects and concepts and using all five senses. Art programming provides experiential learning, play learning, a hands-on education that translates no matter the literacy level of the participants. The values acknowledged — such as dignity, integrity and higher self-esteem etc. — are transferable in the broader sense of addressing poverty via employment and enabling greater engagement with the community. Access to art programming fosters self-sufficiency and confidence and the ability to improve one's own life. It also serves to create connections and bonds amongst neighbours and family members. In short, the benefits translate into active community building.

Opportunity begins with access. This could mean organizations and programming that are culturally relevant, linguistically diverse, and most of all community driven. Again, art programming differs from other recreational programs including sports, and certain school clubs, because it is not contingent on prior knowledge or excellence in a certain area. Arts activities, especially when provided for free, provide people with the opportunity to discover an appreciation for art, and can lead to potential creative employment opportunities. Different career choices

become an option, enriching cultural industries and the city as a whole. Openness is promoted by organizations through the transparency of operations and by their ability to be other things when needed. There must be promotion of a panoply of values in order to respond to the needs of the community in a timely and relevant manner.

Another way openness is encouraged is via the promotion of the community to the rest of the city. This promotion emphatically counters the stereotypes and racism that is directed at so many inner city neighbourhoods and the people in them. These organizations are positive symbols of their respective neighbourhoods to the city as a whole.

3.10 **Conclusion**

Of course, some of the organizations with whom we spoke are more successful than others for a variety of reasons, but most often because of better funding and/or stronger capacity in terms of infrastructure. No matter how much community buy-in there is, there must also be a basic standard of administrative prowess to make the whole thing go. And while we are eager to point out the strengths — and there are so many — there are also weaknesses. There are territorial issues between youth in some neighbourhoods, and between some organizations as well. There is a growing sense of competition for shrinking amounts of funding. There is an overall lack of sensitivity to issues around gender in terms of programming offered, for example how to reach and engage teenage girls and young women with children or how to keep boys engaged through the teen years. Some organizations that charge fees for classes, workshops and resources do not offer alternatives for those who cannot afford them (although many organizations do).

Art really does so much. The organizations represented here promote and use art as a means to reach the hard-to-reach, and to enrich the experiences of both individuals and communities.

“The high levels of participation in many of the programs offered can be attributed to the overall level of community involvement in its implementation”



“Because engagement in art making is so simple it is a very effective means to support and encourage community cohesion.”

4.0

Findings from Interviews with Community Development Organizations and Funders

Division between community art and professional art is the result of an old legacy. New activity — old dollars. It is hard to expect people to do new things with old dollars and outdated cultural policy. There can be will, but we are tied as long as the policies remain under-developed. — Project participant interview

The second phase of our research included interviews with funding bodies and community development agencies. The purpose of these interviews was to contextualize our interviews with arts/community organizations within the broader context of arts and community development in the city — how does community arts play into the larger arts sector and community development strategies, respectively? It is worth noting that while some funders see art as a tool unto itself, others see art more as an ancillary element in housing, employment, health, and education initiatives. In some respects, the responses we gathered revealed a shared recognition on behalf of funders and community arts organizations of their successes and challenges; in others respects, it was obvious there is still much ground to cover.

4.1

Building a “Culture of Culture”

Overwhelmingly, these interviews reiterated our findings from community interviews regarding the value of art as a unique tool for community development. As one interviewee stated, “in the inner city, it’s important to build on existing strengths — and those strengths are cultural.” This sentiment was stated in different forms, and was part of a larger discussion regarding the variety and appropriateness of art programming in the city at large, and at the

community level. Other respondents mentioned that the variety of art programming, and the reflection of culture or heritage in programs, was an asset in community building. At the same time, one interviewee saw the introduction of culturally-relevant programming as a constant struggle for some organizations, and mentioned barriers to its introduction including a lack of flexibility in school curricula, and a lack of cultural leaders in educational settings.

4.2 **The Need for More Formal Connections**

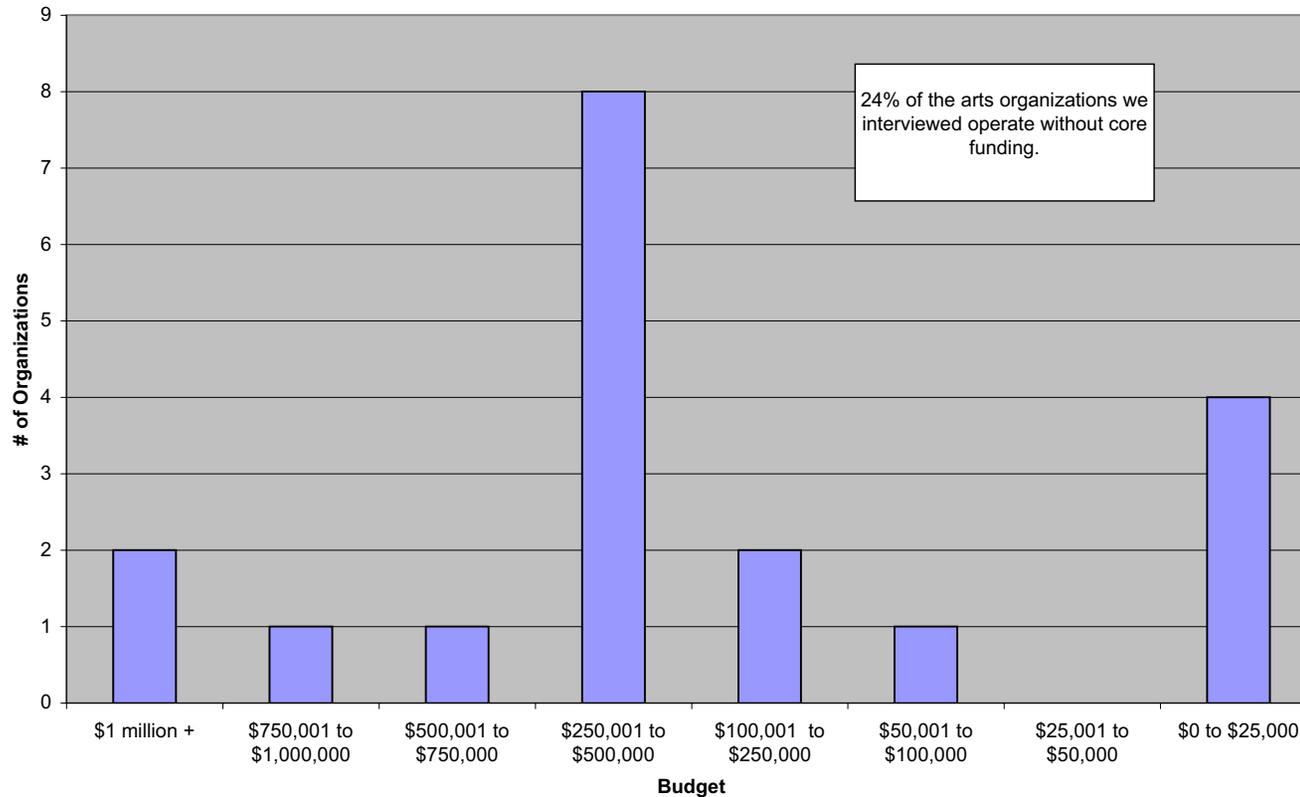
While confirming the importance of arts to Winnipeg's inner city neighbourhoods, respondents also recognized that Winnipeg is behind other cities in developing and/or recognizing the field of community arts. Fledgling arts groups in Winnipeg do not have many strong local models to look to, and those that do exist have been around for less than a decade. In other cities, strong community arts models have been around for as much as twenty five years. Acting as models or mentors for other arts groups can put a lot of stress on these relatively young organizations. Funders see the high standard of innovation as one of the reasons for this early mentorship role. One respondent commented that there is a core group of community-based arts groups in Winnipeg's inner city that are "miles ahead of anyone else."

