

*Catalyst for Sustainability:*  
*The Achievements, Challenges, Lessons and Prospects of the*  
*University of Winnipeg Community Renewal Corporation*  
Full Report

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McConnell

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## Acronyms

CMHC	Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation
DFS	Diversity Food Services Inc. (Diversity)
FRC	Forks Renewal Corporation
HNW	High net-worth
ICR	Inner City Renovation
JVA	Joint Venture Agreement
LEED	Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design
RFP	Request for Proposal
RHC	Rental Housing Construction
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SEED	Supporting Employment and Economic Development
SROI	Social return on investment
TIF	Tax Increment Financing
UW	University of Winnipeg
UWCRC	University of Winnipeg Community Renewal Corporation
UWSA	University of Winnipeg Students' Association

## Foreword

Through investments in training and innovation, Canada’s universities and colleges anchor the economic livelihood and social wellbeing of communities and our country. In addition to teaching and research, their impact is expressed in the people they hire, the goods and services they purchase and the ways they invest their financial, physical and relational assets.

Recognizing their latent capacity to shape better outcomes as economic actors and social innovators, post-secondary institutions are beginning to apply their assets to building “social infrastructure.” The 2017 report, *Maximizing the Capacities of Advanced Education Institutions to Build Social Infrastructure for Canadian Communities*,<sup>1</sup> explores this opportunity in depth.

The University of Winnipeg Community Renewal Corporation (UWCRC) is an outstanding example of a social infrastructure strategy, comprising investments in urban renewal, post-secondary infrastructure, affordable housing, food services and more. *Catalyst for Sustainability: The Achievements, Challenges, Lessons and Prospects of the University of Winnipeg Community Renewal Corporation* documents this model so that others can learn from it as they develop their own approaches.

To deliver on their potential, social innovators like UWCRC need greater access to investment capital and smart metrics that measure outcomes on multiple bottom lines. Growing the field will also take regulatory innovation to create hybrid business models; recognition from business and innovation support programs; and leadership from the private, public and community sectors.

The federal government’s Social Innovation and Social Finance Strategy Co-Creation Steering Group—comprising representatives from government, business, labour, academia, finance, Indigenous nations and philanthropy—has developed policy recommendations that address these challenges.

As a member of this group, I hope that readers of this case study will recognize and be inspired by what can be accomplished when post-secondary institutions position themselves as engines of inclusive growth.

Stephen Huddart  
President and Chief Executive Officer, The McConnell Foundation

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<sup>1</sup> C. Strandberg, *Maximizing the Capacities of Advanced Education Institutions to Build Social Infrastructure for Canadian Communities*, Simon Fraser University and the J.W. McConnell Family Foundation, Vancouver, 2017. Available at <https://bit.ly/2PZrwwf>

## Preface

The University of Winnipeg (UWinnipeg) is a medium-size Canadian university, located in the heart of downtown Winnipeg on Treaty One territory and the homeland of the Metis Nation. Our roots are deep, extending back to the 1880s and we became an independent university in 1967. Today, UWinnipeg is home to approximately 10,000 graduate and undergraduate students and an additional 4,000 learners who are taking courses through our Professional Education division. UWinnipeg has an annual economic impact of \$1.5 billion, which is significant for both downtown Winnipeg and Manitoba as a whole.

We are guided by our Strategic Directions: academic excellence, student success, knowledge mobilization, financial resilience and Indigenization. UWinnipeg's approach to Indigenization is evolving as we learn. Our faculty and students are at the forefront of developing solutions for some of society's most pressing issues, such as responding to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's calls to action, meeting the needs of newcomers to Canada, and climate change.

Unlike other universities, which were originally established on the edges of their communities, UWinnipeg does not occupy a large campus area and we do not have a base of undeveloped land. Centrally located in downtown Winnipeg and bordered by one of Canada's most diverse neighbourhoods, we are compact and carefully consider the impacts of our developments.

During the preceding decade UWinnipeg experienced exponential enrolment growth as the baby-boom echo—generations X, Y and millennials—came to our university in ever-greater numbers. At the start of the millennium, UWinnipeg was home to 6,500 students, but by 2008 it had reached approximately 10,000. To manage the necessary expansion, University leadership at the time developed an innovative approach that was built on principles of sustainability and partnerships with broader community.

The results are indeed impressive, and we are proud of our success. For example, UWinnipeg has achieved a 32% reduction in real GHG emissions below 1990 levels, in spite of increasing our campus footprint by 33% over the same timeframe. All of our new buildings are LEED Silver or better. Our campus foodservice provider, Diversity, sources close to 60% of their inputs from within a 100 km radius and the great majority of its staff are from marginalized communities and now earn a living wage.

The case study you are about to read is a thoughtful reflection of our experience. There were, and still are, tensions that require attention, including ongoing work to address the financial impacts of UWinnipeg's expansion, trade-offs among sustainability goals and working to advance authentic partnerships with community. As an academic institution first and foremost, we must always be mindful of our core purpose and how the work of the University of Winnipeg Community Renewal Corporation helps us to achieve our mission.

Where we have achieved success, it was through the hard work of dedicated people at all levels. The lessons we learned may provide you with insight, but what worked for us may not be directly applicable to your context. As you consider your own path, I encourage you to think about the unique aspects of your organization, the strengths of the people you work with, your communities, your mission and purpose and how you can lead in creating a better future.

Dr. Annette Trimbee  
President and Vice-Chancellor, University of Winnipeg  
Chair, University of Winnipeg Community Renewal Corporation

## Executive Summary

### Overview

This report summarizes the experience, models and tools, results, challenges, lessons and prospects of the University of Winnipeg Community Renewal Corporation (UWCRC). Established by the University of Winnipeg's Board of Regents in 2005 as a special-purpose entity to implement the University's growth and sustainability plan, UWCRC is a separately incorporated non-profit, charitable corporation with its own Board of Directors (eight members from the University of Winnipeg (UW) and eight from the broader community) and staff. The University of Winnipeg President chairs the Board. In 2016, it launched UWCRC 2.0 Inc., chaired by a community representative, as a new vehicle to extend its services to other post-secondary institutions, non-profits and cities in Manitoba and elsewhere. Both UWCRC and UWCRC 2.0 Inc. promote four pillars of sustainability: environmental, social, economic and cultural.

### Organizational Evolution

UWCRC's organizational trajectory as a development catalyst has been, first, to focus on the needs of the University of Winnipeg for campus renewal and community engagement and then, later, to market its development services to non-UW institutions and communities in Winnipeg and elsewhere in Manitoba. In its start-up phase, in 2005-2006, the Corporation bought an interest in an office tower at the edge of campus to house the University's and the UWCRC's operations, including the university bookstore. This property generated cash flow through leasehold revenue, including university and other commercial tenancies and, over time, helped the Corporation to secure financing for its own projects. However, during its initial decade, the core business of UWCRC was to develop and manage University construction projects that created a series of fresh, innovative and green facilities—a new residence, day care, labs, offices and classrooms, recreational facilities and more—to serve a larger student population and a commitment to opening the University to the community. The Corporation also animated the start-up and growth of a food-services social enterprise on campus.

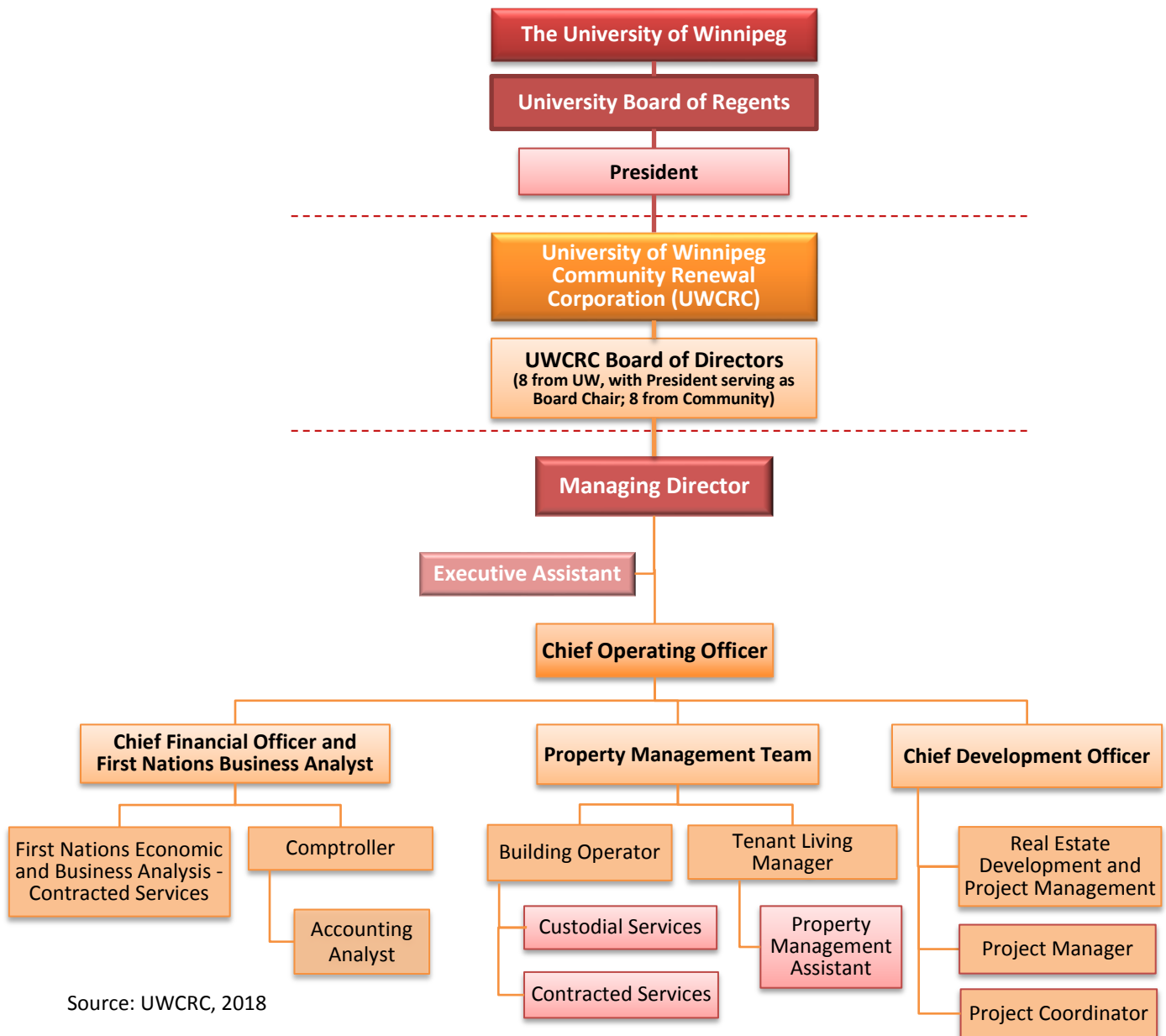
By 2016, though, with the opening of the mixed-use, mixed-income residential tower, the Downtown Commons, UWCRC returned to its role as property owner and manager. That same year saw the creation of UWCRC 2.0 Inc., a separate, non-profit entity with the sole purpose of marketing the Corporation's development expertise to non-UW institutions and organizations across Manitoba and perhaps more broadly. The new structure has nearly \$80 million worth of new projects under development. In addition, in recent years UWCRC and UWCRC 2.0 Inc. have stepped up their advisory work in Indigenous economic development.

### Organizational Structure

Figure 1 shows the organizational structure of the University of Winnipeg Community Renewal Corporation today. This diagram indicates that the Corporation operates three units: finance (which includes First-Nations business analysis), property management and real estate development. Further, UWCRC owns, wholly or partially, a number of businesses and facilities through subsidiaries (e.g. Downtown Commons) or joint ventures (e.g. Diversity Food Services and 491 Portage Avenue office



tower). To carry out its projects, UWCRC 2.0, a separate legal entity, maintains a service agreement with UWCRC to provide the full range of professional services necessary to execute the roles of developer, project manager, property manager and owner.



Source: UWCRC, 2018

Figure 1: UWCRC Organizational Structure

## University Relationship

The relationship between UWCRC and the University of Winnipeg has been close and very successful. Yet, apart from modest start-up funding, space allocation for UWCRC staff offices, and periodic repayable cash-flow support and corporate guarantees to support borrowing, the Corporation does not

receive significant operating funds from the University. Rather, it has had to generate its own revenue primarily through development and project-management fees, rental income, First Nations economic-development and business analysis consulting, property management fees and other sources. In the course of its work, the Corporation has delivered a range of benefits to the University, including cost-effective, well-designed and sustainable real estate projects; improved, healthy food services on campus; creative partnerships with local non-profits, businesses and Indigenous communities; and a visible role as a provider of affordable housing in the downtown core.

For its part, UWCRC was able to build its own capabilities and track record in social real estate and social enterprise through a dozen years of on-campus work; benefit from University Board of Regents, executive support and administrative systems including payroll; access capital at provincial-government rates thanks to the University's status as a publicly-funded institution; and partner with the University of Winnipeg Foundation to mobilize private donations to major new facilities. Furthermore, as the University's strategic priorities have shifted from growth, infrastructure renewal, sustainability and community-facing initiatives to its current focus on financial efficiency and Indigenousization, UWCRC has integrated these priorities into its own strategies and activities.

## Social Enterprise

In 2009, in a joint venture with non-profit partner SEED (Supporting Employment and Economic Development) Winnipeg, UWCRC launched Diversity Food Services (DFS), a social enterprise that provides healthy, affordable food in facilities across the downtown campus as well as off-campus cafés at non-profit sites plus a catering arm. Today Diversity employs more than 100 workers, including many who are new Canadians as well as Indigenous citizens and employees facing other labour-market barriers, such as addiction and disability. Diversity offers living wages, extensive training and support, and good benefits. With business volume exceeding \$3 million per year, DFS has also become a major purchaser of fresh and organic vegetables, fruit, meat and dairy products from some 60 local suppliers, has won awards for its affordable, healthy foods from environmental and student organizations, and has attracted the interest of many universities and student groups across North America.

