

3. Employment and Training

All of the spending initiatives in this budget support the sort of urban space that employers and employees need to thrive: modern infrastructure; a cohesive green space strategy; strong public sector; sensible public transport; a vibrant arts and cultural scene; adequate housing; and access to locally produced food. But, in order to grow a city we need high value-added employers who create jobs, and skilled workers to fill them. How do we meet employers' needs when Manitoba's net inter-provincial migration remains negative — at 4.2 per cent in 2012 (Manitoba Bureau of Statistics Sept 2013: 5)?

According to a report by Loewen et al (2005), there is much debate about whether Canada will face a labour shortage. More likely are 'hot spots' that experience skills shortages. Winnipeg, with negative net inter-provincial migration, low unemployment and a greying population, is likely to be one of those hot spots (12). Although Manitoba's total migration has recently been positive thanks to the large number of new immigrants, these newcomers will not be sufficient to meet Winnipeg's need for labour. How then can we prepare our labour force for tomorrow's economy?

Winnipeg's Aboriginal Population

Loewen et al report that:

Within the Winnipeg population, concealed by statistics predicting a labour shortage, there exists a sizeable community with a different demographic story than the population as a whole — the Aboriginal population (8).

According to the Province of Manitoba, 15.5 per cent of Manitoba's population is Aboriginal (5) and as of 2006, 36 per cent (63,745) of them lived in Winnipeg (7). It is likely that today, Winnipeg's Aboriginal population is closer to 75,000–80,000. Not only is Winnipeg's Aboriginal population growing, it is younger than the non-Aboriginal

population. One in four Aboriginal people are 14 years of age or younger; one third of these are of primary or secondary school age (Province of Manitoba, 14).

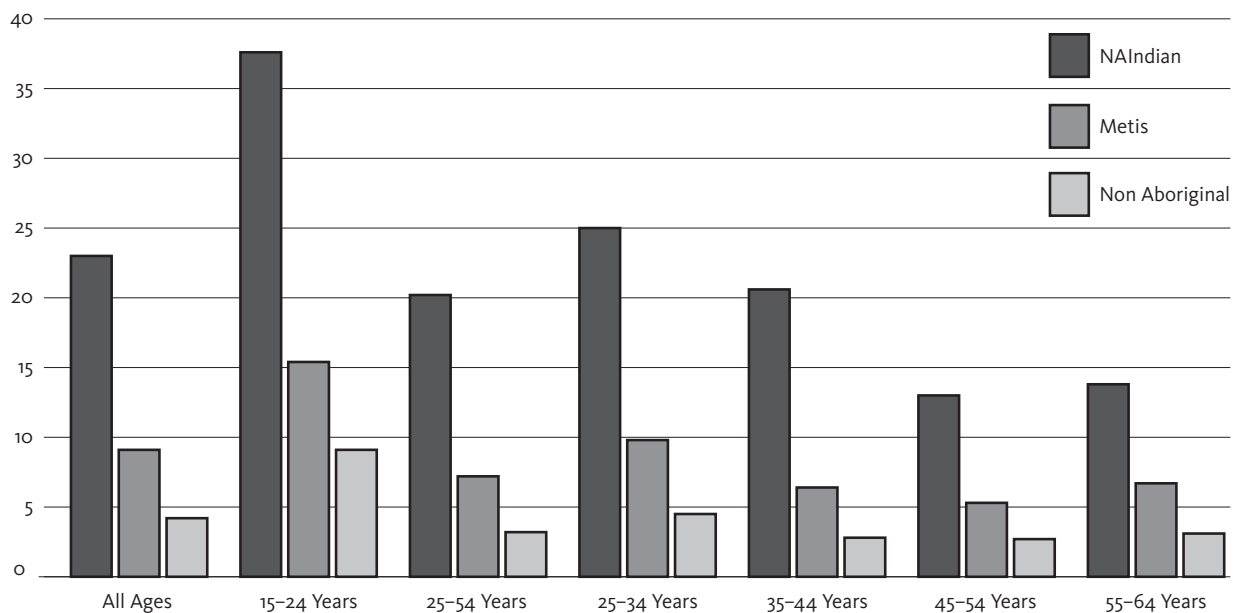
According to 2006 Census data, Winnipeg has the highest concentration of Aboriginal people when compared to other Canadian Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs) (CCPA 2012, 15). Twenty-one per cent of Winnipeg's Inner City identify as Aboriginal; in some inner-city neighbourhoods 50 per cent of residents are Aboriginal (CCPA 2012, 15).

