



The Urban Link



Newsletter of the Institute of Urban Studies

<http://ius.uwinnipeg.ca>

Director's Note

Dr. Jino Distasio, Director



The recent Winnipeg City Summit provided an opportunity for citizens to engage leading urban thinkers and to surmise priorities for the future. While this event was not the first of its kind or novel in its approach, it did trigger a flurry of contemplation about where Winnipeg needs to be in the next decade in order to remain

competitive. One might also successfully argue that the following four priorities emerging from the Summit are not anything *unknown* to urban practitioners—the priorities being simply:

- improve the liveability of our neighbourhoods;
- fix our city and invest in its appearance;
- create more opportunity; and
- get leaders working together on key issues.

While basic in nature, these priorities reinforce the need for cities to invest in themselves, and reinforce that neighbourhoods matter as does the appearance and design of the city. Delegates also emphasized the need to re-use buildings and that transportation is not only about fast-moving buses or cars but that it is also about connecting people to places in many different ways.

As in most urban dialogues of this nature, housing was singled out as being important, with acknowledgement that affordability issues cut across incomes. To this end, Dr. Lloyd Axworthy referenced the novel approaches used following the Second World War when returning veterans faced a shortage of housing and opportunities. His comments resonated with the crowd as he noted that housing programs of this era effectively created a strong middle class. He then went on to challenge delegates to think creatively about urban solutions.

The appearance of the city also ranked high and it was felt that our grand avenue—Portage Avenue— needs attention

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The Urban Link is published by the Institute of Urban Studies. The newsletter disseminates information about the Institute of Urban Studies and major initiatives housed at the Institute. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent those held by the Institute of Urban Studies or the University of Winnipeg. The Urban Link is co-edited by Michael Dudley and Michelle Swanson. Contributions are welcomed on an ongoing basis. Please contact Michael Dudley at (204) 982-1140 or m.dudley@uwinnipeg.ca. ©Institute of Urban Studies, 2006



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Director's Note ...cont'd from page 1

and must be made the focal point of a renewed downtown. Related to appearance was the singling out of “icons” as being important. This included reference to the recent Esplanade Riel or in moving forward with the Canadian Human Rights Museum and other signature projects. These types of projects were noted as being central in defining Winnipeg and drawing tourists and others to the city.

In the end, leadership plays a key role. Government must continue to be a driver of change but that the private sector is also needed to partner and strengthen the city. In reality, the Summit confirmed that Winnipeg needs to continue to refine itself, to create a sense of identity that reinvests in the past but also recognizes that the future must be ushered in with boldness. Whether that boldness is expressed in building icons or being creative in retaining youth, the Summit proved that talk is important—but that actions speak louder than words.

To download a copy of the report: <http://www.winnipegcitysummit.ca>

Postmodern Planning and the Postcarbon Era

By Michael Dudley

A lot of people are asking, what will our cities be like after peak oil? But before we can answer that we should probably also ask, what will city planning be like?

Recently, the problem was put nicely by peak oil author Michael Ruppert, writing on his website **From the Wilderness**, who says, “[t]he maxim that I live by is that what we need today, right now, is not a plan, but options. Plans do not bend well. They tend to break. And with breaks in plans come break downs in function.”

In a highly unpredictable world such as the post-oil era promises to be, we will not have the luxury of spending many months preparing planning documents that will be expected to guide development policy for years at a time; processes will be too fluid, too prone to disruption to make any such paper-based certainties realistic.

The other discontinuity—and one that touches directly on planning’s progressive past—is that large-scale government interventions may not be feasible either. As the ascerbic James Howard Kunstler puts it, governments may not even be able to answer their phones in the post oil future. Like many other “peak oil” writers, he emphasizes a return to the local, and a preference for multiplicity over monoculture.

And this is where postmodern planning comes in.

Robert Beauregard describes postmodern planning as “*consciously fragmented and contingent, nonlinear, without aspiration to comprehensiveness, singularity or even compelling authority.*” Which is good, because we may be facing a long period of fragmentation, with no linear connection to what preceded it; no possibility of comprehensive approaches; a vast need for diverse—not singular—solutions; and grave doubt about what sort of authority may be in charge.