## Social Real Estate

Since 2007, UWCRC has catalyzed the design and construction of more than \$200 million worth of social real estate. Serving as developer and project manager for the University, and more recently as property manager and owner of a multi-unit, mixed-income residential tower, the Corporation has worked successfully in partnership with governments, non-profits, high net-worth families, foundations, private developers, engineers and architects. Major new facilities have been constructed and are in operation, including the University's large-scale student residence, a large health and recreation complex open to the community, a state-of-the-art environment and science research facility, innovative buildings that house academic departments and classrooms alongside an art gallery, a community education program and common spaces for community use. A recent project, Downtown Commons, which UWCRC not only developed but also owns and now manages, is a mixed-income residential development offering premium, market-rate and affordable units, and is a model for new projects in design by UWCRC 2.0.

To date, the Corporation has built nearly 90 affordable housing units in the downtown core and has plans to build more. Overall, this portfolio of social real estate has generated some \$320 million in direct, indirect and induced economic effects, primarily in Winnipeg and southern Manitoba. Furthermore, five new UWCRC buildings with Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Silver certification or better, including two LEED Gold developments, helped the University of Winnipeg exceed its greenhouse gas reduction targets and reduce UW's ecological footprint even while it was expanding the downtown campus. Accordingly, in 2014 UWCRC was awarded the University of Winnipeg's Campus Sustainability Recognition Award for its leadership, innovation and inclusiveness in environmental sustainability.

## Indigenous Economic Development

UWCRC operates a third line of business: providing business analysis and project-management services in support of Indigenous economic development. To date, this work has constituted only a small part of the Corporation's activity, but its growth potential is significant. Overall, UWCRC and UWCRC 2.0 have served as consultants to First Nations on more than 50 planning projects, ranging from urban-property acquisitions and property management to on-reserve capital-equipment purchases, facilities for retail stores, housing repair and construction, community economic development support related to new on-reserve school construction, and even a major access road. The Corporation brings to these assignments high-quality skills in business analysis, financial forecasting and mentoring as well as deep respect for local leadership and community engagement.

## Challenges

While these results have been impressive, the Corporation has also faced challenges. Within the University environment, there have sometimes been tensions between UWCRC and the academic side of the institution, with some faculty members questioning the value of the Corporation's work to research and teaching. Over time, UWCRC has demonstrated its worth through the construction of new, leading-edge facilities providing new labs, classrooms and faculty offices. And the UW's Board of Regents and senior executives have continued to emphasize that UWCRC has not received significant ongoing operating funds from the University budget.

In another challenge, it was found with Diversity Food Services that university food services constitute a seasonal business, following the cycles of the academic terms. By adding off-campus operations and catering, the business was able to gain greater scale and smooth out its cash flow while diversifying its customers and revenue streams.

In its real estate development work, the federal, provincial and municipal policy environments—particularly with respect to higher education, affordable housing, Indigenous affairs and inner cities—have changed almost continuously during the past dozen years, obliging the Corporation to remain agile and flexible, to maintain a broad range of funding relationships and to construct customized financing packages for each project. And in its Indigenous economic development activities, multi-level political and policy complexity has also constrained progress.

## Implications

Through its creation and support of the Community Renewal Corporation, and the UWCRC's many innovations and achievements, the University of Winnipeg has shown how higher-education institutions can catalyze multi-dimensional sustainability for themselves and the communities in which they are located. By forging authentic, effective partnerships with community-based organizations, professionals, investors and all levels of government, and with the guidance and advice of a talented and focused Board of Directors, the Corporation has produced significant outcomes in the areas of both social enterprise and social real estate—at meaningful scale. In so doing, UWCRC has made important contributions to the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, particularly those related to poverty reduction, food security, educational access, decent work, sustainable cities, and responsible consumption. Overall, the Corporation has, very effectively, demonstrated its value as an animator of place-based inclusive growth.

## Replication

There are no perfect development models, including this one. But the case of the University of Winnipeg Community Renewal Corporation is rich in insights and lessons that can be drawn upon by other universities and colleges to help make the cities and towns where they are based greener, fairer, more inclusive and more prosperous. With thoughtful adaptation, its strategies, instruments and tools are highly replicable. Further research aimed at other post-secondary institutions on other models and experiences, a step-by-step guide, and executive training would do much to widen and accelerate the replication process and, correspondingly, the scale and reach of its impacts.

However, to fully optimize these results, an additional component is necessary: that of a pan-Canadian impact investment fund for social infrastructure that can provide both shorter-term, pre-development financing and longer-term loans and guarantees for large-scale real estate projects, as well as patient working capital for growing social enterprises. Working closely with post-secondary education institutions, foundations are well-positioned to work with other institutional investors, like banks, insurance companies and pension funds, together with high net-worth individuals, non-profits and governments, to drive the design and implementation of such a fund.

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Overview

How universities can mobilize all of their assets to revitalize the cities and regions in which they are based is a question that is gaining importance as advanced societies struggle to cope with growing economic inequalities, especially in racialized communities, and the powerful forces of urbanization, technological change and globalization. The challenge is not only to innovate, but it is to *innovate at scale and with replicability*. The RECODE Initiative in Canada and the Anchor Institutions Task Force in the United States are examples of current efforts to support universities to use a wide range of strategies and tools to promote employment and affordable housing for marginalized groups while also delivering their core degree programs. Yet detailed accounts of significant work in these areas by individual universities are too rare.<sup>2</sup>

For more than a dozen years, the University of Winnipeg Community Renewal Corporation (UWCRC) has built an impressive body of work in the domains of social-enterprise development and social-real estate development in Winnipeg’s downtown core. The Corporation’s aim in building this *social infrastructure*<sup>3</sup> has been to foster *multi-dimensional sustainability*—environmental, social, economic, and cultural—in a local community characterized by sharp and longstanding inequalities. Understanding how this long-term, far-reaching effort has been undertaken—the strategies employed, the results achieved, the challenges faced and the prospects ahead—can benefit university leaders across Canada and the United States. The case study presented here summarises this experience and its lessons in a form that is intended for broad dissemination and utilization, with the aim of sparking further innovation and change by higher education institutions in cities across North America and the world at large.

As the President of Simon Fraser University, the Honourable Andrew Petter, said recently: “Canada’s public universities, colleges and institutes have an obligation, as well as an opportunity, to harness the instruments at our disposal to the greatest extent possible to benefit the communities we serve. In addition to fulfilling our core educational and research mandates, we bear a responsibility as public

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<sup>2</sup> An important exception is Judith Rodin’s 2007 *The University and Urban Revival*, which tells the story of the array of projects implemented over a ten-year period by the University of Pennsylvania (UPenn) to revitalize the West Philadelphia neighbourhoods adjacent to UPenn’s campus; see J. Rodin, *The University and Urban Revival: Out of the Ivory Tower and Into the Streets*, University of Pennsylvania Press: Philadelphia, 2007 [Link](#)

<sup>3</sup> In 2017, the J.W. McConnell Family Foundation and Simon Fraser University commissioned a discussion paper on how tertiary education institutions in Canada can optimize their assets and activities to build social infrastructure. The paper defined social infrastructure as “the organizational arrangements and deliberate investments in society’s systems, relationships and structures that enable society to create a resilient, just, equitable and sustainable world. It includes social, economic, environmental and cultural assets” (p. 6). See C. Strandberg, *Maximizing the Capacities of Advanced Education Institutions to Build Social Infrastructure for Canadian Communities*, J.W. McConnell Family Foundation, RECODE and Simon Fraser University, Montreal and Vancouver, 2017 [Link](#)

institutions to exercise our full capacities as community builders, especially at a time when the needs are so great and the sources of social infrastructure in such short supply.”<sup>4</sup>

## 1.2 Approach

The overall approach taken in preparing this case study was to focus on the effectiveness of the results, models and tools used by the UWCRC to achieve its social-enterprise and social real estate objectives. In addition to seeking to understand the success factors underlying the Corporation’s achievements, the analysis was also attentive to any failures, barriers or challenges faced by the entities involved, and ways and means instituted to sustain the gains made. A mixed set of data collection methods was used, including document review, investment-portfolio analysis, interviews with key Board members, staff and partners of UWCRC, and site visits to selected projects.

## 1.3 Framing Concepts

Several framing concepts and tools were employed in the data collection and analysis process to prepare this case study, as follows:

- 1) The Corporation’s definitions, strategies and results in promoting *multi-dimensional sustainability* were examined for both the social-enterprise and social real estate lines of action by UWCRC. “Our values driven work is guided by a four-pillared concept of sustainability,” states the Corporation. Attention was paid to key instruments for institutional engagement in social infrastructure, particularly, in terms of financial instruments, procurement, investment, real estate, funding sources, capital planning, as well as physical instruments such as facilities, cultural services, student housing and land, and relational instruments, notably the University of Winnipeg’s relationships with governments, business and community organizations.<sup>5</sup>
- 2) More specifically, the analysis was especially interested in how the Corporation has mobilized the *talent and capacities* it has required to succeed in its mandate, particularly through its structuring and recruitment of specialized boards of directors and legal agreements with strategic partners. How UWCRC structured financing packages for scaled social business and major building-construction projects was also of special interest.
- 3) In addition, the analysis sought to estimate the *economic effects*—direct, indirect and induced—of the Corporation’s business and real estate activities. Finance Canada has used the economic multiplier of 1.6 for investments in public infrastructure, which is used in this report; others have employed a multiplier of closer to 1.8.<sup>6</sup>
- 4) In the face of widespread income inequality and an array of new, disruptive technologies, governments are increasingly interested in policies that promote *inclusive growth*. “There are no guarantees that Canada will be a leader down this road,” observes one recent report. “But some place, some community, some group of people will fire the imagination by showing how inclusive growth is not only attainable, it is self-reinforcing.”<sup>7</sup> The case study analysis explored

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<sup>4</sup> A. Petter, The new community builders: Universities, colleges and institutes are vital source of social infrastructure, Vancouver Sun, May 25, 2018 [Link](#)

<sup>5</sup> These engagement-instrument categories were drawn from a longer list presented in C. Strandberg, *Ibid.*, 2017, p. 21

<sup>6</sup> The Council of the Federation, Driving Public Infrastructure, Jobs and Economic Growth, August 6, 2014, p. 6 [PDF](#)

<sup>7</sup> S. Johal and A. Yalnizyan, Race to the Top: Developing and Inclusive Growth, Mowat Centre, April 25, 2018 [Link](#)

the ways in which the executives, staff, volunteers and partners of UWCRC have played exactly that role.

- 5) Finally, the case-study analysis assessed the alignment of the work of the Corporation with the international community's *Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)* targeted for 2030, particularly Goal 1 (no poverty), Goal 2 (end hunger, improve nutrition, promote sustainable agriculture), Goal 4 (ensure inclusive and quality education, including learners acquiring the skills to promote sustainable development), Goal 8 (promote sustainable economic growth, inclusive employment and decent work for all), Goal 11 (make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable), and Goal 12 (ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns).<sup>8</sup> Even in a rich country like Canada, a Brookings Institution study found, "the country appears to have been moving backward recently" on some key indicators, such as food insecurity, access to affordable housing, share of electricity consumption in renewables, and other areas.<sup>9</sup> It is clear that there is much work to be done.



Source: <https://www.globalgoals.org/>

**Figure 2: Areas of Contribution by UWCRC to the Sustainable Development Goals**

## 2 Context

### 2.1 Overview

The work of the University of Winnipeg Community Renewal Corporation (UWCRC) has been carried out in a specific place and time period and within a particular institutional framework. In terms of place, the inner city of Winnipeg has faced a wide range of social and economic challenges, ranging from poverty, unemployment and discrimination, particularly among Indigenous citizens and new Canadians, high crime rates and drug abuse, to homelessness and lack of affordable housing. In spite of the many efforts

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<sup>8</sup> The United Nations adopted these ambitious, universal [goals](http://17goals.org/) in 2015; for updates on action and progress, consult 17 Goals (<http://17goals.org/>), Global Goals (<https://www.globalgoals.org/>) and other sites

<sup>9</sup> J.W. McArthur and K. Rasmussen, Who and What Gets Left Behind? Assessing Canada's Domestic Status on the Sustainable Development Goals, Working Paper 108, Global Economy and Development, Brookings Institution, Washington D.C., 2017 [Link](#)

of governments and community organizations, these problems have persisted. The time period in which the Corporation has operated, 2005 to the present, was, in the first ten years at least, characterized by the availability of significant provincial and federal infrastructure funds. In the last few years, however, accessing such public funds has involved more complex and extended negotiations with changing government policies and programs.

For its part, the University of Winnipeg faced its own challenges a dozen years ago, including insufficient public funding, a growing student population, old and inadequate buildings for offices and classrooms, no large-scale on-campus student residence, and reputational issues. Its Board of Regents and leadership of the day charted a path forward guided by the principles of growth, sustainability and community partnership. UWCRC became an important instrument for implementing this vision. And, as conditions in the broader environment have evolved in recent years, the Corporation has also adapted its model, partnerships, instruments and activities.