However, despite accomplishing groundbreaking work and making positive progress, successes are rarely shared widely. In other words, the community arts field is connected very informally. Groups are often unaware that another organization may be going through similar difficulties, or already offering a program that they are considering. Instead, organizations are networked geographically through intra-neighbourhood connections, or through shared social characteristics, such as a shared target age group, or the socio-economic profile of serviced populations. The artistic networks that do exist are often "art-form specific." One participant suggested the arts community could benefit from an umbrella agency charged with brokering, supporting, and connecting, and advocating for arts groups from all disciplines and regardless of their status as "art groups" or "community groups." This body would offer a starting point for strategic connections between established arts organizations and community-based organizations as well. Another funder said that although they supported organizations financially, they also tried to create social connections between people or groups who could learn from one another. She also mentioned that barriers to better networking included the new privacy legislation, as it has become difficult and more time-consuming to share information amongst like-minded groups. Another barrier that was mentioned was the relative informality of the organizations involved in community-based arts efforts: groups are often moving into new spaces, or operate without a permanent office, staff or even telephone number.

4.3 Funding Challenges and Measures of Success

Discussing funding criteria and models for community-based arts dominated most of our secondary interviews. The major issue was the provision of programming money versus core funding for organizations of all varieties. Interviewees mentioned several challenges tied to funding community-based arts groups. One explained that provincially, program funding dollars were not originally intended for community-based art organizations, and that the Province is behind in changing guidelines to reflect growth in that sector of the arts overall.

Winnipeg Art Organizations Annual Budget Figures Summary



A second challenge, she noted, was that because community-arts groups are severely under-resourced and many do not have training in fundraising, grant writing, and evaluation. This skill deficit also translates into an inability to attract the array of funders, sponsors, and business partnerships that established arts groups are able to engage. As one interviewee told us, "Research showed that when grant programs are announced, training must follow in order to provide local opportunities and capacity development."

A third challenge is the on-going debate over what the success indicators or measurements actually are. Funders and development agencies all recognize that it can be difficult to assess the success of certain kinds of programming. However, some funding bodies have more inflexible requirements in terms of measurements than do others, and all want to see positive outcomes. Not only can these requirements place one more pressure on the administration of the organizations receiving monies, these expectations tend to exacerbate the ideological and philosophical divide between the people delivering programming in inner-city communities, and those in charge of funding them. This disconnection between those that "do" and those that "fund" was sometimes glaringly apparent in the course of both our primary and secondary interviews. This is an unsettling reality given the urgent need for both funding and programming.

Overall there is recognition that policy changes are a necessary precursor to better support for community-based arts. Current policy configurations limit government funding used to support the bricks and mortar of organizations; instead, organizations must prove themselves for a minimum of three consecutive years with programming funds before core funding becomes a possibility. Some funders are moving towards a multi-year funding model to cut down on the amount of grant and report writing necessary and at the same time provide some longer-term consistency and stability. Organized advocacy for more funds for community-based arts and the arts overall is necessary along with a restructuring of policy to accommodate and provide more equitable funding for emerging arts, artists and organizations.

In another interview, the challenge of risk associated with funding was discussed. This interviewee explained that awarding emerging arts groups with funding is sometimes seen as a risky investment. More than one interviewee in this secondary round acknowledged their concern that groups are angling for funds, or designing programs according to funders "needs," not the community's, because they need the money so badly. One respondent questioned the sincerity of activities or programs outlined in grant applications, and the awareness and qualifications of groups venturing into community outreach. Another commented, "People get in over their heads and it gets injurious for the community. Program dollars are meant to "inspire" people." In this context, interviews highlighted the inflexible nature of most funding available to arts groups. In other words, although funders recognized that groups might have urgent concerns tied to administration, facility, or operations, their objective is to see program funding used in new, innovative program delivery.

Although philanthropic support through private foundations is not as prevalent here as it is in American cities, there are examples in Winnipeg's inner city of private funds working in community-based settings. One initiative in particular, the Centennial Neighbourhood Project, is receiving \$500,000 over five years in support from the Winnipeg Foundation. This funding formula is being used to uncover and support an enormous capacity for community building within the Centennial neighbourhood. This project puts the power of decision-making right in the community. The Project Coordinator, managers, staff, and participants are all familiar with life in the inner city and in many cases, live in the neighbourhood. To evaluate the project's success, a private evaluation is being conducted concurrently, constantly re-jigging and refining the project's path in order to ensure the maximum impact on, and involvement of, the community at all times. One of the objectives of this project is to identify best practices that could be extended through public policy to help other neighbourhoods.

Not only does the infusion of private funds allow organizations more flexibility in allocation and prioritization of money, but the introduction of alternative evaluation tools (such as those being used in the Centennial Neighbourhood Project) circumvents the difficulty funders and arts groups have measuring an organization's or program's effectiveness in a community, and that according to one interviewee, "there is a real excitement around this." By ensuring evaluation is built in to the process, and making certain evaluation goals are in line with community development objectives, funding bodies build accountability into the equation, and arts organizations can spend more time bringing more effective programming to the community.

4.4 **Conclusion**

Overall, interviews with community development agencies and funders demonstrated that there is commitment to serving and supporting inner-city arts/community organizations. There is recognition that community-driven strategies are the most successful, and that supporting capacity building at this level is desirable. However, the reality is that there is relatively little money allocated in municipal, provincial, and federal governments to support art programming and the organizations that offer this programming. So while agencies and funders can articulate their support, there are rarely the dollars to execute it, or, the dollars that are available are made contingent on a cumbersome reporting process to justify funding in this limited landscape. Lack of funding dollars available to support access to arts activities translates into reduced access for those who need it the most. Lack of funding for art fosters an environment in which art is considered a luxury as opposed to an essential component of a vital society.

Aceza



“Again, art programming differs from other recreational programs including sports, and certain school clubs, because it is not contingent on prior knowledge or excellence in a certain area.”

5.0

Case Study: Minneapolis, Minnesota

In an attempt to contextualize our findings from interviews in Winnipeg's inner city within the broader field of arts and community, we expanded our focus to include and more carefully consider arts activities in other cities. After some preliminary investigation into potential research trips, we became aware of several innovative arts and community initiatives in Minneapolis, Minnesota which seemed particularly relevant to the Winnipeg arts context.

In Minneapolis, we hoped to examine the similarities and differences between the arts community, programming, and research in the two cities. Using a list of general questions to help guide our discussions, we met with with representatives from six Minneapolis arts initiatives:

- ✦ Northeast Minneapolis Arts Association (NEMAA);
- ✦ Minnesota Citizens for the Arts;
- ✦ Arts Midwest;
- ✦ Minnesota State Arts Board;
- ✦ The “Artistic Dividend” project;
- ✦ Representative from the Mayor’s office involved with Mosaic festival.