What is certain is that the dramatic “re-localization” that will be necessary—local power supplies; local gardening; local support networks of all kinds—will mean a new kind of local polity that will be more vigorous and more necessary than the democracy most of us have grown up with. Here too the postmodern planner will have a key role to play. Contingency will be the word to live by when stability is replaced by ambiguity, uncertainty and insecurity. New ideas will likely come from all kinds of unexpected places as



people adapt, make new connections with neighbours and generate new solutions. Incremental improvements will be constant—as will new threats and problems. The postmodern planner will need to prepare their communities for unprecedented adaptability.

Like Michael Ruppert indicates, what will be needed in the future is not plans, but options. As such, the postmodern stance, with its admission of uncertainty, its valoration of diversity, its critical perspective on power, and the fact that it is profoundly rooted at the local, will mean that planners embracing this paradigm will have an essential role to play as energy supplies become more unstable, and discontinuities multiply.

A full version of this essay may be found at:

<http://blog.uwinnipeg.ca/ius/archives/002114.html#more>

When Energy Demand Exceeds Supply: Impacts on Transportation and Cities

Held Wednesday April 19, 2006 in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

A Symposium Report for Planetizen
By Jessica Roder

How can cities prepare for large increases in the price of oil and natural gas? This one-day symposium presented by the University of Winnipeg, the Institute of Urban Studies, and the Centre for Sustainable Transportation focused particularly on the challenge of Canada's scattered settlement pattern and its heavy reliance on transportation.

Attendees heard six speakers throughout the day with a panel discussion wrapping up the symposium. A well-attended free public lecture by James Howard Kunstler was held in the evening.

In the morning, Dr. Bill Buhay and John Mawdsley laid the foundations for what is happening with oil in the world and discussed projections for future supply and demand. Buhay, a paleoclimatologist from the University of Winnipeg, explained oil formation and methods of oil extraction to the audience. Mawdsley is the senior vice-president and oil & gas analyst for Raymond James Ltd. Mr. Mawdsley made it clear that oil is not our only problem and that natural gas will also be in short supply soon, and its cost will continue to inflate well.

The last two speakers of the morning were Dr. Richard Gilbert and Stuart Ramsey. Both have had success working with, and for, different city councils on the oil issue. They each presented best and worst case scenarios (Plan A and Plan B) for dealing with energy shortages and outlined immediate actions that needed to be taken to mitigate its effects as well as actions to take if it gets to a crisis point. Dr. Gilbert of the Centre for Sustainable Transportation worked through some of the touted alternatives to oil fuels and debunked their status.

Stuart Ramsey is a transportation planner for Burnaby, though he was speaking at the symposium in a personal capacity. The City of Burnaby, BC, in January 2006, was the first government in Canada to publicly receive a report on peak oil. He points out that oil shortages are not the only ones looming in our future; food, water, natural gas, and climate stability will all peak soon. We can't forget about these issues.

After lunch we heard from author James Howard Kunstler. While Kunstler focused on the effects of peak oil, he mentioned, like many others throughout the day, how climate change will interplay with it and compound the problem. His main emphasis was on the fact that the developed world will need to



drastically downscale the complex systems we rely on such as food, transportation, and our mode of habitation. Life will, of necessity, become much more localized.

Kunstler noted several major problems in North America: one is the belief that we can keep doing what we're doing by finding substitutes for oil; the other is that the current economy is largely based and supported by the *creation* of our consumer and suburban lifestyles. The major centres are generally in prime locations and will remain important, but Kunstler predicts that they will return to the scale of gothic cities. He is, however, hopeful about the future, stating we "need to put our shoulder to the wheel and make things happen, not sit around watching porn and eating cheesedoodles." People get what they deserve, not what they expect and if we work to make change happen we will get change.

The Right Honourable Edward Schreyer, former Governor General of Canada (1979-1984) was the final speaker before the panel discussion. He noted that while Canada has made great progress in science and technology our politics have been sliding backwards. There is a lack of clear vision, understanding, and the political will and courage to enable change. Schreyer also emphasized that climate change and oil depletion are two problems that must be solved simultaneously or we will be successful at neither.

In summation, all speakers agreed that there will be large impacts on transportation and cities when oil demand exceeds supply. Our goal must be to try and reduce the chaos and ease the transition to a new way of living. Every citizen has a role to play but government and industry need to step up to the plate sooner rather than later. Increasing the supply of oil and of infrastructure to use it more wisely can be slow and expensive. Decreasing our demand for it is relatively cheap and quick to implement. We need to begin doing both with more conviction than we have been.