## 2.2 City of Winnipeg

Located at the confluence of the Assiniboine and Red Rivers in the Province of Manitoba, Winnipeg is Canada's seventh largest metropolitan area with a population of some 800,000 residents. A rail and road transportation hub linking eastern Canada with the western provinces, Winnipeg has built a diversified economy and vibrant cultural life, is a prime destination for newcomers to Canada, and is the site of a world-class human rights museum. The city is also home to a large Indigenous community. Nearly 12% of the population self-identifies as Aboriginal, the highest percentage of any major Canadian city. And the 76,000 Indigenous citizens who live there constitute the largest Indigenous population of any single, non-reserve municipality in the country.<sup>10</sup>

Many Indigenous people live in Winnipeg's downtown core, where widespread poverty, unemployment and homelessness have persisted. Building on the pragmatism of local politicians of all stripes, and working with all three levels of government—municipal, provincial and federal—and the private sector, an array of non-profit, public and Indigenous agencies has worked together, providing business, finance, housing, social, cultural and educational programs to enable low-income families and individuals in the inner-city to improve their lives, to attract new business investment into the area, and to make the core greener, safer and more liveable for all. New coalitions and new ways of working are being nurtured.<sup>11</sup> Further, there is evidence that progress is being made. "After decades of decline, public investment in community-led initiatives is making a difference," reported one recent study, documenting gains in

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<sup>10</sup> These figures are drawn from Statistics Canada census data for 2011 and 2016

<sup>11</sup> One new initiative, for example, is the Winnipeg Promise, which is led by the Mayor of Winnipeg, Brian Bowman (who is Metis) and a steering committee of business, education, health and non-profit leaders, and aims to unlock access to federal funds through the Canada Learning Bond for low-income and Indigenous families. The initiative is supported by the McConnell and Omega foundations. Both the University of Winnipeg and SEED Winnipeg are represented on the steering committee [Link](#)



population growth, improvements in education levels, and reduced unemployment, especially for Indigenous women.<sup>12</sup>

However, a new set of challenges has recently emerged. For one thing, the current provincial government favours tax measures rather than spending programs to promote affordable housing and other social initiatives, and there is uncertainty around provincial grants for community organizations.<sup>13</sup> At the same time, the federal government is facing fiscal constraints on its spending even while it retools its programs for housing and Indigenous communities. And, in the sphere of racial politics, in early 2018, jury decisions that failed to convict suspects in the murders of prominent Indigenous citizens have heightened racial tensions in Winnipeg and other western Canadian cities.<sup>14</sup>

## 2.3 University of Winnipeg

The University of Winnipeg (UW) is a longstanding and important member of the inner-city community. Its founding colleges were established 150 years ago and its modern provincial charter was issued 50 years ago.<sup>15</sup> The University experienced particularly sharp growth in enrollment in the period 2000 to 2005, when its student population jumped from 6,500 to about 9,000.<sup>16</sup> This growth trend continued, with enrolment at UW increasing by 9% between 2008 and 2017.<sup>17</sup> Today the University manages a \$140-million annual operating budget, which is financed through a provincial operating grant (51%), provincially approved tuition and fees (27%), and other grants and revenue (22%).<sup>18</sup>

Under the leadership of its previous President, Dr. Lloyd Axworthy, the University affirmed its commitment to environmental sustainability and community engagement and mobilized more than \$200 million in public and private financing to construct a series of new, state-of-the-art facilities for teaching and research, student housing, student day care, and athletics and recreation. The prime organizational instrument delegated to lead this effort was a special-purpose, non-profit and charitable entity: the University of Winnipeg Community Renewal Corporation, which served as developer and project manager for most of these projects. Featuring prominently in student and faculty recruitment, these new facilities are outward facing, interacting with the community through a variety of outreach programs. Some of these buildings, like the Downtown Commons, provide affordable and mixed-income housing to non-university members as well as student housing. In addition, UWCRC worked

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<sup>12</sup> K. Ten Fingers, D. Lezubski and J. Silver, Drawing on Our Strengths: State of the Inner City 2015, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, Winnipeg, 2015 [Report](#) and [Inner City Report](#). This research, based on census data for 1996 through 2011 in particular, also showed that Aboriginal men continue to experience high levels of unemployment even while Aboriginal women posted gains on this key indicator

<sup>13</sup> E. Smirl, Between a Rock and a Hard Place: State of the Inner City 2017, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, Winnipeg, 2017 [Report](#)

<sup>14</sup> In early 2018, acquittal decisions by non-Aboriginal juries in trials concerning suspects in the deaths of Tina Fontaine of Winnipeg and Colton Boushie of North Battleford, Saskatchewan were widely viewed as evidence that the Canadian justice system discriminates against Indigenous victims; see, for example, [Article](#)

<sup>15</sup> University of Winnipeg, UWinnipeg Fast Facts, Winnipeg, 2017 [Website](#)

<sup>16</sup> N. Martin, A place for the people, Winnipeg Free Press, June 14, 2014 [Article](#) and Office of Institutional Analysis, University of Winnipeg, 2018

<sup>17</sup> Office of Institutional Analysis, Enrolment, University of Winnipeg, Winnipeg, 2017 [Website](#)

<sup>18</sup> University of Winnipeg, 2017-2018 Operating Budget Primer-May 2017, Winnipeg, 2017 [Primer PDF](#)

with a local non-profit to set up a social enterprise to provide high-quality, sustainable food services on campus.<sup>19</sup>

The current University of Winnipeg President, Dr. Annette Trimbee, was appointed in 2014 and reappointed in 2017. A member of the Metis Nation, she built on this work and, in turn, committed to deepen and broaden the University's relationship with the Indigenous community. In the University's 2015 report on strategic directions, *Indigenization*—that is, leading Indigenous inclusion—was confirmed as a major institutional priority.<sup>20</sup> In 2016, the University became one of Canada's first higher education institutions to require all students to gain foundational knowledge of Indigenous society and culture. Currently, 900 Indigenous students study at the University of Winnipeg.<sup>21</sup> With some 12% of first-year students self-identifying as Indigenous, the institution is poised to increase this number significantly.<sup>22</sup>

In the wake of the trial decisions on the Fontaine and Boushie deaths, Dr. Trimbee said in a public statement: "As a place of learning, we recognize our role in supporting the development of the next generation of leaders who will help us understand the systems and histories that have led to these events. It is a difficult time, from which we will further strengthen our resolve to providing spaces and opportunities for young Indigenous people to reach their full potential." She counselled students affected by these events to take extra time to complete assignments if they needed it and to access Counselling Services or Elders-in-Residence if they would like to talk through these issues.<sup>23</sup>

At the same time, President Trimbee has continued UW's commitment to environmental sustainability, engaging a broad range of faculty and students, especially in the natural sciences, to take this dimension of the University's work even further. Impressively, between 1990 and 2017, UW had reduced its absolute greenhouse emissions by 32%, while expanding its overall campus by 33%.<sup>24</sup> In support of its continued commitment to the environment under the leadership of President Trimbee, UW's Board of Regents in 2017 approved a new institutional sustainability strategy that, building on the prior decade's experience, resulted in 19 specific and measurable targets, organized under four broad goals, including: 1) exceeding Canada's commitments under the Paris Accord; 2) cultivating principled relationships with people on and off campus, including those with Indigenous communities; 3) developing and delivering curriculum, student services, and programming that deepen student knowledge about sustainability and that help motivate thoughtful leadership and action; and, 4) mobilizing evidence and research to

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<sup>19</sup> An account of this period of growth is presented in *A Decade of Transformation*, University of Winnipeg, Winnipeg, 2014 [Report PDF](#)

<sup>20</sup> University of Winnipeg, *Strategic Directions*, Winnipeg, 2015 [Link](#)

<sup>21</sup> Office of Institutional Analysis, *University Data and Statistics*, University of Winnipeg, 2017 [Link](#)

<sup>22</sup> See University of Winnipeg, *Undergrad View Book 2018-2019*, Winnipeg, 2018, p. 7 [Book](#)

<sup>23</sup> Statement of Annette Trimbee in Support of Indigenous Community, University of Winnipeg, Winnipeg, February 12, 2018 [Link](#)

<sup>24</sup> University of Winnipeg, *2017 Sustainability Strategy*, "Campus Sustainability: Cultivating Healthy, Resilient Communities", p. 11 [Link](#)

address local and global sustainability challenges.<sup>25</sup> It is the expectation and desire of the University that UWCRC and UWCRC 2.0 align their operations, as appropriate and feasible, with this strategy.

Another important strategic priority is financial and institutional resilience, especially in a period of uncertainty around the quantum of the University's operating grant from the provincial government. With student fees previously frozen at levels much lower than its out-of-province peers, though somewhat loosened now under the current provincial government, the University is actively seeking administrative efficiencies and diversified revenues from various business units and special entities, including the UWCRC.<sup>26</sup> Indeed, the President has emphasized that she views the Corporation, in the current context, as an innovative tool for "doing more with less."<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> University of Winnipeg, 2017 Sustainability Strategy, Ibid., p.19-31

<sup>26</sup> See the 2017-2018 Operating Budget Primer, Ibid., 2017

<sup>27</sup> A. Trimbee, Interview, February 20, 2018

## I The Model

### 3 The UWCRC Model

#### 3.1 Overview

The University of Winnipeg Community Renewal Corporation (UWCRC) was established by the University of Winnipeg's Board of Regents in 2005 as a special purpose entity to lead, with focus and agility, the growth and renewal of campus infrastructure while also contributing to the renewal of the city's downtown core. Structured as an independent, non-profit, charitable corporation, UWCRC has based its work in social enterprise and social real estate on four pillars of sustainability: environmental, social, economic, and cultural. It has worked in partnership with all levels of government, the private sector and community-based organizations.



During the University's expansion phase, the Corporation catalyzed some \$200 million in sustainable infrastructure projects, including five LEED-certified buildings that have contributed significantly to the University's meeting of the needs of a steadily growing student population and also to the fulfilment of its institutional carbon emission-reduction targets. In addition, with a skilled community partner, UWCRC has incubated a successful food-services social enterprise that now employs more than 100 workers, including new Canadians, Indigenous citizens and employees facing other labour-market barriers. In recent years, it has also provided business advisory services to promote Indigenous economic development. And, in 2016, the Corporation created a new non-profit vehicle, UWCRC 2.0 Inc., through which to apply its professional services with other community partners and universities, unrelated to the University of Winnipeg, across Manitoba. As it has carried out its work, UWCRC has developed, tested, refined and consolidated its own organizational model as a development catalyst as well as a bundle of more specific, innovative models for social enterprises and real estate projects that could, with adaptations, be replicated by other higher education institutions in North America and elsewhere.

#### 3.2 The UWCRC Model

##### Mission

Fifteen years ago, faced with a cluster of wicked challenges, the Board of Regents of the University of Winnipeg set to work to raise new funds for scholarships and capital projects to support the growth and renewal of the institution. In 2004, the Board hired Dr. Lloyd Axworthy, a former federal-government Minister and an urban studies scholar, as President and Vice-Chancellor. Dr. Axworthy established three priorities: academic excellence, community access (particularly for immigrant and Indigenous citizens)

and environmental sustainability, including meeting or exceeding Kyoto Protocol targets for the institution.

One of the new President's first acts was, in 2005, to establish a special-purpose entity—the non-profit, charitable University of Winnipeg Community Renewal Corporation—whose mission was from the outset “to create a *sustainable University community*.”<sup>28</sup> And, from its inception, the intent of the UWCRC model was to recruit specialized expertise in development and capital projects to the Corporation's Board while embedding community representation in the organization's structure. “This model brings the community to the table with formal input through the Board governance process, throughout the planning and implementation stages of all University development and creates opportunities for joint University/community initiatives.”<sup>29</sup>

## Values

In the 18 months immediately following the establishment of the Corporation, the UWCRC Managing Director, Sherman Kreiner, carried out extensive community consultations inside and outside the University. These consultations yielded ten principles, endorsed by the University's Board of Regents, that would guide the work of the Corporation. These principles affirmed that the University played many important roles that require reinforcement, particularly as 1) a centre of excellence, 2) an urban village in the city, 3) a new downtown community, 4) an accessible place, 5) an Aboriginal home, 6) a living model of sustainability, 7) an area of community development, 8) a pedestrian precinct, 9) fiscally sustainable, and 10) a model of good urban design.

In its early years, UWCRC recognized that, in alignment with the university's own strategic priorities, the advancement of multi-dimensional sustainability was at the centre of its mandate. To this end, the Corporation adopted a four-pillar approach to sustainability. For the environmental dimension, UWCRC committed to projects that “limit the use of natural resources, use renewable energy sources where possible, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote material re-use.” With regard to social sustainability, the Corporation affirmed its intent to work with community partners to “identify individuals with barriers and cultivate their participation in addressing their needs and realizing opportunities.”

On the question of economic sustainability, UWCRC supported the view that wealth generation should be shared in order to reduce income inequality and to expand opportunities for employment, career advancement, financial security, co-operatives and employee ownership. Finally, on cultural

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<sup>28</sup> University of Winnipeg Community Renewal Corporation, History, website, undated [UWCRC-History](#)

<sup>29</sup> The Corporation more fully articulates the intent of its mission and design as follows: “UWCRC is a unique model among Canadian Universities. Most universities look for leadership competencies associated with development on their Boards. However, Board appointments are influenced by many factors – development experience is not often at the top of the list. This structure allows the development corporation to select for its Board those with the specialized experience necessary to advance its mission. Similarly, while many universities seek to break down barriers with the community and provide greater accessibility, they are challenged to identify regular communication forums with community leaders, and even when communication occurs, they are often criticized for providing too little, too late.” UWCRC, History, Ibid.

sustainability, the Corporation pledged that its projects will “encourage and celebrate diversity and provide supports for individuals from various ethnic, cultural and religious groups.”

Table 1 presents the definitions employed by UWCRC for each of these four types of sustainability.

**Table 1: UWCRC’s Definitions of its Four Pillars of Sustainability**

<b>Environmental</b>	<b>Social</b>	<b>Economic</b>	<b>Cultural</b>
Ensuring that projects leave a small ecological footprint, so that natural resources are stewarded for present and future generations to meet their needs. UWCRC and UWCRC 2.0 work to achieve this by choosing projects and planning and completing developments which limit the use of natural resources, use renewable energy sources where possible, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote material re-use.	Ensuring that projects are inclusive, help overcome barriers for excluded individuals to basic services such as education, employment, healthcare, childcare and housing, and provide supports to enhance the likelihood of long-term success for affected individuals. UWCRC and UWCRC 2.0 work closely with community partners, health and civic agencies to help identify individuals with barriers and cultivate their participation in addressing their needs and realizing opportunities.	Ensuring that wealth generation in projects is shared, with a particular focus on narrowing the wealth and income gap between the rich and the poor. UWCRC and UWCRC 2.0 work to achieve this through the development of local and global economies that provide opportunities for: cooperatives; employee owned enterprises; fair trade practices, and employment with some combination of good wages and benefits, career advancement opportunities, empowerment through participation and, increased self-esteem and financial security through ownership.	Ensuring that projects encourage and celebrate diversity and provide supports for individuals from various ethnic, cultural and religious groups. UWCRC and UWCRC 2.0 initiatives focus on achieving cultural sustainability by helping to enhance the quality of life and place and recognizing and addressing the needs of the diverse communities involved in projects.

