

2017 – 2 Investing in Community-Led Development

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Whereas: Neighbourhoods Alive! (NA!) is a unique program that supports a community economic development (CED) approach to neighbourhood revitalization in urban and rural communities across Manitoba. It recognizes that complex community challenges like unemployment, urban and rural decline, poverty, social exclusion and environmental degradation require comprehensive responses, and that those responses have proven to be most effective and sustainable when they are community-led. NA! enables communities to respond to these challenges with a multi-pronged approach that acknowledges the connections between employment, training, education, safety, crime prevention, housing, physical improvements, recreation, food security, social/community bridge building and more.

Whereas: NA! is viewed nationally as a best practice model for supporting targeted and community-driven neighbourhood revitalization. Its targeted approach, which invests in neighbourhoods that are in need of physical, social, economic and cultural revitalization, is reversing trends of underpopulation, poverty, crime and property decline in Manitoba's most marginalized communities. Its community-driven approach recognizes that communities are best suited to take the lead in identifying and addressing their unique challenges, opportunities and solutions.

Whereas: NA! increases the efficiency and efficacy of community-based organizations by streamlining and eliminating the duplication of their services and programming, and by coordinating funding allocations toward initiatives that target community priorities. This is facilitated by the Neighbourhood Development Assistance program (NDA), which provides up to five years of core funding to 13 Neighbourhood Renewal Corporations (NRCs) across Manitoba. This funding enables each NRC to develop a community-driven five-year neighbourhood revitalization plan that is consistent with the principles of CED. It also enables NRCs to coordinate community efforts and funding toward achieving the long-term vision set out in the revitalization plan.

Whereas: NA! also offers additional flexible funding programs (e.g. the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund, the Community Initiatives Program) that enable community-based organizations to leverage additional non-government resources for innovative initiatives that take a CED approach to addressing community-prioritized challenges and opportunities that are identified in neighbourhood revitalization plans.

Whereas: The last completed evaluation of NA! in 2010 found that NDA funding contributed greatly to improved coordination of neighbourhood revitalization efforts. However, the evaluation found that the original neighbourhoods included in NA! continue to experience issues related to safety, economic hardship and a lack of affordable housing, and that neighbourhood revitalization work is still needed. There is no short-term solution for transforming social, economic and environmental conditions in Manitoba's struggling communities. Community organizations doing this work require sustained, long-term funding that enables them to take corresponding long-term and strategic action.

Whereas: The Province of Manitoba passed the Community Renewal Act, which supports community-based planning and renewal initiatives in designated communities. It establishes considerations for designating communities including a requirement for a community-based organization that works with residents to identify their community-renewal goals, priorities and solutions in a community-driven renewal plan. It also requires the organization to provide input on government funding requests for renewal projects within their community, and requires the Minister to take that input into account when making funding decisions. The Act establishes a community renewal office within government to continue the operation of the NA! Program, a deputy ministers committee on community renewal and a citizens-based community renewal advisory committee.

Be It Resolved That: CCEDNet Manitoba urge the Province of Manitoba to make a long-term commitment to:

- a. Supporting community-led development like the Neighbourhoods Alive! model, especially the following key features:**
 - 1. A targeted approach that identifies and invests in key neighbourhoods in the greatest need of physical, social and economic revitalization.**
 - 2. A community-driven approach that enables communities to take the lead in identifying and addressing their unique challenges and opportunities.**
 - 3. A requirement for Neighbourhood Renewal Corporations to develop community-driven five-year neighbourhood revitalization plans that enhance the efficiency of local revitalization efforts.**
 - 4. The Neighbourhood Development Assistance program that provides up to five years of core funding to Neighbourhood Renewal Corporations.**
 - 5. Flexible funding programs that enable community-based organizations to take a multi-pronged approach to addressing local challenges and opportunities.**
 - 6. A requirement for neighbourhood revitalization plans and community-led development initiatives to demonstrate adherence to the CED principles.**
- b. Continuing and enhancing funding for community-led development like Neighbourhoods Alive!.**