Our findings suggest that despite similarities in levels of innovation, arts organizations in Minneapolis and Winnipeg operate in two extremely different funding realities. Overall, our research in Minneapolis was useful in offering some potential next steps for the development and strengthening of the arts community in Winnipeg.

5.1 **Northeast Minneapolis Arts Association**

The arts are a sound investment for a city and neighbourhoods, supporting tourism efforts, promoting quality of life, attraction business relocation, increasing economic activity and making the community a better place to live. (*NEMAAP, 2002, p. 4*)

The first organization we met with was the Northeast Minneapolis Arts Association (NEMAA). This non-profit organization's mission is to promote and support the quality and diversity of artistic resources based in Northeast Minneapolis, with the larger goal of benefiting the greater community. NEMAA evolved from an event called Art-A-Whirl, in the mid-1990's — a sort of studio tour event and showcase for artists in Northeast Minneapolis. Gaining momentum, the organization developed the Northeast Minneapolis Arts Action Plan (*NEMAPP*) in 2002, a document intended as a first step to supporting and sustaining the artists' community and in Northeast Minneapolis. The action plan involved the consultation of large advisory and steering committees, as well as the financial support of several regional agencies and philanthropic organizations. It resulted in thirty strategies and eight recommendations for the organization as well as the Northeast being officially recognized as an arts district.

Our chief goal in meeting with NEMAA was to better understand the structure and purpose of the organization, as well as investigate the degree to which of the Arts Action Plan had been implemented two years after its development. It was determined that not much has, in fact, emerged from the action plan. Interviewees stated that the original group behind the plan have lost energy and have had trouble focusing a vision with which to proceed. As a result of a reshuffling of active organizers, and changing realities in the northeast neighbourhood, the entire organization is undergoing a shift from arts advocacy and artist promotion, to community building, leaving proponents with a confused and out-of-date mission. One representative commented that the action plan left the organization with too much on its plate, and that it was necessary to determine a few of the most important recommendations made, and proceed from there.

It is remarkable that the organization has developed to the point it has, considering that until the summer of 2004 it operated solely as a board of directors without a permanent staff person. Now it is on the verge of reinvention and reinvigoration.

5.2 **Minnesota Citizens for the Arts**

The second organization we met with was the Minnesota Citizens for the Arts (MCA), a broad-based, grassroots organization started in 1975 concerned with arts advocacy in the state legislature and in congress. The organization is charged with endorsing the support of the arts overall, not individual projects on behalf of its several thousand members statewide. They have five ongoing goals:

- ✦ funding for the arts;
- ✦ changes in taxation policy;
- ✦ federal level endorsement for arts;
- ✦ arts education at state level;
- ✦ state bonding.

MCA has been successful in its bid to increase the visibility of the arts advocacy in the state, uniting voices — from individual arts philanthropists, to community and established arts organizations — that may not in other circumstances find common ground, creating an “arts ecosystem” across the state. MCA conducts research into the arts when necessary to support its campaigns; they develop arts advocacy documents, stickers and posters that outline the importance of the arts in the state. In 1997, MCA was part of a successful lobby that saw an 80% increase in arts funding in the state. Funding levels haven’t fallen below that increase since. MCA’s lobbying efforts are unmatched in Manitoba, and increased funding challenges are evidence of the lack of a structured, long-term, and vocal arts lobby in the Province. In this regard, MCA’s “eco-system” approach to linking community-based and established arts organizations together in a united drive for publicly funded arts dollars is worth noting.

5.3 **Arts Midwest**

Arts Midwest is a regional arts organization, responsible for coordinating and supporting intra-state arts initiatives within nine Midwestern states. Dues paid to Arts Midwest are returned to the regional arts programs through funding programs designed to do everything from expanding the influence of local initiatives throughout the region and beyond. The START program, a four-year initiative started in 2002, is one such program coordinated through Arts Midwest. Funded through the Wallace Foundation, its primary objective is to increase participation in the arts at all levels — from audience development and diversification, to increasing board knowledge, motivating and training

program staff, and building artists' advocacy skills. Moreover, through the START program, arts organizations have been introduced to some innovative evaluative structures and techniques for collecting compelling stories and successes for funders. In fact, the START program itself has built in a program performance component, that sees the evaluation and reassessment of program strategies with every session, changing the program to better respond to participants needs and the funders' objectives. By involving evaluators from the beginning, Arts Midwest has found participants and programmers are less critical of the evaluation process.

5.4 **Minnesota State Arts Board**

Similar to the Manitoba Arts Council, the Minnesota State Arts Board (MSAB) is the state funder, connecting and supporting arts organizations throughout Minnesota. In general, the MSAB works with mid- to large-sized arts organizations to provide both core operating funds and programming dollars. The MSAB is also working with Arts Midwest on the START program within Minnesota as a means of supporting smaller arts organizations running with largely volunteer labour. They saw START as essential to sustaining smaller arts programs and the often overextended and dynamic leaders at the helm, by deepening, broadening and diversifying their volunteer base.

The joint project of Arts Midwest and the MSAB and its focus on arts development at all levels is a key concept to sustaining community-level arts initiatives. Programs such as START provide opportunities for community arts organizers to network and learn from each other, while equipping them with the tools they need to ensure programs are sustainable. The program also provides some truly insightful models for program evaluation and reporting, and champions a comprehensive funder- instigated evaluation model.

5.5 **Mayor's Office, Minneapolis**

Established in 1999, the City's Office of Cultural Affairs was eliminated in 2002, in favour of a more integrated role for the arts in city affairs. In order to help clarify the city's intended role in the arts — the city supported large scale theatres and art institutes, but wasn't directly reaching more localized, community efforts — and to determine how art could be used to further the city's own goals, it began a cultural planning process in 2004. The process involved a 77-member advisory committee, and the resulting document is available on the city's web site (*"The Minneapolis Plan for Arts and Culture"*). In addition to the Cultural Plan, the city has actively sought to use the arts to address the cultural diversity and divide in the city, and the inequitable distribution of arts funding among established art

organizations that largely engage Minneapolis' white middle class and the smaller ethnically-based community arts organizations throughout the city. The city's relatively new Mosaic festival — a summer celebration of the city's arts and cultural diversity — is one step they are taking to bridge that gap. Their stated goals are to:

- ✦ increase awareness of who they are as a community;
- ✦ increase understanding of diversity through exposure in an accessible and non-threatening way;
- ✦ make diversity a positive, not a negative for the city.

The city hopes this benefits arts organizations involved in the festival by providing increased visibility and marketing opportunities, building audiences, and networking arts organizations with potential funders and other resources.