Many Aboriginal Manitobans are successful employees and employers with thriving families. But centuries of colonialism — which engendered racist policies such as residential schools and *The Indian Act* — have damaged many Aboriginal people. High rates of poverty, unemployment and incarceration, together with poor educational and health outcomes, all speak to the tragic legacy of colonialism (CCPA MB. 2010, 2012; Province of Manitoba, 2012).

Aboriginal youth hold great promise for Winnipeg's economic future, but only if a concentrated effort is made to ensure that these young people have access to decent jobs. Current statistics do not bode well:

Although the statistics for all age groups reveal disparity between the three identity groups, as noted in the 2012 Provincial Report, *Aboriginal People in Manitoba*, the unusually high rate of unemployment experienced by non-Metis Aboriginals is of great concern. Non-Metis Aboriginal people between 15 and 24 years old had an unemployment rate more than four times that of non-Aboriginal Manitobans. It must be noted that these figures include people living on reserve where unemployment rates tend to be higher than for those Aboriginal people living off-reserve. Nonetheless, the lower rates of educational attainment and higher rates of poverty experienced by Winnipeg's Aboriginal population (CCPA 2012 17, 18), combined with the link between these two determinants and employment, mean that Winnipeg must find strategies

FIGURE 4 Unemployment Rates by Identity and Age Group, Manitoba, 2006 Census



SOURCE: Province of Manitoba, 2012, 31: Statistics Canada, 2006 Census, 2008 Special Tabulations, Labour Market Statistics.

to prepare its burgeoning young Aboriginal population (including Metis) for tomorrow's jobs.

Five Strategies

Expansion of Oshki Annishinabe Nigaaniwak: City of Winnipeg's Aboriginal Youth Strategy

The Aboriginal Youth Strategy is a promising practice at the City of Winnipeg: a successful partnership with community-based organizations providing multi-year funding. The Strategy, Oshki Annishinabe Nigaaniwak "Young Aboriginal People Leading", is designed to increase the number of Aboriginal youth in civic services and to create positive opportunities for Aboriginal youth. The funding for the Strategy was recently doubled, from \$1 million to \$2 million in the 2013 program budget.

The strategy is two-pronged. Inner City community-based organizations are funded by the City of Winnipeg to deliver a wide-range of youth programming, including recreation and visual

arts, job readiness, skills development and career planning. The second stream aims to get Aboriginal youth into the civil service through internship opportunities within civic departments, career exploration camps, enhanced recruitment and interviewing practices, and cultural awareness training for civic staff. This offers youth the opportunity to become employees of the City of Winnipeg. City jobs are good jobs: unionized by CUPE 500, they offer competitive pay and benefits and opportunities for career advancement. The Strategy also includes scholarships and awards to assist youth in post-secondary education or to further their employment options.

The Aboriginal Youth Strategy is well-received by the Inner City community as it funds both community development and capacity building for Aboriginal youth as well as providing avenues into good City jobs. The general sense is that this program should be continued and enhanced to provide more employment opportunities. All the initiatives in this section complement and enhance this existing strategy which is an example of how well-designed policy can

positively affect an entire community. To enhance this promising initiative, the City should continue to increase investments for the Aboriginal youth internship program.

New expenditure:

- Increase investment youth internship program: \$500,000

Expand spending to Early Childhood Education and Care

Education is primarily a provincial responsibility but given the need for improvements in Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) for Winnipeg's Aboriginal children, the City needs to offer support in this area.