Jessica Roder is a City Planning Student at the Faculty of Architecture, University of Manitoba

A fuller version of this essay originally appeared on the Planetizen website:

<http://www.planetizen.com/node/20351>

Work on Recent Projects

New IUS Report:

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

An Examination of Hidden Homelessness among Aboriginal Peoples in Prairie Cities

This research identified the characteristics and circumstances of the hidden homeless population, the factors that contributed to the phenomenon of hidden homelessness and the programs and services currently available to alleviate the problem. The study included Winnipeg, Saskatoon and Regina and focused on better understanding the shelter circumstances of persons inadequately housed such as those living in temporary accommodations with friends or family or those who reside in any number of short-term accommodations such as shelters, rooming houses or hotels.

For their part, service providers recognize the enormity of the situation and do their best to cope with a system bursting at the seams. Service providers are also faced with funding issues and long term program sustainability.

The foundation for this report was *The First Nations/Métis/Inuit Mobility Study*, released by the Institute of Urban Studies in 2004, and it remained clear that the movement of Aboriginal peoples to urban centres is due to a range of factors. In total the present work conducted 240 surveys with Aboriginal persons experiencing hidden homelessness and the service providers trying to help.



The study was governed by a Steering Committee including the Director of IUS, Jino Distasio, and two members of the IUS Research Team, Gina Sylvestre and Susan Mulligan as well as Aboriginal Elders, community members and organizations.

The report was prepared for the National Secretariat on Homelessness and received funding from the National Research Program of the National Homelessness Initiative. It was administered by the Institute of Urban Studies at the University of Winnipeg in Partnership with the Social Planning Council of Winnipeg.

To download copies of the report, see http://ius.uwinnipeg.ca/pdf/hidden_homlessness.pdf

The Mobility Needs and Transportation Issues of the Aging Population in Rural Manitoba

Gina Sylvestre, Gary Christopher, and Marcie Snyder

“How can I put a frail 85-year old man on the bus to Winnipeg by himself for cataract surgery? He would have to find a hotel for the night, find meals and find transportation to the hospital ... and then get back on a bus to come home after surgery!”

While many of us take for granted our access in cities to services and social supports, the above commentary by a community worker demonstrates the insurmountable difficulties that many older persons are faced with in rural Manitoba. In some parts of the province seniors are left with few options to remain mobile and independent. The low population density of many areas leave rural elders isolated, while the continued out-migration of younger persons in response to agricultural crises leaves seniors with few options for assistance and support. The depopulation of rural Manitoba has also resulted in the closing of food and retail stores in smaller towns, and hospital and clinic closures have come in the wake of the regionalization of health services. The isolation of rural seniors is only entrenched by the unavailability of para-transit and inter-city bus systems.

This study was initiated by the Manitoba Seniors and Healthy Aging Secretariat, who contracted the Seniors Transportation Working Group, which then sub-contracted IUS. The study found that while significant mobility resources exist in some parts of the province, the lack of transportation alternatives in many small communities puts resident elders at greater risk of social isolation and a poor quality of life.

The report contains a series of recommendations that address the transport options that are available in rural Manitoba:

- (1) As driving an automobile is the primary form of transportation for rural seniors, programming is required not only to keep older drivers safe, but also to provide supports when alternatives to driving must be considered.
- (2) Rides provided by an elder’s social support network are particularly important in keeping the older population mobile. There must be greater recognition of the contribution of informal caregivers, as well as awareness of the diminishing volunteer base that provides support to rural seniors.
- (3) The volunteer driving program is an important mobility resource because it is an affordable option that provides escort support and is offered throughout rural and remote areas of Manitoba. The report recommends that greater awareness is required in relation to the substantial value offered by the program in the form of social and capital savings to public service agencies.
- (4) The province of Manitoba also offers transportation to rural seniors through the Mobility Disadvantaged Transportation Program. There is a range of inconsistencies in the operation of the program, along with unsustainable practices.



The report also outlines a series of recommendations for the handi-van program that include the standardization of operations and the greater coordination and sharing of resources amongst rural communities.

Overall, the recommendations of the report provide a foundation to address mobility and transportation issues for older adults in rural Manitoba. Improved access to transportation is essential for the aging population to remain independent. Increased networking, along with greater coordination of resources and improved funding are crucial in the development of sustainable mobility options for rural elders.

To obtain a copy of this report, see

http://seniors.cimnet.ca/cim/dbf/transport_Final_Senior_doc.pdf?im_id=5102&si_id=19

What's New at IUS

IUS Staff - at Large!