5.6 “The Artistic Dividend” Project

We also met with researchers associated with The Artistic Dividend: The Arts' Hidden Contributions to Regional Development, a project for the Hubert H. Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs at the University of Minnesota. The project argues that artistic activity is “a major and varied contributor to economic vitality” in its own right, as opposed to the “impoverished view of the arts and its role in the regional economy [that] treats the arts as a consequence of, even a parasite on, a successful business economy” (*Markusen, 2003, p.3*). The project is now in its second phase, examining more closely the role of artist-centred organizations, or “clubhouses”, where artists come together to develop their craft, resources, create a gallery and offer equipment rental, in regional economies. Overwhelmingly, the researchers have learned that the founders of such organizations were artists, business people or community residents who wanted to turn their neighbourhoods around. Moreover, most of these arts entrepreneurs faced doubt, naysayers, and challenges at every turn, but community involvement made artist-run centres successful. More work is being done investigating the structure of these organizations, including the make up, diversity, and activity level of boards of directors among other research directions.

The second phase of the Artistic Dividend project will do much to further support the link between arts activities and great economic benefits. It is interesting to note that the Minnesota Citizens for the Arts is currently conducting a community-based, state-wide economic impact study on the arts, which will undoubtedly compliment the findings of the Artistic Dividend project. Winnipeg would do well to keep an eye on these developments as current research shows Minnesota to be a leader in viewing the arts for their regional economic value — an approach largely unexplored in Winnipeg and Manitoba.

5.7 Conclusion

All the organizations we spoke with were better funded, both in terms of core and project funding, than arts organizations and agencies in Winnipeg; and they offered some unique and useful insights for our research. To a large extent, the support of large-scale, privately funded foundations were entirely responsible for the funds behind some of the most innovative programs we encountered. This type of philanthropy is much less common in Canada. Despite this fundamental difference, a number of key lessons emerged:

- ✦ The need for planning. Both the City of Minneapolis and one of the city's largest districts each had arts-related action plans
- ✦ The need for consultation. These plans were widely consultative and/or involved advisory bodies
- ✦ The need for advocacy. Minnesota Citizens for the Arts provides a much-needed advocacy role for artists and arts organizations, helping them navigate funding bodies, lobbying for more educational funding, and working to change tax laws.
- ✦ The need for an "eco-system" approach. Arts should not be looked at in isolation: they are an essential element of a healthy society. What's more, just as any ecosystem requires diversity, so too must a city's art scene be made up of a wide range of artistic elements, forms, styles, media, participants, ambitions, goals and constituencies.
- ✦ The role of celebration: The Mosaic festival shows that arts and culture highlighted through celebration and festivals can be a major draw for the city and can raise public awareness of a city's diverse arts groups.

These themes are carried forward into the report's recommendations (*see Section 7*).

What follows is a synthesis of the data collected, and the major themes that emerged.

“Openness is promoted by organizations through the transparency of operations and by their ability to be other things when needed”



6.0 | **Synthesis: Art is Essential**

6.1 **Community-driven = Asset-driven.**

All of the organizations consulted were unanimous in their conviction as to the powerful role that access to art activities plays in activating and strengthening bonds and that these dynamics contribute to the overall assets in their communities. The degree to which an organization and its programming are community-driven influences greatly the “buy-in” on the part of the community for that organization. Organizations need to be able to respond flexibly to the needs and desires in a community, and arts-related programming provides an excellent means to respond to variables in age, literacy and interest.

There are many ways that these organizations build relationships between themselves and the larger community. Some organizations accept volunteers from their neighbourhood only, while others try to hire staff from the neighbourhood as much as possible. Some organizations make every effort to hire artists whenever possible for any job. Board membership is often made up of a percentage of community residents. A few organizations have youth councils that inform programming goals. These strategies ensure that an organization is run from the ground-up in a culturally relevant way that is in tune with the opportunities and challenges present. They also increase mentorship and leadership opportunities within respective communities and artistic disciplines. All of these strategies inform a cycle of community cohesion and development that starts with the recognition that people are the strongest asset.

6.2 **Addressing Poverty**

For many of the organizations we consulted, poverty is the primary concern in the community and for their organizations. Poverty is the “eye of the storm” for many systemic factors: lack of educational opportunities and employment, poor safety, inequality and racism are but some of the major issues that enforce, engender and encourage poverty in inner city Winnipeg. Approaches to art (and other) programming are organized with literacy, hunger, and safety issues taken into consideration. Time and again, the researchers heard that access to art instruction is an excellent way to challenge the boundaries enforced by poverty and, in some cases, alter them.

In the early stages of interviews, we noticed that often an interviewee would casually mention the availability of a resource or service to the community that stood out from the usual art programming details. We began to keep track of these ‘secret weapons,’ (as we began to refer to them), the non-programming elements that attracted people to the organization or made coming to the facility more accessible. Food, transportation, laundry facilities, free phone, and someone to listen were mentioned the most frequently. Food is the number one secret weapon. Many programs (especially after-school or drop-in) provide a generous “healthy snack.” Youth council meetings are organized around pizza. Annual general meetings and community consultations include dinner or snacks.

One organization offers kids a ride home after the nightly drop-in programs, another is trying to raise money to buy a vehicle to do the same. Transportation makes it easier for kids to access programs while appeasing parents who are concerned for their kids safety. One group offers to drive kids involved in sports activities outside of the organization because they recognize this is a direct way of offering support. All of these resources work to meet people where they are at, and get them in the door. These are responses that acknowledge that people’s basic needs have to be looked after in order to support participation in arts programming and in the community.

6.3 **Collaborations**

The diversity of collaborations at the community level was identified by many organizations as crucial to their success. Partnering with local businesses and community agencies fosters allies and in some cases, economic advantages. Family-owned businesses may still be found in many inner-city neighbourhoods, which makes partnering easier than trying to forge a connection with a big box store located in another part of town. These intra-community collaborations foster increased information-sharing between organizations, as well as more mentoring and leader-

ship opportunities. At a micro level, these community-level networks of communication can serve to break down negative stereotypes within the community and, at a macro level, the city at large. One organization has been so successful with its collaborations that it has fostered the development of at least three other arts organizations.

There is a distinct lack of connection between community-based arts organizations and more established organizations (although this is not the case between community-based development organizations and larger community development agencies such as the United Way). One of the reasons collaborations at the community level were cited as more relevant to an organization than potential collaborations with more established arts organizations, was the ability to be more flexible and less structured. As discussed previously, flexibility is key to successful program delivery in inner city community based organizations.

Our interviews also revealed that a few organizations had had their spaces donated to them via generous landlords or anonymous donors. In at least three cases, this sort of generosity is what made the difference as to whether or not the organization could continue to exist at all.

6.4 **Support for Emerging Artists**

Informants demonstrated an understanding of the value of supporting and nurturing art skills and education for their own sakes. There is awareness that art must not only be considered a means to an end or a tool to fix something (although it can be used in these ways), but that there is intrinsic value in learning about and making art. All of the people we interviewed cited examples of witnessing individuals truly connect to art-making and the organizations recognition of the value of supporting these emerging artists. Through this recognition, Winnipeg's arts community grows stronger, and these values eventually translate into more support for professional artists, increased arts philanthropy and advocacy, and patron development.

6.5 **Culturally-appropriate teaching and environments**

Most of the organizations we interviewed are making the effort to offer culturally relevant programming in a culturally appropriate environment. Aboriginal people make up a significant population in the inner city. Art and culture are intrinsic Aboriginal teachings and essential Aboriginal values. For these values to be taught and upheld effectively the environment in which they are conveyed must be informed by aboriginal instructors, elders, users, mentors

and leaders in some way. The transfer of user or practitioner-based knowledge has the power to break down both the individual and community sense of invisibility, and promotes validation and understanding. A culturally appropriate environment benefits everyone as does recognizing that art and culture are essential values.