Source: UWCRC, 2018

## Organizational Evolution

UWCRC’s organizational trajectory as a values-driven development catalyst has been, first, to focus on the needs of the University of Winnipeg for campus renewal and community engagement and then, later, to market its development services to non-UW institutions and communities in Winnipeg and elsewhere in Manitoba. In its start-up phase, in 2005-2006, the Corporation bought an interest in an office tower at the edge of campus to house the University’s and the UWCRC’s operations, including the university bookstore. This property at 491 Portage Avenue generated cash flow through leasehold revenue, including university and other commercial tenancies, and has, over time, helped the Corporation to secure financing for its own projects. However, during its initial decade, the core business of UWCRC was to develop and manage University construction projects that created a series of fresh, innovative and green facilities—a new residence, a day care, labs and classrooms, recreational facilities and more—to serve a larger student population and a commitment to opening the University to the community. The Corporation also animated the start-up and growth of a food-services social enterprise on campus, Diversity Food Services.

By 2016, though, with the opening of the Corporation’s mixed-use, mixed-income residential tower, the Downtown Commons, UWCRC returned to its role as property owner and manager. That same year saw the creation of UWCRC 2.0 Inc., a separate, non-profit entity with the sole purpose of marketing the Corporation’s development expertise to non-UW institutions and organizations across Manitoba and

perhaps more broadly. The new structure currently has nearly \$80 million worth of new projects under development. In addition, in recent years UWCRC and UWCRC 2.0 Inc. have diversified their advisory work in Indigenous economic development.

## University Relationship

The relationship between UWCRC and the University of Winnipeg has been close and very successful. Yet, apart from modest start-up funding, space allocation for UWCRC staff offices, and periodic repayable cash-flow support and corporate guarantees to support borrowing, the Corporation does not receive significant operating funds from the University. Rather, it has had to generate its own revenue primarily through development and project-management fees, rental income, First Nations economic-development and business analysis consulting, property management fees and other sources. In the course of its work, the Corporation has delivered a range of benefits to the University, including cost-effective, well-designed and sustainable real estate projects; improved food services on campus; creative partnerships with local non-profits, businesses and Indigenous communities; and a visible role as a provider of affordable housing in the downtown core.

For its part, UWCRC was able to build its own capabilities and track record in social real estate and social enterprise through a dozen years of on-campus work; benefit from University Board of Regents and executive support and administrative systems including payroll; access capital at provincial-government rates thanks to the University's status as a publicly funded institution; and partner with the University of Winnipeg Foundation to mobilize private donations to major new facilities. Furthermore, as the University's strategic priorities have shifted from growth, infrastructure renewal, sustainability and community-facing initiatives to its current focus on financial efficiency and Indigenization, UWCRC has adapted to, aligned and integrated these priorities in its own strategies and tactics.

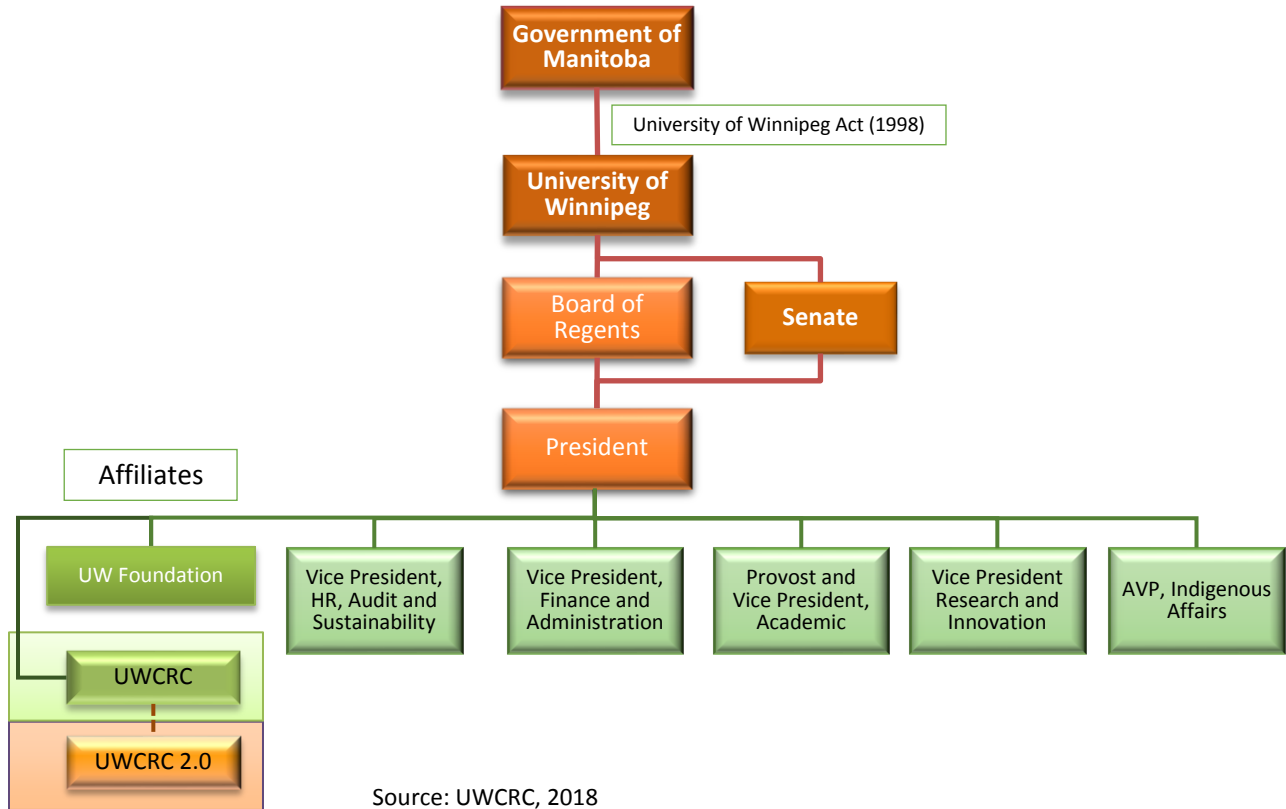
## Structure

The University of Winnipeg Community Renewal Corporation is one of a number of distinct, specialized organizations that are affiliated with the University of Winnipeg, running alongside the core lines of business of the University—particularly academic programs, research, and administration—but, through its Board composition, effectively controlled by the institution. Another of these organizations, for example, is the University of Winnipeg Foundation. In the case of UWCRC, the Board of Directors comprises eight University appointees, including a representative each from its Board of Regents and Students' Association, and eight representatives of the community and the private sector, with UW's President, Dr. Annette Trimbee, serving as UWCRC Chair. Figure 3 shows the location of UWCRC within the broader institutional structure of the University of Winnipeg.

With regard to its own organizational structure, Figure 4 shows that UWCRC consists of a small professional staff overseen by its Managing Director, Sherman Kreiner, who reports to the Corporation's Board of Directors. The Managing Director has served in this role since the inception of the Corporation. His prime direct report is the Chief Operating Officer, Jeremy Read, who oversees three units: finance (and First Nations business analysis), property management, and real estate development. The

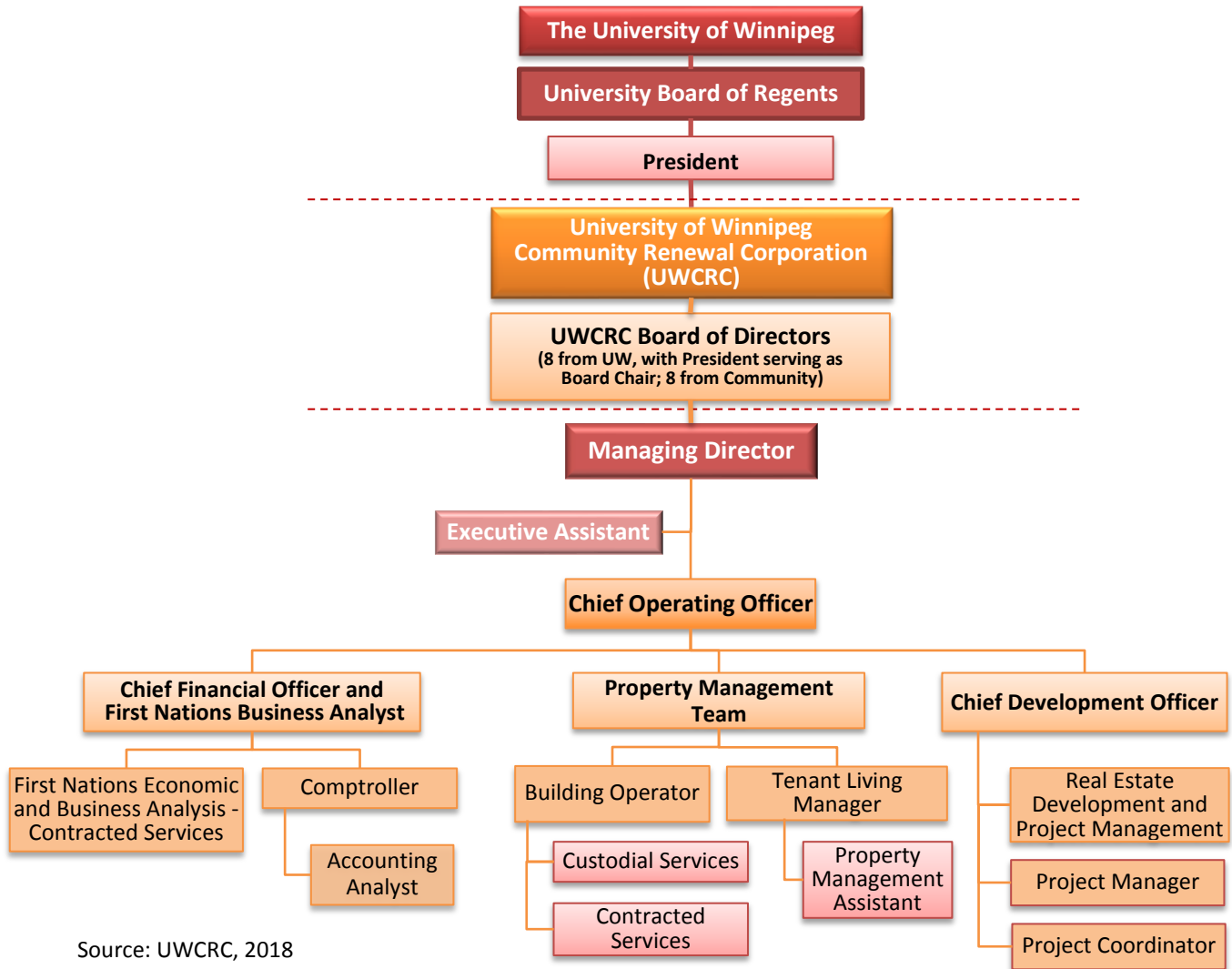
Managing Director also serves as Chair of Diversity Food Services, the social-enterprise which UWCRC co-owns with community partner SEED Winnipeg, a respected non-profit.

Figure 5 presents the full range of entities that are controlled fully or partially by UWCRC, including Diversity, 491 Portage (the Rice Building), and Downtown Commons. Subsidiaries and joint ventures have proven to be important tools for the Corporation. For its part, UWCRC 2.0 is guided by its own Board, whose membership currently mirrors that of the Board of UWCR, except that the 2.0 Board is chaired by a community representative. Figure 6 shows three 2.0 projects presently under development.



**Figure 3: UWCRC’s Location in UW’s Organizational Structure**

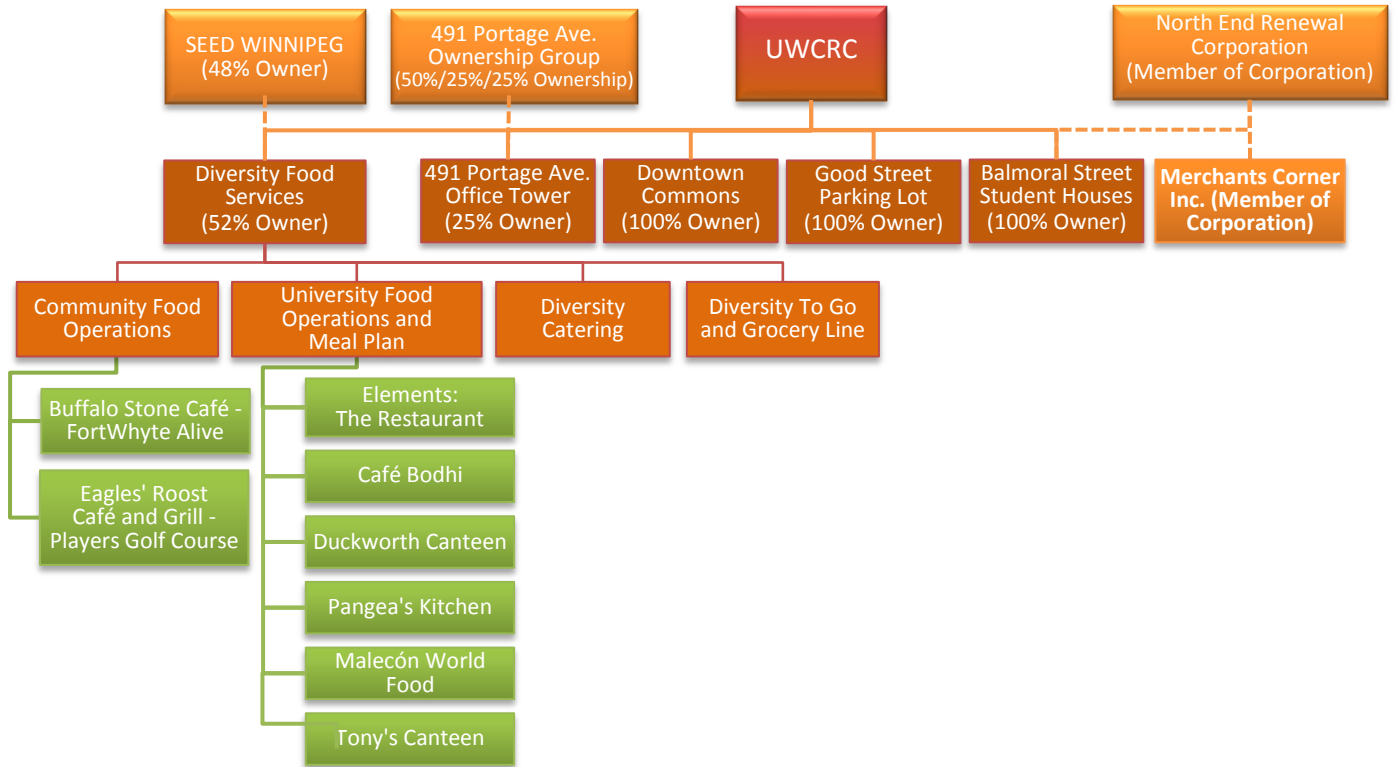




Source: UWCRC, 2018

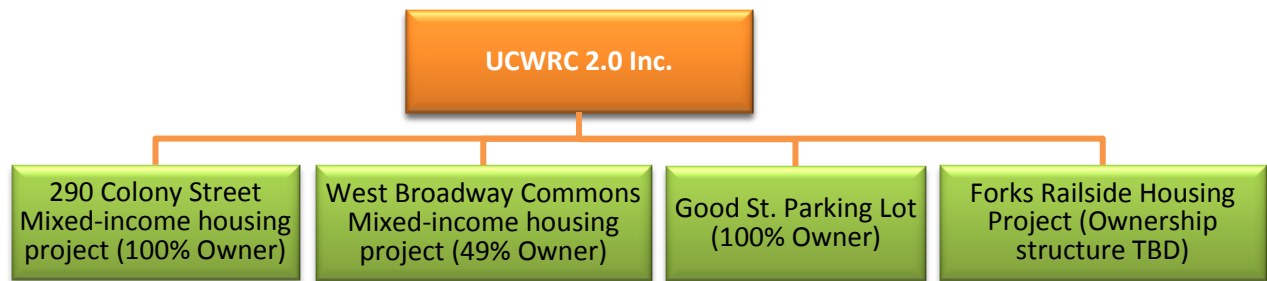
Figure 4: UWCRC Organizational Structure