A conference report on the the World Planners Congress in Vancouver attended by Michael Dudley and Susan Mulligan

World Planners Congress, Vancouver June 17-20th 2006

Vancouver, with its densely-populated and highly livable downtown is, in many ways, an ideal city in which to attend an international conference on city planning. We participated in the World Planners Congress 2006, the programming of which, to complement the overlapping World Urban Forum (also hosted in Vancouver June 19th – 23rd), emphasized planning issues of a truly global scope, and all under the banner of “sustainable urbanization.” Recurring themes from the conference included the urbanization of poverty, socially just placemaking, disaster planning and food security.

Vancouver’s success was seen in one session to be at least in part owed to the legacy of Donald Appleyard and Allan Jacobs’ classic 1987 “urban design manifesto.” A panel—including Jacobs himself—revisited the manifesto and its impact, identifying those things that it missed: linguistic and cultural diversity, for instance, and capacity-building. The planner’s mission in light of the manifesto and current challenges was framed in terms of increasing environmental design literacy at the community level, and to give citizens and politicians a vocabulary to participate in the urban design process. But as Jacobs himself put it, as important as guidelines such as the manifesto are, they cannot ensure equity: the discretion of the planner is required.

This theme was picked up in another panel discussion on ethics in planning, which emerged from the question, “is planning sprawling development consistent with professional ethical guidelines?” Panelists interrogated planning’s procedural and substantive responsibilities, in terms of facilitating democratic processes and ensuring peoples’ basic rights. As well, they queried the nature of shared public values and those privately held by the planner, positing that the planner needed to distinguish between them. Consistent with the theme of “new urban planning” urged by plenary speaker Hague, there was a recognition that planners needed to recognize multicultural diversity and work to address social inequities. Perhaps the most challenging statement (given the Congress’ theme of “sustainable urbanization”) came from panelist Dr. Ian Wight of the University of Manitoba, who asserted that “sustainability is an appallingly minimalist” planning goal: to merely “sustain” what we are currently living with is hardly inspiring, nor is what is needed to secure a future for our own—and other—species.

Securing the future in the light of myriad threats, and the need to marry concepts of sustainability, resilience, disaster planning and risk management, emerged as one of the strongest recurring themes of the Congress. We heard about some potentialities: one speaker proposed that New Urbanism (with its emphasis on grid street systems offering multiple points of entry and egress, and central public infrastructure such as civic centres and parks within easy walking distance) be employed as a model for resiliency. Other promising ideas include decentralizing utilities so that, for instance, every house has its own solar panel, rather than relying on a centralized power source: This can help to avoid



synchronous failure in cases of emergency (for more on this theme, please see Michael's blog entry "WPC 2006: From Sustainability to Resiliency" <http://blog.uwinnipeg.ca/ius/archives/002193.html>).

The conference also offered a wide range of on- and off-site "Super Saturday" excursions prior to, and mobile workshops during, the conference. Here Susan learned that the Vancouver model hasn't worked for everyone: it has a very high homelessness rate, much of it concentrated in the Downtown East Side. Susan's tour of this area emphasized the richness of this community rather than the same old stereotype of gloom with which it is so often reported in the Canadian media. The theme of the tour was "revitalization without displacement," as this partially blighted area, littered with vacant storefronts, is surrounded by surging economic growth, in part spurred on by the future development for the 2010 Winter Olympic Games. The group walked along a route housing twenty single room occupancy hotels that are currently at risk of demolition or conversion, which would only add to the homeless population.

In response to this threat, some local city planners have organized a "coalition of the willing" representing low-income housing and other groups with a strong desire for positive changes in the area. Their goal is to avoid another "period of crisis" that took place in 1999, when high rates of homelessness and illicit drug deaths led to near riots by those seeking shelter. That crisis, however, spawned the birth of Vancouver's famous "safe injection sites" (which have contributed greatly to the reduction of drug-related deaths), as well as the development of Carnegie Community Centre, a community-based organization and meeting place—apparently the busiest in Canada. There is also now a more socially-minded community consultation process, one that has seen the redevelopment of a former department store—vacant since 1993—into a mixed-income residential dwelling.