6.6 **Funding Issues**

All organizations consulted spoke to the challenges of trying to get enough funding to support existing operations and programs, never mind finding dollars to grow new initiatives. There is less money available from all levels of government and yet there is more demand as art programming is increasingly accepted as an excellent means to grow individual and community development. Not only are arts programs often run by over-extended individuals, these organizers are often community members who lack the professional support and development of their better-funded counterparts in established arts organizations. Where organizers do have a more developed administrative background, their staff and volunteers most likely do not. Unfortunately tight fiscal circumstances, especially in terms of securing operating funds, force many organizations into a “patchwork” approach to keeping their doors open.

Many of the organizations are critical of what they see as funders’ pre-occupation with the “glamour” of programming. In other words, funders see programming as the most immediate means to see their dollars at work (it is easier to measure participation numbers than the impact of office management) and therefore there is more money available for this area than the others. On the contrary, we found that the three pillars of any organization — operating, programming and infrastructure — must all be supported to ensure high functioning, relevant and meaningful programming. There is a strong desire to see more dollars made available overall, and that these dollars be available for the long-term in order to eliminate the lack of consistency, burnout, and weakening of infrastructure and in order to maintain continuity in programming

Many organizations also feel unduly burdened by the requirements they are asked to meet in order to justify and account for funding dollars. At the same time, funders often feel liable, and unsure as to whether the dollars are being used effectively. In some cases, this dynamic has created a sense of distrust, but we have also seen a desire on both sides to move past it. There needs to be a wider acceptance that hard data will never accurately portray the full benefits of arts programming.

Relevance and engagement start with the people who are the users and employees of these community organizations.

They know what they want and what they need. This point may seem obvious, but is often forgotten or overlooked when groups or funders are trying to program “what’s best” for the community in question or when organizations attempt to “fit” themselves into funding criteria that do not serve the true purpose of the organization.

6.7 **Art Education in Schools**

Several interviewees revealed that they provide art instruction for kids who do not otherwise have access to art classes in their school. Some organizations partner with schools to present programming on-site, others provide lessons off-site at the organization; in any case, some feel that community-based organizations are being asked to fill an important gap in our education system. The implication that the level of arts education available in public schools varies considerably, and puts kids who have less or no access at disadvantage, warrants more investigation.

6.8 **Identifying the Benefits of Arts-Based Programming**

The most immediately apparent benefits are physical: Artistic programming contributes to the beautification of public spaces via mural painting and art shows. Moreover, such highly-visible arts-driven beautification efforts in inner city neighbourhoods do much to levy additional support from other stakeholders in the city at large.

Yet art programming does much more than change the physical environment: it also fosters connections between individuals and physical spaces because it literally brings people together to participate in the same place and share their efforts and resources. There is a wealth of anecdotal data from the interviews that speaks to the connections that participants feel towards their community and to one another as a result of their access to arts activities and instruction provided via diverse community based organizations. A safe place to go and express oneself in a positive, receptive and consistent environment is means not only to affirm the individual and provide positive choices, but also to affirm that the community that he or she comes from is worth acknowledging. For many people it is the only place they can give voice to their thoughts and visions and be rewarded for doing so. What we heard repeatedly is that creating an environment for art making creates opportunity for connections of all kinds, connections that directly serve the goals of increasing neighbourhood stability and community capacity.

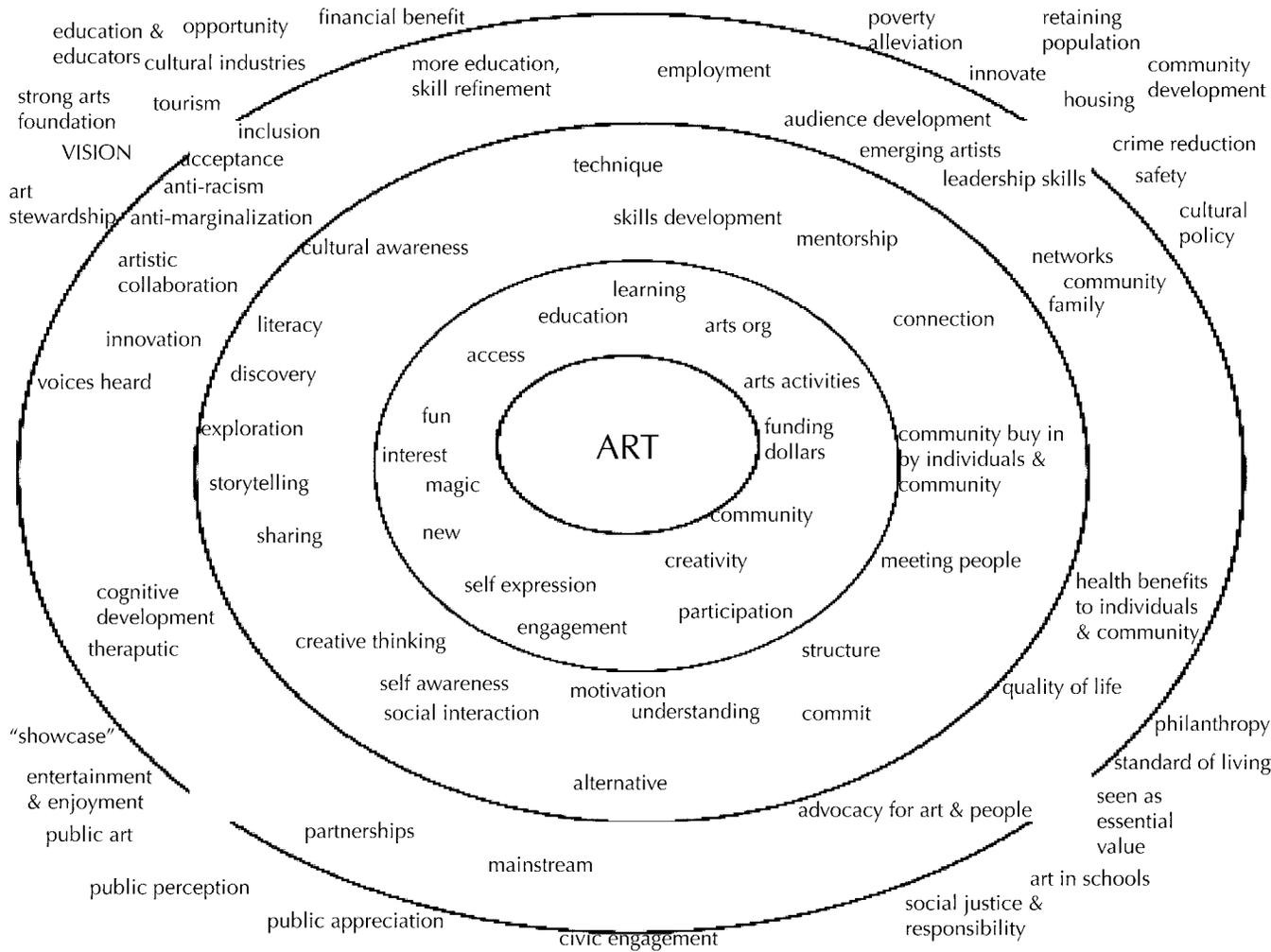
These linkages with the community encourage users to invest back into organizations through participation, volunteerism,

and contributions to decision-making via youth councils and board participation. Often, the community at large is invited to openings, recitals, parades and open houses, raising the profile and understanding of what happens in the organizations and therefore expanding community involvement and investment in these local assets.