Catalyst for Sustainability: The Achievements, Challenges, Lessons and Prospects of the University of Winnipeg Community Renewal Corporation



Source: UWCRC, 2018

Figure 5: UWCRC Controlled and Related Entities Structure



Source: UWCRC, 2018

Figure 6: UWCRC 2.0 Inc. Controlled and Related Entities Structure

## Services

During its first decade, UWCRC pursued two main service areas. In one of these service areas, the Corporation worked with a community partner to animate a scalable social enterprise in the food services sector. Diversity Food Services Inc. was launched in 2009 and has expanded to become a significant employer of marginalized workers, an important purchaser of locally produced natural foods, and a viable small business. The second and larger service area was that of real estate animator and manager. During the University's expansion phase, UWCRC built major green facilities on the University's downtown, including the University's first large-scale student residence, new buildings for

departmental offices, classrooms, laboratories and recreation, and mixed-use housing complexes, including affordable and market-rate units. Working with Winnipeg-based architects and construction companies, and University and community stakeholders, UWCRC built its capacity in designing projects, creating financing packages, overseeing the construction process, and running social and other programs as part of the ongoing property management functions of some of the new facilities. In recent years, the Corporation has added another service area: providing business advisory services to Indigenous economic development.

## Indigenous Economic Development

In addition to its social enterprise and social real estate work, UWCRC operates a third line of business: providing business advisory and project-management services in support of Indigenous economic development. To date, this work has constituted only a small part of the Corporation's activity, but its growth potential is significant and diverse. In fact, recently, and in large part due to the creation of UWCRC 2.0, this component has begun to generate more revenue and could yield a modest profit in the next 12-18 months.

Overall, UWCRC and UWCRC 2.0 have advised First Nations on a wide range of more than 50 planning projects, from urban-property acquisitions and property management to on-reserve capital equipment purchases, facilities for retail stores, housing repair and construction, new-school construction, and even a major access road. With a strong commitment to community engagement and to mentoring, the Corporation's team has provided professional services in business planning, financial projections, real estate assessment, operations and maintenance guidance, and management training. Progress reports on these projects are provided at meetings of the Boards of Directors of UWCRC and UWCRC 2.0.

The main clients for these services have been two major First Nations. With 10,000 members and entitlement to 39,000 acres, Peguis First Nation is Manitoba's largest band, located about 200 kms north of Winnipeg. UWCRC has advised all of the community's main development organizations: the Chief and Council (strategy, management training), the Surrender Claim Trust (housing), the Treaty Lands Entitlement Trust (purchase of National Research Council buildings in Winnipeg; other properties), and the Chief Peguis Investment Corporation (urban property management).

The second key client is Fisher River Cree Nation, located not far from Peguis, where the Fisher River empties into Lake Winnipeg. Among the Fisher River projects for which UWCRC has provided business planning services are a Castle building-supply store and storage facility (with the possibility of a future Castle building-supply store through a joint venture between Fisher River Cree Nation and Norway House Cree Nation), a fish-processing plant, a modular-housing manufacturing plant, and a \$1.7 million multi-purpose facility, for which UWCRC 2.0 is serving as developer and project manager. In addition, the UWCRC has advised the Hollow Water First Nation on the purchase of heavy construction equipment and the Shoal Lake 40 First Nation on an ambitious access-road project. And UWCRC 2.0 was recently engaged by seven First Nations communities to carry out initial planning and mentoring on local readiness for community benefits and economic development related to the construction of several new schools in northeast and southeast Manitoba.

It appears that fiscal year 2018-2019 will be a productive one for the Corporation's work in Indigenous economic development, with nearly \$500,000 in ongoing consulting projects generated by the lead staff person on this component, Wayne Flamand, who also serves as Chief Financial Officer for UWCRC and UWCRC 2.0 and is a Chartered Professional Accountant and Certified Management Accountant. In fact, his strengths in business-plan preparation, financial projections and funds mobilization—together with his demonstrated commitment to community engagement, respect for local leadership, and effectiveness as a mentor of First Nation personnel and Indigenous students—are key factors in the decisions of Aboriginal organizations to engage the Corporation's services.

The Corporation's future prospects in Indigenous economic development are shaped by both internal and external factors. Internally, additional growth in this component will require that UWCRC recruit an additional staff person to take on an increasing workload. Further, over the next five years, the incumbent liaison person for this portfolio may decide to retire. While his skill set and experience are unique, some combination of high-quality skills and proven experience in business planning, financial forecasting, and construction and property management will be essential to realize the revenue potential of this business line. As an effective mentor, he will be able to smoothly transfer his skills and contacts to his successor.

The most prominent external factor shaping the future of this component is the sheer size of the Indigenous economic-development sector in Manitoba. It is large, and dynamic. There are more than 60 First Nations that are members of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs and are actively engaged in economic development. The Manitoba Metis Association also has a robust membership and its own province-wide development corporation. A wide range of other political, advocacy, professional, financial and social organizations, including 11 Friendship Centres, serve Indigenous peoples throughout Manitoba.<sup>30</sup>

Young and burgeoning, the Indigenous population of the province, urban and rural alike, needs more and better housing and other infrastructure and increased opportunities for employment and training. Multi-dimensional sustainability and values-driven development—precisely the type of development animated by UWCRC—should, and can, be at the heart of efforts to meet these needs.

However, it is also a sector continuously affected by politics and bureaucracy. Both the federal and provincial governments, and sometimes the municipal government as well, implement (and regularly change) their policies, programs and funding formulae that are complex and slow to navigate and negotiate. For their part, Indigenous communities' own political processes are intense and sometimes volatile, resulting in additional complexity and delays. UWCRC and UWCRC 2.0 have demonstrated their prowess and patience in building positive relationships and providing valuable services in this broader environment.

The path that UWCRC and UWCRC 2.0 have chosen here is appropriate. Working initially with First Nations that have major infrastructure and construction needs, and also some of their own capital to

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<sup>30</sup> For a comprehensive list, see Manitoba Indigenous and Municipal Relations, Indigenous Organizations in Manitoba, Government of Manitoba, Winnipeg, No Date [Link](#)

blend with government and other financing, is the most promising space in which to currently operate. Several projects on which the Corporation has advised have been very substantial in scale (e.g. a \$30-million access road, a \$14-million federal-government building, and a \$7.5-million manufacturing plant), with the exception of the access road, under auspices other than UWCRC, none of these larger projects have yet come to fruition. Nonetheless, soon, others will. For example, \$500,000 in community economic benefits and support are expected for \$350 million in planned First Nations school builds in northeastern and southern Manitoba. In the meantime, working with a variety of clients on multiple, billable files which open doors to larger future assignments is exactly the right strategy for the Corporation.

### 3.3 UWCRC 2.0

#### Mission

As its intensive campaign to build social infrastructure for the University of Winnipeg was nearing completion, the Corporation needed to regroup and renew its own strategy for the years ahead. The leadership of UWCRC determined that the Corporation could use or sell its expertise in planning and building sustainable real estate to other universities and community organizations. Accordingly, in May 2016, the University and UWCRC established a new non-profit corporation under the provincial Corporations Act. The new entity would be known as UWCRC 2.0 and its purposes included:

- **Housing:** The “acquisition, development, construction, supply, leasing and management of residential accommodation for students of the University of Winnipeg and other educational institutions and residential accommodation”; and “residential accommodation in areas of Winnipeg in need of redevelopment and improved housing.”
- **Other real estate:** The “acquisition, development, construction, supply, leasing, management, retro-fitting and re-purposing of real estate and facilities” for the benefit of the University of Winnipeg, the furtherance of community economic development, and the benefit of First Nations communities.<sup>31</sup>

#### Structure

The new corporation is a related entity of both the University and the UWCRC, but controlled by neither. The by-laws of UWCRC 2.0 Inc. provided for the new corporation to be governed by up to 16 directors, including the President of the University, up to seven directors appointed by the President in consultation with the Chair of the UW Board of Regents, and up to eight community directors who are elected by the directors of the Corporation. It is important to note that the Chair of UWCRC 2.0 is not selected from among the University’s appointed directors, but rather from among the community directors. With the exception of the Chair, the composition of the founding Board of Directors of 2.0 was the same as that of the Board of the University of Winnipeg Community Renewal Corporation. Going forward, it is planned for both the University-appointed directors and the community directors to become increasingly distinct from the directors on the UWCRC Board, while still maintaining the proportional representation of University appointees and elected community directors.

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<sup>31</sup> UWCRC 2.0, Articles of Incorporation, Winnipeg, April 29, 2016 and By-Law No. 1, Winnipeg, May 2, 2016

## Services

Box 1 lists the services currently offered by UWCRC 2.0 and UWCRC as well as the types of projects the group can build and the variety of financing sources it can access. The Corporation has demonstrated proven expertise and high performance in all of these areas. Indeed, the spectrum of services that 2.0 can provide spans the full programming cycle, from pre-design and feasibility, to land assembly and financing packaging, to project management and even, in the post-construction phase, ongoing property management. When projects integrate diverse groups by income, ethnicity or other factors, there is an imperative for the on-site property manager to possess the capacity to animate and facilitate social cohesion and to avoid social fragmentation. Again, UWCRC has shown it can do this. The prime target clients/partners for these services are tertiary-education institutions, non-profit organizations (such as churches and other religious and cultural organizations), First Nations communities, and other local governments.

### Box 1: Services, Projects and Financing Offered by UWCRC and UWCRC 2.0

#### *Professional Services Offered*

- Pre-development environmental scans, business-case analysis, financial modeling, and feasibility assessments
- Comprehensive development team assembly
- Project management throughout the design and construction process, including: Integrated Design Process, Integrated Project Delivery, stakeholder relations
- Access to conventional and alternative public and private financing
- Social enterprise development and management
- First Nations economic development consulting and business development
- Land assembly
- Commercial and residential property management
- Property management

#### *Types of Projects Built*

- Mixed-use post-secondary, housing and downtown revitalization projects, blending diverse activities, including:
  - ♦ Education
  - ♦ Recreation
  - ♦ Food Services
  - ♦ Retail/Commercial
  - ♦ Housing
  - ♦ Retail
  - ♦ Fine Arts

#### *Project Financing Sources Utilized*

- Conventional commercial bank and insurance company loans (1-40 year terms)
- Government operating and capital contributions for post-secondary and affordable housing
- Public sector loan guarantees (from the Province and from the University)
- Foundation grants and 'impact' investments
- Commercial and residential rents and business revenues
- Corporate and private donations and sponsorships
- Power Smart and other grants for environmentally sustainable design

Source: Adapted from UWCRC website, 2018

## Current Projects

As of the first half 2018, UWCRC 2.0 was working on five active development projects. In the first example of the new entity's work with other post-secondary institutions, UWCRC 2.0 has completed the feasibility study for Brandon University for a mixed-income residential tower in downtown Brandon, based on the Downtown Commons model and has supported that University's stakeholder consultations. Two other new projects in the downtown core of Winnipeg, valued at approximately \$30 million each, are also inspired by the Downtown Commons model. One is a new 14-storey tower to be built at 290 Colony Street. Supported by financing through CMHC's Rental Construction Financing initiative, this project includes, three street-level commercial units and, 119 apartments, of which 46 will be affordable units. The second downtown project is a joint-venture community partnership with All Saints Church called West Broadway Commons, with plans to build 110 apartments, including 56 affordable units, in a 12-storey structure. For these two projects, UWCRC 2.0 serves as owner, and/or partner, developer, project manager and, in the post-construction phase, property manager.<sup>32</sup> Another Winnipeg initiative, part of the Forks Railside Housing Project, involves a \$19.5 million project proposal by UWCRC 2.0 to build a six-storey, 65-unit mixed-income tower with 30% of the units being affordable as well as high sustainability standards, commercial and social-enterprise tenancies, and child care facilities. UWCRC 2.0 Inc. has also been hired by Fisher River Cree Nation to undertake a \$1.7 million commercial redevelopment of an existing on-reserve structure.