According to Healthy Child Manitoba (HCM), 35 per cent of Aboriginal children are not well-prepared for school at age five, compared to 22 per cent of non-Aboriginal children (in CCPA MB. 2010, 15). Inner-children scored particularly poorly (HCM in CCPA MB. 2012, 15). Given the importance of ECEC in preparing children for future success in school and the labour market, successful programs that are currently running in the Inner City need to be enhanced and expanded. The most effective way to help many of Winnipeg's Aboriginal children is through culturally aware ECEC programming, as recommended by our community partners.

Existing community-based organizations (CBOs) like Urban Circle and Turtle Island Neighbourhood Centre know how to deliver this sort of programming to all age groups, and investment in these organizations would complement the excellent work being done by the City's Aboriginal Youth Strategy (see Oshki Annishinae Nigaaniwak above). Expansion of the programming for all ages would ensure that more Aboriginal youth graduate from high school so they can take advantage of other City initiatives such as the Medical Careers Exploration Program (City of Winnipeg 2012, 23). By supporting a full range of CBOs the City's spending would ensure that

children are helped from birth to graduation, making it less likely that any will fall between the cracks.

New expenditure:

- Increase Aboriginal Youth Strategy funding for ECEC programming to include grants to CBOs identified by community: \$500,000

Labour Market Intermediaries

The Loewen et al (2005) report referred to above provides a compelling argument for the use of Labour Market Intermediaries (LMIs) in Manitoba. This concept was further applied specifically to Winnipeg in another CCPA MB report by Silvius and MacKinnon (2012). Here we will explain why this model is needed in Winnipeg and why it will work. But first, what is a LMI?

According to Loewen et al:

Workforce intermediaries bring together around a single table otherwise diverse and separated elements of the community, in pursuit of a common objective — moving significant numbers of low-income people from disadvantaged communities into good jobs (6).

Employers who are willing to train low-skilled employees with little or no previous work experience are often ill-equipped to meet the training needs of these workers. They often have unrealistic expectations as to how much time multi-barriered workers need to adapt to work life. These potential workers may require counselling around addictions and basic life skills, or may be struggling to raise children while attending school. Obviously employers cannot meet all these needs, but many might be willing to hire such an employee if s/he were getting support from one or more other institutions.

An LMI connects disadvantaged workers with a network of partner organizations — community-based organizations that are often the point of entry into the world of work; educa-

tional institutions; governments; employers; and unions—that collectively have the expertise and resources to guide the worker on her journey to decent work. Often the first stop is a CBO such as the North End Community Renewal Corporation’s PATH Resource Centre. From there the worker could move to a community college, adult learning centre, participating union, vocational learning centre or government department for further training. A particularly attractive option is an Aboriginal organization like the Urban Circle Training Centre, which can offer high-school completion or post-secondary training in a culturally-sensitive environment that helps the student come to terms with the negative impact of colonization and racism. The LMI brokers relationships between prospective workers and these various organizations, including employers (Loewen et al, 20), offering ongoing support as the worker, with the guidance of the LMI, negotiates what is often a rocky path to fulltime work.

Further research by Silvius and MacKinnon (2012) found that a LMI designed to fit the needs of Winnipeg’s inner city would have to support the role the CBOs would play in building the trusting relationships that are required between the trainers and multi-barriered trainees. CBOs, like the Winnipeg Central Park Women’s Resource Centre and the Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization of Manitoba (IRCOM) work with a variety of workers who face challenges entering the workforce. The LMI can then negotiate the best means by which potential workers can meet the three categories of training that Loewen et al identified as essential: 1) soft skills or pre-employment education; 2) conducting a job search and getting placed; and 3) hard skills (Silvius and MacKinnon, 17).

The Silvius/MacKinnon report studied the feasibility of starting a LMI in Winnipeg’s Inner City. Of all the models considered, the authors concluded that a hybrid community-focussed, decentralized case-worker model would best

meet the needs of Winnipeg’s Aboriginal and Newcomer communities (32), and that funding for such a LMI would be approximately \$500,000/year. LMIs offer a workable strategy to help Winnipeg’s many multi-barriered workers gain valuable skills and assist employers fill job vacancies. Ultimately the result will be a stronger labour market and a more vibrant local economy.