For all this though, it is difficult to directly translate the breadth of the linkages between community art activities and local economics; however recent urban research strongly indicates that the presence of art activities and artists in the community contributes directly to quality of life and encourages investment in these neighbourhoods (“Culture as an economic engine”). On a broader scale, artistic activity is also a major contributor to regional economies (Markusen 2003). In spite of the support in the literature for economic benefits deriving from artistic endeavours, community based arts programming cannot be seen as a revenue-generating enterprise in the traditional sense. Instead the “profits” generated are in the form of the enhanced development of social, human and cultural capital. Re-investment of this capital creates a “ripple effect” that serves to strengthen a community’s self-reliance. In this way, art-making and education create learning possibilities and skill development that can enhance job skills and employability. The mentoring that occurs between instructors and participants supports life-long learning capabilities by introducing problem-solving techniques and conflict resolution skills that are required in order for any educational, social or economic relationship to grow. As well, many of the community-based organizations with whom we spoke hire directly from the community. Partnerships and collaborations with local businesses also create allies and opening for local employment.

The above-mentioned “ripple effect” is indeed far-reaching; we have attempted to illustrate these effects visually on the diagram on the next page.

In sum, community-based programs provides opportunities for a potential re-orientation of norms in a positive and non-judgmental environment. The impact that skill development and increased knowledge have in terms of the development of self-confidence and respect cannot be underestimated. Creative programming can boost self-esteem, improve skill sets and strengthen social connections. It makes for purposeful lives, or at least purposeful hours and days that can foster leadership, investment, engagement and connection to a community, which can then be reinvested time and time again.



6.9 Conclusion

This research has revealed that there is not only a wealth of artistic and cultural resources in the inner city, but that these resources can make an enormous contribution to building community capacity, energizing community-based revitalization efforts, educating young people, improving our public spaces, and invigorating local economies.

The concept of art as a tool for community development is beginning to resonate across the country. In Winnipeg and elsewhere arts organizations have been creating meaningful, positive change in their respective communities. However, as a result of overburdened staff, inadequate and short-term funding, uncoordinated efforts and a lack of advocacy, these organizations are not able to accomplish all that they could. Indeed, they are not being recognized for all that they are doing.

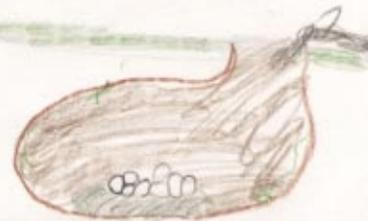
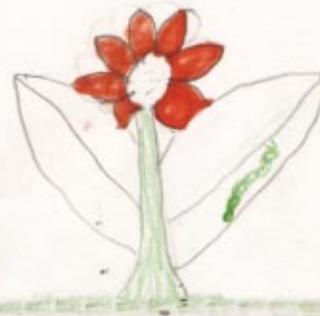
Regardless of how difficult the cycle of community capacity building might be to quantify in terms of hard data, all one needs to do is drop by any of the organizations we interviewed during drop-in or scheduled programming and see and listen to what is going on. At Andrews Street Family Centre folks are practically shoe-horned into the building there is so much activity going on in there, from art-making to kindergarten to laundry and more. During Art City's annual haunted house event this past October, members of the West Broadway neighbourhood were lined up around the block to get in and participate. At Graffiti Gallery, Rossbrook House, and Ndinawe Resource Centre, drop-in programs are packed and constantly evolving according to the needs of the community. Martha Street Printmakers Association and the West End Cultural Centre both collaborate with local school that have no other art and music resources. After her first free theatre class with Nor'West's Masquerade Theatre one young participant commented "I'm going to tell my dad that when I'm bored and at home and it's a Wednesday that I want to come here 'cause it's fun here. I like it here. I like the people here."

All of these organizations spoke of the challenge of keeping up with community needs given that the alternative to access to arts activities in many of these neighbourhoods, is no alternative at all. Most of the information we collected in the course of this research confirmed our original hypothesis: Access to art activities fosters and contributes to community development.

“Overall there is recognition that policy changes are a necessary precursor to better support for community-based arts”

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7.0 | Recommendations

7.1 Funding Models

The Province of Manitoba, The City of Winnipeg and the federal government should allocate more dollars to support community-based art activities. More money would aid existing groups and facilitate the creation of new — and much needed — organizations/programs and program mentorship opportunities. Community-based arts need longer-term funding programs in order to develop the stability with participants, community and administration and staffing that is essential to the survival, growth and self-sufficiency of arts activities. Longer-term support programs should be developed at all three levels of government.

Funding dollars also need to be more flexible so as to support other activities besides programming. In particular, monies are needed to support the so-called “secret weapons” identified in this report such as transportation, nutritious snacks, computer access and other expenses not related to programming, but nonetheless essential to the success of inner-city community arts initiatives. While these programming elements are well-suited to private or corporate support, these donors must also be flexible in their approach to support, asking what is needed and how it is best delivered. Community arts organizations could reflect this support through signage, newsletter advertisements and so on when possible.

Although there has been a recognition on the part of the Manitoba Arts Council that there is a demonstrated need for community-based arts funding, funding policies and programs at all levels of government need to recognize the

specific challenges facing community-based arts activities, as well as the extent to which these activities contribute to the development of emerging artists, arts audiences, and cultural industries.

7.2 **Maintaining and Enhancing Arts-Based Curriculum in Public Schools**

The Province must also ensure that high quality art instruction (visual, drama, music etc.) is available to all students in all public schools in Manitoba. These elements of the curriculum should not be thought of as “frills” that can be cut when budgets are tight, but as essential elements of a well-rounded education.

7.3 **The Need for Coordinated Advocacy**

Minnesota Citizens for the Arts provides an excellent example of the sort of grassroots advocacy that is needed in Winnipeg. Such an umbrella advocacy body could represent the interests of member artists, community-based arts organizations, established arts bodies and citizens. This body would lobby provincially and federally for increases in arts funding, as well as coordinate access to research supporting the arts. This body would engage in strategic partnerships in order to engage support for arts activities from a broader range of government funding bodies and private interests.

7.4 **The Need for Organizational Mentorship**

Obviously, all the organizations involved in arts are at different levels of development and capacity. While networking and mentorship occurs informally in the arts community, there are risks associated with overburdening “senior” community arts organizations with too many mentorship functions. Formalized program mentorships in the arts community that recognize that risk and support “senior” community arts groups in a mentorship role are needed. It should be noted though that while there exists a body of literature on artist mentoring, it is difficult to find research on arts organizational mentorship that might provide a groundwork for formalized mentorship programs in Winnipeg.