## Challenges

Progress on these files is steady and prospects are good. However, there are two challenges in particular that are slowing the pace of work for UWCRC 2.0. The first is that the current provincial government has put a pause on funding programs for affordable and mixed residential housing projects as it undertakes a review of existing and previous policies and programs, although some tax-credit measures remain in place. This has required the organization to place a higher priority on attempting to access previously unavailable funding and financing from federal-government grant and mortgage programs, including those of the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), which have been introduced as part of the Federal government's National Housing Strategy (NHS). At the same time, the 2.0 team has begun to identify additional project financing from philanthropic impact investors inside and outside Manitoba. In this way, the effort to mobilize capital for social real estate initiatives has become more labour-intensive and time-consuming—though it is feasible, nonetheless.

If financing is the first challenge, the second is leadership. In hindsight, the level of knowledge and consensus among the core leadership group of the University of Winnipeg during UWCRC's real estate expansion decade was extraordinary. Today, while UWCRC 2.0 also enjoys strong UW support, the leaders of its clients and partners are often uneven in terms of their knowledge of and consensus on how to achieve multi-dimensional sustainability through social infrastructure. Moreover, client and partner decision-making systems can be complicated and slow, as in the case of churches or Indigenous organizations. Education, evidence, demonstration and engagement are all required in order to enable these new actors to fully commit to the projects proposed by UWCRC 2.0.

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<sup>32</sup> M. McNeill, Downtown Commons: The Sequel, Winnipeg Free Press, August 14, 2017 [Link](#)

## New Project Models and Tools

In order to respond to these and other challenges, the 2.0 team is developing new project models and tools. The 290 Colony Street project is an instructive example. This is a \$29.5 million, 14-storey mixed-use, mixed-income residential complex that includes just over 4,000 sq. ft. of commercial space at the ground level. The project includes 119 residential units—in studio, one-, two- and three-bedroom configurations—of which 46 will be offered at affordable housing rates. There will also be four to six suites to be used by visiting artists on short-term stays in partnership with Artspace Inc., a local non-profit. UWCRC 2.0 will serve as owner, developer, and, upon completion, property manager, realizing a range of financial benefits in stages over time. UWCRC 2.0 has confirmed CMHC direct financing through its new Rental Construction Financing initiative, plus \$1.4 million in the form of a provincial tax credit and a \$250,000 Power Smart grant. The remaining capital requirements are being finalized with the provincial and municipal governments. During the construction period, loan security is being provided by UWCRC and UWCRC 2.0 assets until a CMHC mortgage product is in place following project completion. Construction of this project began in summer 2018.

Another example is the planned West Broadway Commons project. The All Saints Anglican Church and UWCRC 2.0 plan to build a LEED-certified, or equivalent, 12-storey apartment complex with commercial occupants in nearly 3,600 sq. ft. of space on the main floor, with the rest of the floors providing 56 affordable housing units and 54 market-rate units, pending the final structure and confirmation of financing and capital grants. The total cost of the project is \$28.7 million. The legal instrument for this initiative is a joint venture agreement between UWCRC 2.0 and the housing project of All Saints Anglican Church. Under the terms of this agreement, All Saints makes its land available to the joint venture through a long-term land lease, UWCRC 2.0 provides \$500,000 in impact capital and the Church \$500,000-\$700,000 in raised capital, with various orders of government contributing subsidies, tax credits and other forms of financing and grant funding. In return for providing its development and project-management services, UWCRC 2.0 will be paid a development fee of 5% of total construction costs. UWCRC 2.0 is also a joint-venture owner of this building. Through these and its other initiatives, UWCRC 2.0 is creating and implementing innovative models that drive the construction of sustainable infrastructure while they also generate a variety of revenue streams for UWCRC 2.0 and, ultimately, the University of Winnipeg.

## 3.4 Achievements

Since its inception, the University of Winnipeg Community Renewal Corporation has recorded a wide range of achievements. It has fulfilled its mission as a catalyst of multi-dimensional sustainability. Highlights include:

- 1) *Sustained business revenue:* As Table 2 shows, over the 13-year period from 2006 through 2018, UWCRC generated about \$14 million in business revenue, or an average of a little more than \$1 million per year. On the expenses side, the Corporation spent about \$12.5 million over the same multi-year period. Over the 13 years, therefore, UWCRC posted a net revenue gain of nearly \$1.5 million, while creating \$200 million in new infrastructure for the University and community, and itself assembling assets of nearly \$8 million (as at March 2018). This is solid



performance for a non-profit organization and demonstrates a viable business model at meaningful scale.

**Table 2: UWCRC Revenue and Expenses 2006-2018**

Year	Revenue (\$ Thousands)	Expenses (\$ Thousands)	Excess of Revenue Over Expenses (\$ Thousands)
2006	\$805	\$181	\$624
2007	514	430	84
2008	638	504	133
2009c	730	528	202
2010c	1,013	825	188
2011	870	872	- 2
2012	894	958	- 64
2012c	782	853	- 71
2013c	1,550	1,271	279
2014c	1,472	1,452	20
2015c	1,563	1,394	169
2016c	1,430	1,404	26
2017c	1,131	1,467	- 336
2018c	1,568	1,343	225

Note: UWCRC's fiscal year ends March 31; "c" denotes consolidated statements, minus Diversity Food Services

Source: UWCRC Financial Statements, Various Years, 2006-2018

- 2) *Scaled social enterprise:* Since 2009, the Corporation has partnered with local non-profit SEED Winnipeg to successfully incubate a social enterprise, Diversity Food Services Inc. that employs more than 100 workers, most of them facing multiple-labour market barriers. Providing healthy, affordable food at multiple sites on campus as well as at several facilities off-campus, plus operating a catering arm, Diversity has become an important purchaser of local natural produce in southern Manitoba, has won numerous awards for its sustainable food, and has attracted wide interest from other universities in Canada and the United States.
- 3) *Major social real estate portfolio:* In 2006, UWCRC completed its first major real estate transaction with the purchase of an interest in an office building (now the Rice Centre) adjacent to the University campus, where it established its own operations and leased space to other parties. This asset has appreciated significantly, providing cash-flow and loan security as the Corporation grew and diversified. During the decade from 2008 through 2017, UWCRC led the design, construction and operational launches of a portfolio of sustainable buildings on the downtown campus worth more than \$200 million. These buildings included a new student residence and adjacent day care, a new environmental studies college with state-of-the-art labs, new offices and classrooms for science departments and the business school, a major recreation complex, additional space for the University's high-school program, the repurposing of a derelict hotel to a community and university satellite centre, and a downtown tower offering subsidized, mid-range and luxury housing units. In the process, the Corporation built 88 units of subsidized affordable housing that was integrated with market-rate units across several sites. Moreover, five of the new buildings in the portfolio were LEED-certified, with two achieving Gold and three

Silver standard designations. These projects were powered by a diverse set of partnerships with the community, private and public sectors and also high net-worth donors, and mirrored in the layers of loans, grants, tax credits and donations mobilized to finance these projects.

- 4) *Support for student growth:* UWCRC contributed in three tangible and important ways to enabling the University to recruit and retain a larger student body as it implemented its growth strategy. First, by building a major residence on the downtown campus, the Corporation expanded affordable housing options customized for students and enriched campus life. Second, by also building state of the art classrooms, labs and recreational facilities, UWCRC rendered UW a much more attractive choice for students at all levels of study. Finally, with the introduction of Diversity Food Services, healthy, affordable and sustainable food was made available at all restaurants and cafeterias across the downtown campus and upgraded the performance of the University in the food services area.
- 5) *Significant economic multipliers:* Like all types of publicly funded infrastructure, the real estate projects of the Corporation generated significant multiplier effects. Using a multiplier of 1.6, it can be estimated that UWCRC's real estate portfolio created direct, indirect and induced economic activity in Winnipeg and the province as a whole of approximately \$320 million. When a higher multiplier of 1.8 is applied to the portfolio, the economic effects of this basket of projects are, of course, correspondingly greater, at \$360 million. It is worth noting that all of this activity was generated in the wake of the global financial crisis of 2008-2009 and was well-aligned with federal and provincial efforts to fund "shovel-ready" infrastructure projects to stimulate job creation and consumption.
- 6) *Environmental sustainability gains:* Through its construction of three new buildings on campus with LEED Silver certification and two achieving the LEED Gold standard, UWCRC was a major contributor to the University's reducing its ecological footprint while it expanded, achieving its Kyoto 2012 and 2016 greenhouse gas emission reduction targets, and advancing an increasingly robust and ambitious sustainability strategy over time. In fact, in 2014, in recognition of its many contributions to environmental sustainability, the UWCRC won the University of Winnipeg's Campus Sustainability Recognition Award, "for its ongoing, innovative and inclusive approach to development and campus and community life."<sup>33</sup>
- 7) *Demonstrated models:* In the course of its work, UWCRC has developed, tested, refined, scaled, and adapted itself as a model for higher education institutions to contribute to multi-dimensional sustainability on campus and in neighbouring communities. Indeed, in response to changing needs and conditions, UWCRC 2.0 is its latest, updated and adapted version of the model, intended itself to be sustainable over an even longer life-cycle. Furthermore, the Corporation has animated the design, testing, revising and scaling of a social enterprise model for sustainable and affordable campus food-services, which has attracted broad interest across North America. And its social real estate portfolio, past and current, includes a basket of models for partnered building of mixed-use facilities, including affordable and market-rate housing, post-secondary teaching and research facilities, recreational complexes and much more, that serve stakeholders in the higher education sector and in the broader external community at the same time.

Viewed separately, each of these achievements is important. But taken together, they tell a powerful story. The evidence is clear: the University of Winnipeg Community Renewal Corporation has been a

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<sup>33</sup> Campus Sustainability Recognition Award, University of Winnipeg Community Renewal Corporation, University of Winnipeg, 2015 [Article](#)

very successful catalyst of multi-dimensional sustainability. UWCRC has brought to life the mission it was given and, with hard work and imagination, has achieved far more than its founders could foresee.

## 3.5 Challenges

There are many challenges inherent in building social infrastructure, from creating, nurturing and expanding the organizational structures to do the work, to structuring and securing complex business and construction deals. But it is worth highlighting three challenges in particular.

### Development versus the Academic Enterprise

The first is the tension with the academic enterprise. While there shouldn't automatically be such tension, it is likely inevitable. That is to say, the more successful and visible the university development agency is, the greater will be the scrutiny of its opponents from within the institution. It is true, fundamentally, that the core business of any higher education institution is running its degree programs. And, as such, it is reasonable enough for faculty, students and staff to recognize and assert this priority in university strategy and operations. However, modern public universities are complex organizations with a wide range of functions that lie outside the core business—but that are also nevertheless essential for degree programs to thrive. Chief among these is high-quality infrastructure for students and faculty.

In the experience of UWCRC, tension between the development function and the academic enterprise was almost always a factor in governance and decision-making processes. While there were some strong supporters of the Corporation among the faculty, there were also professors who were critical of the attention President Axworthy gave to the mission and activities of UWCRC during its social real estate expansion years especially. These critics viewed development activities as marginal distractions from the core tasks of teaching and research. These views were expressed through forums such as the Senate, the University's highest academic governance body, through negotiations between the executive and particular faculties, schools or departments, and by individual professors.

The nature of the funding relationship between the Province of Manitoba and the University of Winnipeg has, from the Corporation's inception, been especially challenging. For much of the period reviewed here, the NDP provincial government capped tuition fees for all public universities in Manitoba. For UW, this restricted the institution's ability to make up for its considerable annual budget shortfalls, which were partly the consequence of historical underfunding relative to its peers. This translated into budget constraints in faculty and staff hiring and thus on the quality of UW programs and services. Meanwhile, the Province was, also under the NDP, a supportive partner and funder of affordable housing initiatives. While capital grants and subsidies for housing were completely separate from operating grants or tuition fee rates set by a different ministry, this situation added to the tensions between the Corporation and some faculty stakeholders. And, while the current Progressive Conservative provincial government has lifted the tuition cap, it is moving to maintain or even reduce university operating grants. Further, the current Manitoba government prefers to support affordable housing through tax measures rather than spending programs, another difference from its predecessor government. Against this shifting backdrop, the academic-development tension is expected to continue.

Managing and ideally resolving these ongoing tensions has been the responsibility of the University President, who reports to the Board of Regents and chairs both the Senate and UWCRC. One important principle that has been put in place since the Corporation's inception is that only limited University funds will be allocated to UWCRC's activities. In general, the Corporation must generate its own revenue streams to sustain its staff and operations. This is difficult, but it is an appropriate solution that contains this tension. Another strategy that has been effective to some degree is for UWCRC to recruit the support of deans and department heads whose units are selected to occupy the new buildings. While sometimes these relationships resulted in more intensive or protracted negotiations by academic managers seeking greater benefits for their units, most have been pleased upon moving into the new facilities, which, among other things, enhance recruitment and retention not only of good students but of high-quality faculty. The new facilities have also housed new graduate programs and have enhanced the University's research capacity.

All of this said, UWCRC could probably have done a better job reaching out to potential allies among the faculty and middle management and forging more substantial partnerships with them. While senior staff members of the Corporation give occasional lectures and talks to some classes on campus, and periodically support student placements and faculty projects, there is nonetheless little evidence of systematic, collaborative research activities between UWCRC and UW professors and students. The nature, models, instruments and challenges involved in the work of the Corporation are ideal, timely subjects for such knowledge co-production for both scholarly and action purposes. A wide range of fields—including business, urban studies, Indigenous studies, development studies and project management courses—could contribute to and benefit from partnered research on social enterprise, social real estate and Indigenous economic development.

## The Changing Priorities of Senior Levels of Government

The second challenge relates to the changing policy priorities of different governments. Understanding and engaging with these evolving policy environments has required much effort by the senior management team of UWCRC. During the real estate expansion phase, the Conservative federal government was not enthusiastic about public universities or inner-city sustainability, but infrastructure construction was, in fact, a priority. At the provincial level, the New Democratic government of the day ran a wide range of social, economic, environmental and housing programs offering modest grants and other subsidies as well as tax credits. In this environment, while UWCRC had to be agile and creative, it was very possible to assemble financing packages within a reasonable timeframe, especially when private donor gifts were added to the mix for named facilities to match and lever public monies.