Finally, the provincial government’s recent commitment to providing apprenticeship opportunities (Province of Manitoba 2014 Budget Speech, 2) opens up more possibilities for the City to stimulate job growth that would complement a LMI strategy. The City needs to consider how to take advantage of the Province’s program and work in unison to increase efficiencies.

New expenditure:

- LMI start-up funds: \$100,000
- First year operating costs: \$500,000
- Total LMI spending: \$600,000

Living Wage

It is not enough that all Winnipeggers receive decent education and training: once fully trained they need to earn enough to support their families. Workers need to earn a living wage, not a minimum wage.

A living wage movement is rising across North America. A living wage is the hourly wage required for a household to meet its basic needs, taking into account government transfers and deductions, and sets a higher test for quality of life than the minimum wage by reflecting what earners in a family really need to earn based on the actual costs of living. It is a conservative, bare-bones budget without the extras many of us take for granted.

Research by the CCPA-MB shows the living wage for Winnipeg in 2013 is \$14.07/hour (CCPA MB, 2013). This is calculated on the needs of a family comprised of two working parents with young children, but it would also support a mix of family types throughout the life cycle so that

young adults are not discouraged from having children and older workers have some extra income as they age.

The benefits of a living wage are not limited to the employee. Research has shown that paying a living wage has concrete benefits for employers, including:

- Reduced absenteeism
- Increased skill, morale and productivity levels
- Improved customer satisfaction
- Enhanced employer reputations.

By adopting a living wage policy for their employees and contracted services, the City of Winnipeg will declare itself a leader in poverty reduction in Winnipeg. Furthermore, it will lead to better provision of city services and a stronger labour market which will in turn generate more demand for local products and services through an increase in disposable earnings.

New Expenditures:

- Development of municipal living wage strategy: \$80,000

Procurement

Public sector procurement is determined the same way a family makes purchasing decisions — value for money. How should value for money be calculated? Rather than simply evaluating bids for public contracts by cost and timelines, the use of Community Benefits Clauses when tendering purchasing contracts broadens the evaluation criteria to include social, environmental, and economic outcomes. Doing so ensures the City of Winnipeg will receive the best long-term value for its spending, and allows the City to strategically target certain demographics for labour market development.

Strategic purchasing from businesses that are locally owned, employ local people, pay a living wage, and spend their profits locally cre-

ates an economic multiplier effect that benefits the local economy. Strategically purchasing from businesses that train and employ people with multiple-barriers to employment strengthens and grows our labour market.

Community Benefit Clauses are fiscally prudent — expanding our tax base, strengthening local purchasing power, decreasing social services cost, and reducing the cost of crime by ensuring those marginalized by the labour market have a platform to pull themselves out of poverty.

The provincial government has developed Aboriginal Procurement, Sustainable Development Procurement, Community Economic Development Procurement, and No Sweat Procurement policies. The City could build on these policies and expand their benefits to the municipal level. Provincial directories already identify businesses that fit the criteria of each procurement policy, and could be utilized by the municipal government.

This initiative could be accomplished without any significant increase to the budget. A staffing complement of three individuals could develop policies to analyze current procurement patterns, and develop an internal communications plan to advance the policies through City Departments. This staff complement would cost less than \$300,000 per year but would result in a significant impact far greater than this to the local economy.

All arms of the municipal government, including the Winnipeg Police Service, Winnipeg Transit, Parks and Recreation, Water and Waste, Winnipeg Public Library, and Fire Paramedic Service, should shift their purchasing patterns to include social and economic benefits. Incorporating Community Benefit Clauses will result in greater return on investment to government and society, and will result in more jobs for people with barriers to employment, poverty reduction, increased community services, community renewal, and fairer, stronger and more sustainable economies and environments. It is a logical

extension of the LMI and Living Wage policies included in this section.

New Expenditures:

- New staffing to design Community Benefit Clauses for City departments: \$300,000

Total New Expenditures:

- Total education spending: \$500,000

- Aboriginal Youth Strategy Enhancement: \$500,000

- Total LMI spending: \$600,000

- Development of municipal living wage strategy: \$80,000

- Community Benefit Clause initiative: \$300,000

Total: \$1,980,000