As part of the pre-conference programming, Michael participated in an afternoon bicycle tour of a proposed greenway route through the three municipalities of New Westminster, Burnaby and Vancouver. These three cities have been seeking opportunities to run the route as much as possible using existing infrastructure, and incorporating not only a beautiful landscaping scheme but a public art programme as well. The session showed how bicycle facility planning can be a means to enhancing the public realm and meeting a diverse range of needs (again, for a more complete discussion of this event, see Michael's blog entry, "WPC 2006: Diversity, Bicycles and the Public Realm" <http://blog.uwinnipeg.ca/ius/archives/002185.html>).

While many of the attendees were representatives of the Canadian Institute of Planners, there were delegates from 38 nations in attendance, giving the global focus an appropriately international audience. While a complete assessment of such a diverse conference would not be possible—even for multiple authors—it may be said that the World Planners Congress was an exciting, challenging and inspiring effort to orient 21st-century planning to addressing in an holistic—even integral—manner the myriad challenges facing our civilization and our planet.

Staff Changes

Marcie Snyder left the Institute in July to pursue graduate studies at The University of Waterloo.

Lesley Gaudry joined the Institute in July to work on various projects.



Canada Research Chair in Urban Change and Adaptation



Canada Research Chair Report

THE WINNIPEG/KAMPALA PARTNERSHIP PROJECT ON HIV/AIDS

Kampala City in Uganda has experienced rapid population growth, increasing from 774,241 in 1991 to 1.2 million in 2002, an annual growth rate of 5.16%. During the day the population swells by as much as a million as people enter the city to work and sell goods in the informal sector. Development is occurring in a haphazard manner, sprawling into the surrounding rural areas and the formerly satellite towns within a radius of 32 kilometres. Within this sprawling urban area the living environment, particularly for the poor, is deplorable, with inadequate housing, poor solid and human waste management, water pollution, a lack of social, educational and health services and exposure to a number of disease vectors. More than 60% of Kampala's population live in informal settlements in which 43% of the population is not able to meet the basics of life due to poverty.

Instituted in 2003, the Winnipeg/Kampala Partnership Project decided to focus on one of the primary challenges facing the people living in the conditions described above—combating HIV/AIDS. Delivered under the auspices of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities Municipal Partnership Program and funded by the Canadian International Development Agency, the primary objective of the project is to empower people in local parishes and villages (neighbourhoods) so they can participate in planning for better services to combat HIV/AIDS. It was decided to approach this in two ways: to work toward improving the working relationship between local government agencies and people in the parishes and villages; and, to enhance the capacity of people living in these neighbourhoods to participate in community planning, conducting needs assessment and priority setting. Working relationships

between local government agencies and people at the neighbourhood level have been weak and the capacity of residents to participate in planning and priority setting needs strengthening.

Team members from Winnipeg, Ursula Stelman from the City, Sharon MacDonald from the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority and Tom Carter from the University of Winnipeg have been working with team members from the City of Kampala and Makerere University to establish the necessary processes and planning and needs assessment approaches to enhance resident participation and planning capacity. Tom and a Student Research Assistant, John Osborne, are spending July and early August in Kampala working with residents in the Parish of Mbuya 1 in Kampala to develop and undertake a needs assessment and establish the basics for residents to participate in planning for the development of HIV/AIDS services.



Once such a process is in place it can be easily transferable to plan for other services desperately needed in the community—better housing, sanitation and waste disposal for example. The project is expected to be complete by March 2007.

Tom Carter, Canada Research Chair in Urban Change and Adaptation
And Professor of Geography



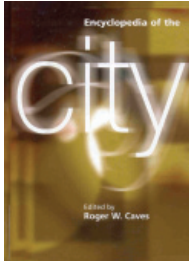
IUS Library

Library News

New in the IUS Library

Michael Dudley

Feature: New Reference Titles



Encyclopedia of the City

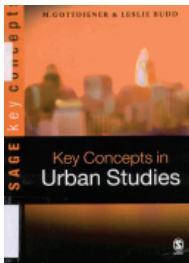
Edited by Roger W. Caves

Routledge

564 pp.

2005

REF HT 108.5 E63 2005



Key Concepts in Urban Studies

M. Gottdiener & Leslie Budd

Sage

188 pp.

2005

REF HT 109 G68 2005

The IUS library has recently acquired two exciting additions to its reference collection, both of which are broad introductions to urban studies, but each with very different approaches. Caves' *Encyclopedia* is a massive undertaking that assimilates the submissions of over 230 international contributors. It covers a diverse range of topics, personalities, concepts and themes in urban studies, while Gottdiener's and Budd's *Key Concepts* is a small collection of introductory essays—arranged in alphabetical order—by the authors themselves. Together they offer the student an excellent basis on which to pursue research on contemporary cities.