However, in 2016, the situation changed. The new Liberal federal government was committed to sustainability and social programs, but its infrastructure funds were depleted and several key departments and agencies, such as the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, were only beginning to regroup from a period of under-utilization by the previous federal government. At the same time, the Progressive Conservative party had won the 2016 provincial election and proceeded to cut, reduce or put on hold numerous spending programs, including initiating a review of its affordable housing policies and expenditures, though it retained a number of housing-related tax-credit measures. The Province

also tightened core grants to all Manitoban universities, while allowing greater flexibility on setting tuition fees. So, not only had UWCRC completed most of the infrastructure projects required by UW's downtown campus and was looking to external clients for new business, but the financing formulae that had worked so well during the expansion phase were no longer possible for the immediate future.

Fortunately, the leadership of UWCRC and the University at large is seasoned and well-networked in policy and politics—and strategically agile. The Corporation has chosen to cultivate new relationships with federal departments, particularly CMHC, and work with the federal government's regional representatives. It is also refocusing its efforts on the relevant provincial government programs and tax incentives that have survived or show potential for renewal. Moreover, the Corporation is exploring new sources of philanthropic and private capital for social real estate and social enterprise from impact investors inside and outside Manitoba. This new way forward is feasible, but making the shift has taken time and effort.

While these two challenges have placed serious obstacles in the path of UWCRC, they should be seen as part of the normal business of a university development corporation that aims to advance multi-dimensional sustainability in ways that are scalable and replicable. The senior management teams of these organizations, and the university executives supporting them, should be prepared to address these issues directly, with energy, creativity and durability.

## The Rankings Conundrum

The third challenge involves what could be called the rankings conundrum. University rankings present a dilemma for higher education institutions. At best, universities are conflicted in their responses to and uses of published ranking systems such as that of Maclean's magazine in Canada. When their positions among their peer universities rise, this news is disseminated widely. When their positions falter, little is said. To be fair, any single ranking system cannot capture and code the full range of services, processes and outcomes of a complex, mid-sized public university, though it can track a basket of basic indicators, as the Maclean's survey does.

Overall, the Maclean's rankings show mixed performance by the University over the 11-year period 2007-2017. In fact, in the years that correspond to the expansion phase of UWCRC through its construction of new buildings and the development of its food services enterprise, the indicators for the University moved in contradictory directions. While the University began the period in the top half of its cohort, it ended it in the bottom half in terms of both its overall rank and its operating budget and was even ranked in the bottom third with regard to student satisfaction. Nonetheless, UW improved its rank in terms of the percentage of its budget spent on student services. And, though it lost some ground, it maintained its position in the top half of the cohort in terms of its scores on the Maclean's reputational survey.

Chief among such factors was, again, provincial funding for higher education. The University of Winnipeg struggled during the period reviewed here, and continues to struggle, with challenging policies and insufficient funds from the Province, a hangover from the terms of government support when the University was established. The tuition fee cap (though recently removed), and later reductions in the

core grant to the University, have constrained the ability of UW to improve its teaching and research activities and thus its overall ranking, notwithstanding any gains realized from capital funding.

A second external factor is that other primarily undergraduate universities appear to have been able to improve their rankings, during the same period, perhaps in part by improving their own infrastructure using federal and provincial support. Indeed, some would have easier access to land for expansion of their stock of residences and classroom space than that available to an inner-city university like the University of Winnipeg. In any case, the bottom line is that, in spite of UWCRC's many efforts at improving the infrastructure and food services of the University, this was not sufficient to move UW's rankings upwards; other factors were more influential in constraining the University's progress, at least as measured by Maclean's.

## 3.6 Lessons

In assessing the experience to date of the University of Winnipeg Community Renewal Corporation, it is possible to draw out some key lessons for university executives, non-profit leaders and policy makers interested in the UWCRC model. Eight such lessons deserve to be highlighted:

- 1) *Long-term, strategic commitment:* The host institution must make a long-term, strategic commitment to a special entity like the Corporation. Its mandate must be at the heart of the university's strategy and it must be given the necessary support by institutional boards and senior leadership over at least ten to 15 years and ideally longer, to make a substantial contribution to institutional and community change.
- 2) *Skilled and knowledgeable senior leadership:* Senior leadership at the host institution and in the special entity must, in combination, possess the skills and knowledge required to enable the entity to succeed. Key areas of competence include university governance, stakeholder engagement, sustainability, Indigenous issues, community development, fundraising, social enterprise, real estate and construction, property management, deal-making, legal agreements, policy analysis and politics.
- 3) *Access to Board talent and perspectives:* One of the intentional design features of UWCRC is that its Board of Directors is a corporate vehicle for recruiting and mobilizing crucial talent and perspectives to pursue the Corporation's mandate. This has included the participation of respected non-profit and Indigenous leaders, policy experts as well as developers and engineers skilled in mixed-use development, green design and construction, and property management, among other areas.
- 4) *Multi-dimensional sustainability:* Not only is sustainability inherently multi-dimensional,<sup>34</sup> but the UWCRC model has shown that—acting in partnership with community organizations, governments and the private sector—higher education institutions are capable of making

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<sup>34</sup> The understanding of the multi-dimensional nature of sustainability was first given prominence 30 years ago by the World Commission on the Environment and Development, chaired by Gro Harlem Brundtland. Among other things, the Commission's report, [Our Common Future](#), called for action on an array of inter-related challenges, including population growth and under-developed human resources, food insecurity, damage to ecosystems, inappropriate energy choices, waste in consumption and production, and urban poverty—all areas that are relevant to Winnipeg's inner city and encompassed by UWCRC's four-pillar approach

significant contributions to improving all of those dimensions through social infrastructure in the form of social enterprise, green buildings, affordable housing and more.

- 5) *Gender equality*: While most of the early leaders of UWCRC inside and outside the University were men, reflecting the real estate development industry more broadly, the current Board of Directors of the Corporation has achieved near gender parity and its chair is a woman (the current President of the University). Women leaders continue to play key roles in Diversity Food Services and in the non-profit organizations (churches, educational and Indigenous organizations) with which UWCRC partners.<sup>35</sup>
- 6) *Diverse financial partners, especially governments*: For real estate projects in particular, it is necessary to “layer” various combinations of donations, grants, subsidies, tax credits, mortgages and equity investments tailored to finance each specific project. While private investors and high net-worth families and foundations are key sources of funding, the most important partners for social-infrastructure initiatives are governments, especially national and sub-national (provincial or state) departments and agencies. Municipal partnerships and support can also play a substantial role, especially in the areas of funding, financing, and expedient and/or flexible project reviews and approvals.
- 7) *Diverse revenue streams*: Special entities like UWCRC must find ways of sustaining themselves while they build and nurture social infrastructure for others. Public universities in North America must cope with the fiscal constraints of their own government funders and typically have only modest resources for such instruments. Special entities thus have to work hard to generate continuous and diverse streams of revenue. They must, fundamentally, become—and remain—viable businesses themselves.
- 8) *Adaptive management*: When entities like UWCRC start out, they may not know what they don’t know. While these organizations must assemble all the talent they understand is required to execute their mandate, there are also unforeseen issues that arise over time that impel senior management to learn new skills, structure new relationships and move into new markets, as the Corporation is doing with UWCRC 2.0. They must, therefore, practice adaptive management, building their capacities through learning by doing.

### 3.7 Prospects

Looking ahead, the prospects for UWCRC and UWCRC 2.0 are bright. However, the Corporation will need to continue to be agile and creative in pursuing its objectives through its three components: social enterprise, social real estate and Indigenous economic development. In doing so, it must consolidate and renew its relationships within the University, and especially with the academic enterprise.

How could UWCRC engage the academic side of the University of Winnipeg in a more systematic and sustained way? Several lines of action should be considered. First, the Corporation should continue to look for win-win *construction projects*. That is, it should ensure that, for University-owned buildings, the new or renovated facilities help advance research and graduate studies in particular. The UWCRC’s current work supporting the University’s library revitalization project is a good example of this kind of activity.

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<sup>35</sup> It is an interesting question as to whether UWCRC should develop a more systematic, formal gender mainstreaming strategy, as other some organizations have done in a range of social, economic, educational and cultural sectors. This is an issue that could be taken up by the Corporation’s Board of Directors as part of its normal business

Second, UWCRC should continue to find ways to support UW's learning and research activities. This support could be provided in various forms. Perhaps the most straightforward approach here would be direct revenue transfer from UWCRC to the University. Alternatively, such support could also take the form of work with government departments and foundations to aggregate an *action-research fund* on sustainable business, affordable housing and social enterprise that faculty members could access and, in turn, hire students to carry out real-world tasks, some of it for Corporation projects and some of it for projects not directly associated with the Corporation. Such a fund would encourage peer-reviewed publications from this work.

UWCRC could also, as conditions permit, allocate significant contributions of its net revenue to serve as matching funds for third-party funded *academic chairs*. Such third parties might be private individuals, foundations or other entities. The substantive areas of focus of the chairs could span a range of issues, fields and disciplines across all of the sustainability dimensions in which the Corporation is involved. It would be important for the chairs to be designed in cooperation with deans and department heads.

Finally, UWCRC needs to increase its practice of hosting and mentoring students in internships and placements, and regularly contribute to the research activities of the institution, through fostering partnerships with development practice, Indigenous governance, business, inner-city studies and project management courses and/or programs, in particular.

In the external environment, there are also important actors with whom relationships must be forged or renewed. In light of the unevenness and unpredictability of government support at various levels for social enterprise and social real estate in particular, two sets of private-sector actors have emerged as important to the prospects of UWCRC and its multi-dimensional sustainability mission in the years ahead. The first of these are *impact investors*, which may be private or family foundations, non-profit investment funds, venture capital funds, pension funds, banks, or insurances companies, deploying a variety of investment instruments, including debt, equity and quasi-equity and seeking a range of financial returns from market rate to below market rate. Blending patient, flexible and purposeful impact capital with government grants, loans and mortgages, private donor gifts and consulting and management fee revenue can result in robust financing packages for enterprises and buildings alike.<sup>36</sup>

The second set of private-sector actors are *major corporations* that are committed to economic and social inclusion because shared prosperity and community cohesion can boost their bottom lines as well as their reputations while reducing costs to taxpayers. For example, aligning with the Sustainable Development Goals, the TD Bank recently articulated this perspective, announcing \$100 billion in low-carbon financing and asset management by 2030 as well as \$1 billion in philanthropy over the same period to promote financial security, social cohesion, the low-carbon economy and health innovation. "Inclusion is a powerful force" the bank's chief executive officer says, "that makes us feel better about

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<sup>36</sup> For an overview of the key actors and instruments in the impact investing sector globally, see C. Clark, J. Emerson and B. Thornley, *The Impact Investor: Lessons in Leadership and Strategy for Collaborative Capitalism*, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, 2014; a comprehensive set of policy recommendations for expanding impact investing in Canada is found in *Mobilizing Private Capital for Public Good: Priorities for Canada*, prepared by the National Advisory Board to the G8 Social Impact Investment Task Force and The MaRS Centre for Impact Investing, Toronto, 2014 [Report PDF](#)



ourselves and more confident about our future” and can “mitigate some of the challenges and maximize the opportunities that come about during periods of profound change.”<sup>37</sup>

Through grants, investments and advice, such investors and companies can be valuable allies in multi-dimensional sustainability initiatives on the ground. Accordingly, the leadership group at UWCRC should redouble its efforts to build partnerships with impact investors and inclusion-oriented corporations. Strong collaborations with these actors will significantly increase the prospects of expanding the Corporation’s scale, reach and impact in Winnipeg and Manitoba, and across Canada and the United States.

In terms of the public sphere, for at least the next few years, there will be a greater reliance on the programs of the federal government to help finance the future projects of UWCRC and UWCRC 2.0 in Winnipeg and across the province. One initiative that would help to optimize the federal contribution is the formation of a *Government of Canada working group on social infrastructure* for Manitoba. Members of such a working group should include: the Canada Foundation for Innovation (research), Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (affordable housing), Employment and Social Development Canada (employment and training), Industry Canada (small business), Indigenous Services Canada and Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (economic capacity development, business development, on-reserve infrastructure development, urban organization capacity, research), Infrastructure Canada (green infrastructure), Western Economic Diversification Canada (regional development), and ancillary, federally funded programs, such as the Federation of Canadian Municipalities’ green infrastructure and community infrastructure programs.

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<sup>37</sup> B. Masrani, Canadian business must lead the charge for inclusivity, *The Globe and Mail*, March 28, 2018, [B4](#); For a detailed discussion on policy options for inclusive growth, see J. Johal and A. Yalnizyan, *Race to the Top*, Ibid., 2018 [Link](#)

## II Social Enterprise

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### 4 Diversity Food Services: A Social Enterprise for Sustainable Food

#### 4.1 Overview

“We eat better,” President Annette Trimbee says of the University of Winnipeg’s main food services provider.<sup>38</sup> She should know. Dr. Trimbee is a regular customer of Diversity Food Services (DFS), the social enterprise that prepares and serves tasty, healthy, affordable and sustainably sourced meals and snacks at three cafeterias and two restaurants on UW’s downtown campus and at another restaurant in a conservation park outside the city. It also operates a busy catering service. Green, local and social, with more than 100 employees and some 60 area suppliers, Diversity stands alone among food-service providers at higher-education institutions in North America and indeed around the world. The award-winning business is a joint venture between non-profit SEED Winnipeg and the University of Winnipeg Community Renewal Corporation. After ten years of successful operation, meeting challenges along the way, DFS offers a tested model for adaptation and replication by other post-secondary education institutions.

#### 4.2 Impetus

In 2005-2006, the University of Winnipeg faced a converging set of challenges. For one thing, the University had been separated by walls and other barriers from the community, even though UW was a longstanding, key institution in the downtown core. The recently appointed President, Lloyd Axworthy, made community engagement a centrepiece of his mandate. For another, after a period of sharp growth in enrollment in 2000-2004, UW was now obliged to find better ways of serving this larger student population more effectively. To do this, it determined it needed to build a new, large student residence, as well as new state of the art labs, classrooms and departmental offices to house its expanded programs—and to ensure that the new facilities would meet the highest standards of environmental sustainability. In 2005, led by President Axworthy, the University of Winnipeg Community Renewal Corporation was created as a non-profit, charitable, special-purpose entity to lead this ambitious effort in a values-driven way, including through community partnerships and green design and construction practices.