7.5 **The Need for a More Formal Network**

Winnipeg's arts communities would also benefit greatly from the creation of a formal network to support community-based organizations, artists and individuals that deliver art activities. This network would facilitate the sharing of best practices, research, skills and the provision of support. Such a network would coordinate formalized mentorship networks and programs between arts organizations, and also enable partnerships between established and community based organizations where relevant. From mentoring/best practice sharing re: grant writing to programming, these flexible partnerships could spearhead sharing amongst diverse organizations with similar goals.

To be clear: right now informal networks exist; however what we are suggesting is that this capacity must be supported via funding dollars to allow organizations to formalize a networking and mentorship function so that all community-based organizations offering arts programming have access to the knowledge base within the community.

7.6 **Institutional Cooperation**

More opportunities to offer arts programming could emerge if the City opened up spaces in existing institutions. For example, an after school art club could be held in the same facility that has extra curricular sports programming. Public schools sit empty for most evenings and weekends; the "community school model"² in which public schools open their doors to provide space for events and programming put on by outside agencies, should be more widely adopted as a way to facilitate program provision. This will require more cooperation between institutions and community-based organizations, this would go a long way to strengthening community capacity.

7.7 **Evaluation**

Drawing on successful built-in evaluation models already at work in projects such as the Centennial Neighbourhoods Project (a Winnipeg Foundation project), art program evaluation should be done on an ongoing basis and in a manner that is as responsive to the community as possible. There also needs to be a recognition on the part of funders that the evaluation process as it currently exists - based on reporting for a succession of short-term grants — is onerous on already over-extended arts organization staff, and responds to the needs of the

funders, not necessarily those of the community and program participants, to say nothing of the organizations involved. Evaluation measures where arts are concerned must also of necessity be based more on “soft” indicators (such as benefits as reported by participants) rather than on hard numbers.

7.8 **Further Research**

This study is only a first step towards a better understanding of community arts in Winnipeg. An important next step would include interviews with program participants in order to better ascertain their needs and goals, and program successes and failures.

A second area that might be explored is the relationship between community arts and commerce. Drawing on the work of Ann Markusen, connecting arts activities and business development and growth would do much to provide stronger economic justification for arts support and funding.

A third direction would be to investigate the extent to which “culturally appropriate” programming was adapting to the changing face of Winnipeg.

Appendix 1: About Art City

Since 1998, when a former boarded-up nightclub on Broadway was converted into an intergenerational community art centre, Art City has offered a safe place for people of all ages who need or want to express themselves creatively. The centre operates on a drop-in basis, providing art instruction in a wide variety of art media including drawing, painting, screen-printing, sculpture, hip-hop dance, music, and video.

Art City is a non-profit centre dedicated to providing high-quality programs to residents of the West Broadway area. The mandate of Art City is:

1. To encourage self-expression, communication, and creativity thereby fostering a sense of self-worth, ownership, and accomplishment in participants,
2. To provide a safe, supportive, non-competitive environment for children and adults which is an ongoing, integral part of the West Broadway community,.
To provide free, accessible, high-quality art programming with local, national, and international professional artists, thereby enriching and supporting the West Broadway community, the arts community, and the City of Winnipeg,
4. To be sustainable and available to the community day after day, year after year,⁵.
To be a model for future community art centres, and
6. To encourage social interaction and cooperation among participants.

Art City owes its inspiration to local artist Wanda Koop, a resident of the West Broadway neighbourhood. She saw a need in the community and the potential in the young residents. Art City was established in 1998 with the assistance of the Broadway Neighbourhood Centre and the West Broadway Development Corporation.

Each month two guest artists facilitate week-long workshops for participants. Besides the weekly workshops, Art City also offers Adult and Teen Aboriginal Arts and Crafts, Adult Pottery, Kids Pottery, and Photography, as well as Day Programming activities to a number of groups and organizations. On top of the regular programming, Art City also organizes three large community events each year: the Art City Exhibition, the Art City Parade, Barbecue and Powwow, and the Art City Haunted House.

Decisions regarding the programming and objectives at Art City are made by its Board, Executive Director Jason Granger, Assistant Director Talia Potash, Studio Coordinator Jennie O'Keefe, and a number of talented and dedicated workshop facilitators. Programming ideas are also gathered from participants through the Art City Youth Council to ensure that programming remains relevant and appealing to the community of West Broadway.

Appendix 2: Interview Questions

WIRA: Enhancing Cultural Capital in Winnipeg's Inner City.

Interview Questions

Part One — Organization Profile

A. Organization

1. What is the history of the organization?
2. Do you have a mission statement? What is it?
3. What are the objectives of your organization?
4. Describe the governance (e.g. Board) structure of the organization?
5. Staff structure (how many full-time, part-time)?
6. How many volunteers?
7. Do you consider yourself a community-based organization?

B. Funding

1. What is your annual operating budget?
2. How do you finance your organization?
3. How is your funding broken down by sector? funder? (percentages)
4. How do you pursue funding?
5. How do you pursue fundraising activities?
6. What are the funding challenges for your organization?
7. How have funding challenges changed over time?

C. Partnerships

1. Do you collaborate with other community organizations, i.e. schools, businesses, churches etc.?
 - a. If so, can you name them and describe the collaboration, its purpose, and the result.
 - b. If not, is this something you would like to do in the future?
 - c. How important to your organization is building partnerships of this kind?

2. Do you collaborate with other community based arts organizations?
 - a. If so, can you name them and describe the collaboration, its purpose, and the result.
 - b. If not, is this something you would like to do in the future?
 - c. How important to your organization is building partnerships of this kind?

3. Do you collaborate with other established art organizations?
 - a. If so, can you name them and describe the collaboration, its purpose, and the result.
 - b. If not, is this something you would like to do in the future?
 - c. How important to your organization is building partnerships of this kind?

D. Users

1. Is your programming geared to individuals and/or group settings?
2. What is the age range and average age of participants?
3. What special needs groups attend?
4. Please highlight on map where constituents come from (see attached map)?
5. Have you ever surveyed your constituents?
 - a. If so, why?
 - b. What did you survey them about?
 - c. What were the results?
 - d. Can we see the results?

E. Community

1. In your community, are any of the following areas of concern? If so, in what way?
 - a. Safety
 - b. Crime
 - c. Housing
 - d. Education
 - e. Poverty
 - f. Community Cohesiveness
 - g. Health
 - h. Employment
 - i. Racism & Discrimination
 - j. Marginalization
2. Of the areas you've mentioned, which three are the most urgent?
3. What are some of the assets in your community?

F. Programming

1. What is the nature of your programming?
2. How is the programming delivered?
3. With respect to the issues discussed in the Community section, how does the programming respond to or address:
 - a. Safety
 - b. Crime
 - c. Housing
 - d. Education
 - e. Poverty
 - f. Community Cohesiveness
 - g. Health
 - h. Employment
 - i. Racism & Discrimination
 - j. Marginalization
4. How do the community needs discussed in the Community section:
 - a. Affect programming?
 - b. Limit your ability to meet your organization's goals and objectives?

5. How do the community assets discussed in the community section:
 - a. Affect programming?
 - b. Strengthen your ability to meet your organization's goals and objectives?