The signed articles in the *Encyclopedia* range between 1 or 2 columns to several pages in length and include "further reading" supplied by the author. Concepts are cross-referenced with capital letters to refer readers to additional articles. Many of the entries concern scholars in urban studies, and as such refer to their "key works" and, where appropriate, place and dates of birth and death.

The book's index refers to multiple occurrences of concepts or personages, and indicates the main entry in bold. The Editor's introduction to the *Encyclopedia* is a general appraisal of the concept of "the city" as well as an

overview of urban history; while of interest, it might have been more valuable to have provided the reader an introduction to the genesis of the project itself, the methodology by which concepts were selected or excluded, plans for subsequent editions, and any guidance on the use of the book.

This latter approach is the one adopted by Gottdiener and Budd, who explain the origins of the project as part of Sage's "Key Concepts" series, but that it also provided an opportunity to correct what they call the "decades of sloppy writing" that have "victimized" urban studies, causing "a great confusion and misunderstanding" in the field. They advise that the book is not intended to be read from first entry to last, but rather to group the (alphabetically sequenced) essays under three broad themes: Urban Sociology and Urban Studies (fitting, as Gottdiener is the co-author of *The New Urban Sociology*, which saw the release of its 3rd edition this year); Urban Planning; and Urban Geography.

Where Caves' work covers some very specific topics ("Annexation"; "Boulevard"; "Graffiti"), *Key Concepts* leans towards the broad and theoretical: essays include "Environmental Concerns", "Global Cities", "Immigration and Migration", "Pedestrian and Automobile", "Postmodern and Modern Urbanism." Like the *Encyclopedia*, each entry is followed by a list of references; unlike it however, there is no index, which makes the book a bit inconvenient to use as a quick reference source, or to see how topics may be covered in multiple entries (although where appropriate the authors have provided see references within the articles).

With the literature (and theoretical bases) of urban studies expanding as rapidly as they are, it is invaluable to have resources such as these that encapsulate, explain and relate complex and diverse concepts. The *Encyclopedia of the City* and *Key Concepts in Urban Studies* should be standard, general reference works in the field for some time to come.

IUS Library Hours

Monday to Friday, 8:30am to 4:30pm.



Available in Fall 2006

CANADIAN JOURNAL OF URBAN RESEARCH

Revue canadienne de recherche urbaine

Volume 15, Issue 1, Supplement 2006

Canadian Planning and Policy - Aménagement et politique au Canada

Joint Issue Editor: Ian Skelton

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Winnipeg Inner-City Research Alliance (WIRA)



Updates on Community-based Research

By Anita Friesen,
Community
Liaison Director



The following reports are now available on the WIRA website:

NEW WIRA RESEARCH REPORTS

Building the Economy on Community Capacities: the Spence Neighbourhood

Judith Harris, Lee Ann Beaubien, Inonge Aliaga, Earl Fast, Joan Hay

Housing Intervention and Neighbourhood Development: Harnessing Change in West Broadway

Ayoka Anderson, Geoff Butler, Paul Chorney, Eric Funk, Brian Grant, James Platt, Ian Skelton

Report 1: Census Analysis and Views of Key Informants and Residents on Neighbourhood Change

Report 2: Housing Interventions and Market Responses

For these and other full reports plus details about WIRA research projects,
visit: http://ius.uwinnipeg.ca/wira_research_projects

NEW RESEARCH INITIATIVE!

Linking, Learning, Leveraging: Social Enterprises, Knowledgeable Economies and Sustainable Communities

Funds for community-based research projects about the social economy in Manitoba are available through the Winnipeg Inner City Research Alliance (WIRA), as part of the broader "Linking, Learning, Leveraging: Social Enterprises, Knowledgeable Economies and Sustainable Communities," a five-year research initiative that covers Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Northern Ontario. This initiative supports research partnerships of community groups and academics who combine their strengths, expertise and resources to work towards a greater understanding of the social economy. There will be a call for research applications in the spring of each year for five years, beginning in 2006. For more information about the initiative and the research areas, see

http://ius.uwinnipeg.ca/wira_research.html

COMING SOON!

The Summer 2006 issue of *The Canadian Journal of Urban Research* will be a Special Issue featuring WIRA research projects. Watch for it in early September.

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