Part Two — Emerging Themes and Values

1. How does your organization promote the following values?
 - a. Communication
 - b. Opportunity
 - c. Openness
 - d. Diversity
 - e. Inclusiveness
 - f. Sharing
2. What is the impact of your promotion of these values?
3. Are there other values that guide your organization?

Part Three — To Conclude

1. What do arts organizations contribute to the community that distinguishes their work from that of other community organizations (community development agencies, youth organizations, housing groups, etc.)?
2. Is there anything else you would like to add?

Appendix 3: Foundation Document

WIRA project: Enhancing Cultural Capital in Winnipeg's Inner City.
Foundation Document

1. Project Mission Statement

This research will demonstrate the role that community-level visual, literary and performing artists and organizations play in Winnipeg's inner city in addressing social, economic and environmental problems and, as such, contribute to overall community health and well-being.

2. Terms of Reference

Community

Employing a general and geographically based definition of community allows for maximum inclusion, and acknowledges the fluid nature of community boundaries. Naming specific communities (women, children, disabled etc.) in the context of our broad-based research is potentially exclusionary, and risks the prioritizing of groups within a community. While a general definition of community is not without its drawbacks, (the risk of exclusion), it is the most comprehensive and inclusive approach for our research. Our position is to focus on the geographic community and to discover and name the capacities that we find there, allowing the experiences of individuals and organizations to define their own measures of success.

- ✦ A group of people having common ties or interests and living in the same locality or district and subject to the same laws, a group of people living together, the place where they live, any group of people, nations, etc. with a common bond. *Gage Canadian Dictionary, 2000.*
- ✦ Organized political, municipal or social body, body of people living in the same locality, body of people having religion, profession in common etc. *Oxford Concise Dictionary, 1983.*
- ✦ A group of people with common interests, a supportive group of people with common goals, a sense of connection, sharing and belonging - definitions from the Community and Collaborations workshop provided by arts and cultural workers at PD Day.
- ✦ Residents of a geographic neighbourhood or multi-neighbourhood area - no matter how they relate to each other. *(Ferguson and Dickson in Rebuilding Community, 11).*

Established Arts Institutions and Community Based Organizations

Distinctions between established art institutions and community based art

Established Arts Institutions: inaccessible, can be financially and otherwise, exclusive as a result.

Community based: accessible, financially and otherwise, inclusive as a result.

It is clear from the data and from feedback from individuals in the arts and culture field that these are two very separate and distinct groups. There is of course a place and a role for both, and it is important to acknowledge that artists and organizers are often involved in both groups simultaneously. The scope of this project will focus on community based arts groups and its recommendations will include ways in which the two can possibly work together in future if the data shows that there is interest.

Revitalization

Focus on acknowledging and building upon what is already working in the community i.e. arts organizations, and on the health and well being of a community, as opposed to “revival” which suggests something is missing or lost.

3. Themes — Emerging Values

Our discussions reveal some underlying themes we feel are important:

- ✦ **Marginalization:** An important constituency for community-based Arts are those who are not a part of the mainstream - the poor, minority groups, those facing discrimination, the disabled, etc.
- ✦ **The Centrality of Racism in Perpetuating Marginalization:** Any project addressing the role of culture in Winnipeg must not overlook the importance of Aboriginal cultures, and the systemic racism that has oppressed these cultures nationally and locally.
- ✦ **Communication:** The Arts may then be seen as a way for these marginalized groups in society to be able to communicate with each other and the rest of society, and thus address, challenge and overcome some of the systemic barriers that have contributed to marginalization.
- ✦ **Opportunity:** The Arts provide an opportunity, a forum, a medium, for this communication to occur.
- ✦ **Permissiveness:** The opportunity provided should not be prescriptive, but rather open to new...
- ✦ **Voices / Visions:** The Arts allow people to give voice to their visions, to share their visions, and reach new levels of understanding.

- ✦ Inclusiveness: While the nature of these visions may be different, the Arts can provide an environment in which these differences may be celebrated.
- ✦ Sharing: Thus shared, common understandings may emerge.
- ✦ Community: The act of sharing Art thus naturally brings people together.

4. Research Direction and Methods

The research will be conducted primarily through interviews, which shall be conducted and analyzed once a “community inventory” (a list of what organizations/programming is out there within our geographical boundary) is complete. Interviews allow for thorough and accurate information gathering and will be our primary method. At the latter stage in our research, it is possible that we may do a few focus groups in order to gather specific recommendations as to the role arts play, and could conceivably play, in enhancing cultural capital in Winnipeg's inner city. However, focus groups are extremely time consuming to organize and more detailed data can be gathered in other ways. We will also use demographic statistics/information from Statistics Canada to frame our research as well.

We will include information as to what organizations/ arts activities were NOT included in our research due to time constraints and other limitations.

4.1 Interview Questions

8. What sort of arts programming do you offer?
9. Do you consider yourself a community based organization?
10. What sort of programming is offered?
11. How is the programming delivered?
12. Who is the programming for/aimed at?
13. How many employees/volunteers do you have?
14. What is your annual operating budget? (give range of choices)
15. Where do you get your funding?
16. How much time does your organization spend pursuing funding?
17. Is the arts programming geared more for individuals or for groups/communities?
18. In what ways do you believe your arts programming affects/benefits the community?
19. Do you collaborate with other community organizations, i.e. schools, churches?
20. Have you partnered or collaborated with other community based arts organizations?
21. If so, can you name them and describe the collaboration, explain the result.

22. If not, is this something you would like to do in future?
23. How important is building partnerships and community collaborations to your organization?
24. Does your organization want opportunities to work together with established arts institutions whose mandate is perhaps less community focused? Do you see any benefits resulting from this?
25. Have you ever surveyed your base constituents?
26. Questions about the neighbourhood: How would you describe safety/housing/schools/community cohesiveness(think of other variables) in your neighbourhood?
27. What are some of the assets in your neighbourhoods?
28. What are some of the urgent needs in your neighbourhoods?
29. How do these needs / assets define your programming?
30. How do these needs / assets contribute to your programming?
31. How do these needs / assets strengthen your programming?
32. How do these needs / assets limit your programming?

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We would like to extend a special thanks to all of the people at the following organizations for their assistance in this project:

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Centennial Neighbourhoods Project
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Crossing Communities
198 Evanson Street
Winnipeg MB R3G 2A3

Festival du Voyageur
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Folklorama (Folk Arts Council of Winnipeg Inc.)
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Graffiti Art Programming, Inc.
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Jazz Winnipeg Festival
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Manitoba Artists in Healthcare
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Manitoba Arts Council
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Manitoba Crafts Council
214 McDermot Avenue
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Manitoba Writers Guild
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Martha Street Printmakers' Association
11 Martha Street
Winnipeg MB R3B 1A2

Mondragon Bookstore and Coffeehouse
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Winnipeg MB R3G 1G5

Ndinawe Resource Centre
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Footnotes

1 “A slogan meaning that the beauty of the fine arts is reason enough for pursuing them — that art does not have to serve purposes taken from politics, religion, economic and so on.”

(Answers.com [<http://www.answers.com/topic/art-for-art-s-sake>])

2 See Building Communities of Hope. Available at

http://www.sasklearning.gov.sk.ca/branches/children_services/community_ed/docs/buildcomm/ofhope.pdf