At the same time, it was clear that the University’s food services provider, a major company, was not offering the University community optimum value for money. There were complaints about the quality of the food. Students went off campus in search of alternatives. Negative perceptions of this dimension of life at UW found their way into the national university rankings.<sup>39</sup> There was, therefore, both a need

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<sup>38</sup> A. Trimbee, Interview, February 20, 2018

<sup>39</sup> More specifically, some of this feedback from students found its way to the annual Maclean’s University Rankings, making it more difficult for the University of Winnipeg to improve its position

and an opportunity to do something different. In the process of building a more outward-facing role for the University, the UW executive team sought a solution that would also align with its newly declared principles of community engagement and environmental sustainability.

### 4.3 Proponents

Within the University of Winnipeg, three key players coalesced and worked together closely to lead the effort to create this new solution: President Axworthy, Vice-President Finance, Bill Balan, and the recently hired UWCRC Executive Director, Sherman Kreiner. As the social enterprise model emerged as an option, all three proponents understood both the advantages and risks of such an approach.<sup>40</sup> In particular, they understood that good leadership, patient financing and sufficient scale are all fundamental to social-business viability. Through his volunteer work with the non-profit Community Ownership Solutions, Mr. Kreiner had helped Inner City Renovation (ICR) satisfy these conditions, employing workers marginalized by poverty, addiction and prison time to renovate residential and commercial properties in Winnipeg's tough North End.<sup>41</sup>

Each of the University's proponents played specific roles in introducing and gaining support (or at least non-objections) for the idea of a social enterprise that would provide food services on campus. The most visible of the three in this process, appropriately, President Axworthy consulted with the academic, student and community constituencies of the University. Mr. Balan introduced the idea to the Board of Regents and worked through the debates in that forum. For his part, Mr. Kreiner reached out to the community to find a partner that could bring this concept to life—and help sustain it—and began to run the numbers on what might work. The three key players collaborated to terminate the contract of the provider at the time, with the University paying a modest buyout fee. They then confirmed that the new business would be able to serve the three main campus cafeterias, thus ensuring a significant sales volume from the outset. And an informal search began to identify the leaders to run the new business.<sup>42</sup>

There were also proponents of the new solution outside the University. Cindy Coker, Executive Director of SEED Winnipeg, a local non-profit, had for some time, been interested in her organization incubating a restaurant in the downtown core. Moreover, Ms. Coker had commissioned a consultant's study on a

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<sup>40</sup> In fact, Dr. Axworthy, Mr. Balan and Mr. Kreiner brought extensive experience and practical insights on social business from their previous jobs. An urban studies scholar and former federal government Minister, Dr. Axworthy had supported a wide range of community economic development initiatives in Winnipeg and elsewhere. A former senior manager in the Government of Canada responsible for the design and implementation of a range of social, cultural, economic and regional programs, Mr. Balan had similar exposure to community-based business. And Mr. Kreiner was well-known across North America as a leader in non-profit animation of employee- and community-owned enterprise, and especially skilled in designing and executing the legal and financial structures underlying these businesses

<sup>41</sup> See M. Donkervoort, *Inner City Renovation: How a Social Enterprise Changes Lives and Communities*, Fernwood Publishing, Black Point and Winnipeg, 2013 [Link](#)

<sup>42</sup> In separate interviews conducted for this study in early 2018, all three of these key players pointed to that period as a very special time in their careers. They worked on a series of real estate projects as well as on DFS. It was a period of intense and productive collaboration. They enjoyed working with one another, appreciating their colleagues' individual talents and complementary perspectives

property in the area that could potentially house such a social enterprise. Aware of their complementary objectives, UWCRC and SEED decided to combine forces.<sup>43</sup>

## 4.4 Community Partner

SEED (Supporting Employment and Economic Development) Winnipeg Inc. is an accomplished and respected non-profit agency that began operations 25 years ago to fight poverty in Winnipeg's inner city. Today, the organization manages a range of programs and projects to enable low-income residents, especially Indigenous citizens and new Canadians, to gain financial literacy skills, build savings and start businesses. The non-profit was an early pioneer of savings circles and in the provision of technical advice to locally owned enterprises, later introducing "money stories" for Indigenous youth from their elders and making tax preparation and government benefits accessible to its clients.

To implement its programs, SEED leverages the expertise and cooperation of some 50 staff and volunteers in partner organizations active in the downtown area on Indigenous, immigrant, youth, training, banking, cultural and health issues. SEED also makes social purchasing a priority. Last year it recorded \$310,300 (81% of all of total expenditures) in local purchasing, including from social enterprises and cooperatives as well as private businesses.<sup>44</sup>

Over time, SEED has built a diversified funding base. Its operating revenue in 2016-2017 of nearly \$2.5 million was raised mainly from the Government of Manitoba (46%), the United Way (20%), private foundations (15%) and the federal government (13%) as well as smaller corporate and individual donations. The current provincial government's cuts in social-program spending have created uncertainty for SEED's funding model,<sup>45</sup> although the organization has worked purposefully and successfully to diversify its sources of revenues in an anticipation of provincial funding reductions.

In 2005-2007, SEED identified, purchased and relocated to a new building on Salter Street. Inner City Renovation (ICR) carried out the renovation work on the new offices. ICR itself was a successful social enterprise that employed low-income residents to carry out construction and renovation projects on

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<sup>43</sup> Mr. Kreiner and Ms. Coker are spouses. Both are highly skilled and deeply committed leaders in overlapping fields in a small city. Long an animator of social businesses and their support networks, Ms. Coker set up an employee-owned day care business in Philadelphia 30 years ago. In Winnipeg, she served as Executive Director of SEED for 14 years, stepping down in 2017. However, she has remained on the Board of DFS. To minimize any real or perceived conflicts of interests—neither benefited in any direct material way from any of the activities of Diversity Food Services—Mr. Kreiner and Ms. Coker engaged consultants and staff carry out specific tasks and created legal structures and rules, defined by the joint venture agreement, within which to collaborate on this project. On the Board of Directors, Mr. Kreiner has served as Chair and Ms. Coker as Vice-Chair (until 2016). Other Board members have included Carinna Rosales from SEED (Vice-Chair since 2016), Lydia Warkentin (until 2016) and Jeremy Read (beginning in 2016) from UWCRC as well as Bill Balan (a special UWCRC appointment, until 2017) and Diversity's Ian Vickers (beginning in 2017). Mr. Vickers' appointment is viewed by the Board leadership as an initial measure to involve DFS employees in the governance of the business

<sup>44</sup> SEED, 2016-2017 Annual Report, Winnipeg, 2017 [Report PDF](#)

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 2017

commercial and residential properties in Winnipeg's North End.<sup>46</sup> The non-profit Community Ownership Solutions was ICR's lead shareholder.<sup>47</sup>

## 4.5 Instrument

In mid-2009, the parties signed a five-year joint venture agreement (JVA) to create and operate Diversity Food Services as a going business concern. Both UWCRC and SEED Winnipeg created special-purpose subsidiary companies for this purpose, with the Corporation holding 52% (valued at \$26,000) of the shares of the joint venture and SEED 48% (\$24,000).<sup>48</sup> The third party to the agreement was Diversity Food Services itself.

The main purpose of the joint venture was the provision of food services at three university cafeterias and such other additional locations as the University of Winnipeg may determine in the future. The specific objectives of the joint venture were to:

- 1) Offer wholesome, affordable, ethnically diverse food choices reflecting environmentally sustainable practices;
- 2) Develop a catering service to meet University needs and generate revenue;
- 3) Provide "high-quality jobs for target food service employees (new Canadians, Aboriginal peoples and other groups who encounter difficulty in obtaining high quality jobs, which carry with them good wages and benefits, career advancement opportunities, access to training and capacity building, and participation in decision-making;" and
- 4) Facilitate "the formation of an employee investment and/or acquisition vehicle at the earliest possible time that will offer the experiences and rewards of ownership" for the employees who choose to invest their capital, time and energy in Diversity Food Services. (The Agreement provided that SEED, if it so chose, could transfer up to half of its interest in the joint venture to its employees).

In addition, the JVA stipulated that the initial expenses of Diversity would be covered by a range of sources, including contributions to start-up costs by the UWCRC (\$6,500) and SEED (\$10,000); an additional injection by the Renewal Corporation of \$47,000 (about \$23,000 in grant funds and \$24,000 in venture capital); two grants channelled through SEED from the United Way and Employment Manitoba totalling nearly \$83,000, plus almost \$23,000 in venture capital from SEED; a line of credit for \$70,000 and a term loan of \$30,000 with Assiniboine Credit Union; and another term loan from the Jubilee Fund. UWCRC also agreed to provide \$125,000 in indirect funds through the University for leasehold improvements in its designated food-services facilities.

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<sup>46</sup> An insightful account of the evolution, achievements and challenges of Inner City Renovation is found in M. Donkervoort, *Inner City Renovation: How a Social Enterprise Changes Lives and Communities*, Fernwood Publishing, Black Point and Winnipeg, 2013

<sup>47</sup> Over ICR's life-cycle, other shareholders had included Social Capital Partners, a Toronto-based social venture fund, as well as the North End Housing Project, Winnipeg Housing and Rehabilitation Corporation and other local non-profit and public agencies. Launched in 2002, Inner City Renovation was wound up in 2017, after 15 years of operation, by Community Ownership Solutions [Link](#)

<sup>48</sup> UWCRC contributed equity and SEED provided a combination of equity and supplementary grants in lieu of equity

The agreement further stipulated that management decisions for the joint venture were to be made by a majority vote of the members of a Management Committee, which initially would be the directors of the joint venture corporation. For major decisions (i.e. those concerning contracts, budgets, financing, hiring of senior staff), a 75% majority vote was to be required. On a proportionate share basis, the parties to the JVA were required to, when necessary, advance funds to Diversity Foods if the business was not able to meet its obligations. If necessary, one party could loan the other its share of such advances. Any offers by an outside party to purchase the interest in the joint venture of one of the parties would be subject to the right of first refusal by the other parties to the agreement. Finally, the agreement provided for disputes between the main parties to be resolved, if necessary, by a neutral, jointly agreed upon arbitrator whose decision would be binding.

## 4.6 Business

Figure 7 presents the timeline of Diversity Food Services' evolution over the past decade.

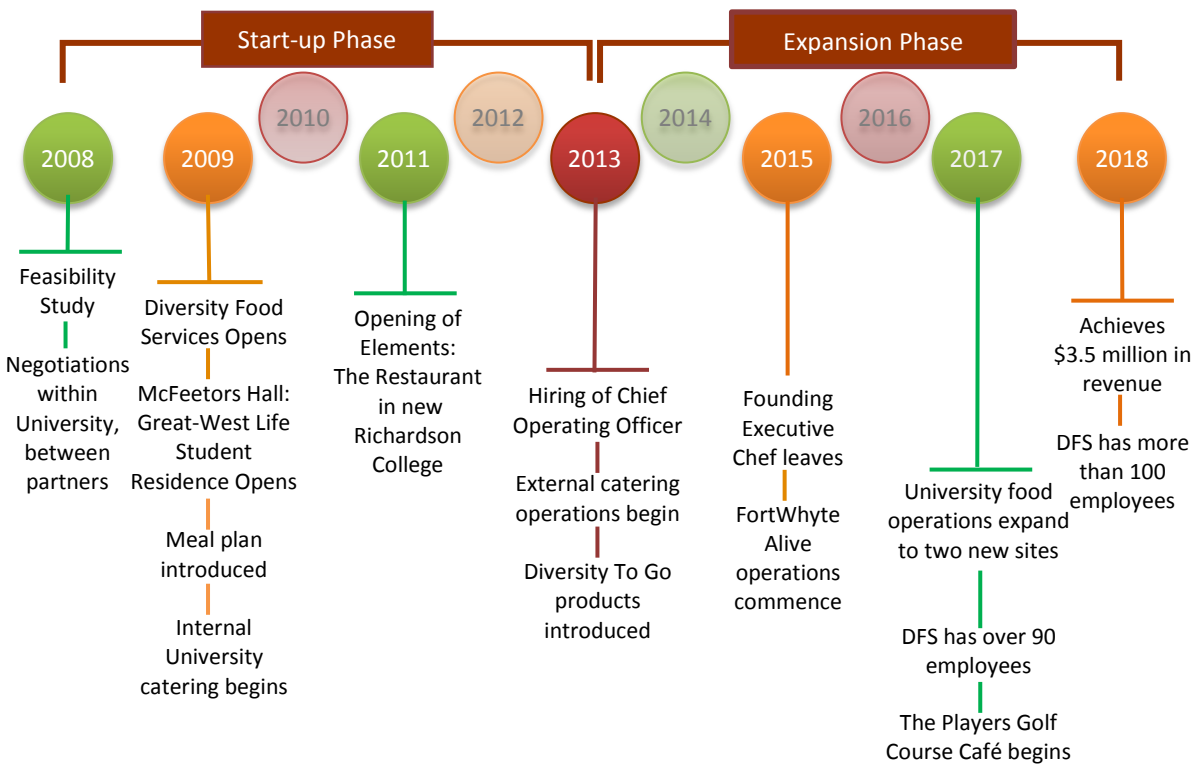


Figure 7: Ten-Year Timeline of Diversity Food Services

### Start-Up Phase

Diversity Food Services began operating in the summer of 2009, delivering food services to three cafeterias (Riddell Hall, Centennial and Lockhart) on UW's downtown campus.<sup>49</sup> DFS started with 25 employees and generated about \$500,000 in its first, partial year of operation. The partners had

<sup>49</sup> As provided in the JVA, these were the initial sites at which DFS was expected to begin its food-service operations

succeeded in their recruitment efforts and launched the business with a high-profile Executive Chef who had earned awards for his healthy cuisine together with a Manager of Food Services with proven experience in a successful organic social café.<sup>50</sup> In the fall of 2009, McFeetors Hall: Great-West Life Student Residence opened its doors, offering students 176 dorm-style rooms and 25 townhouse homes for student families. All students staying in the residence had mandatory meal plans (for 14 or 19 weeks) that now would be delivered by DFS, boosting Diversity's sales and requiring an increase in employees. Then, in 2010, DFS began to win a string of awards, led by its Executive Chef, drawing positive media coverage to the business and the university, and validating Diversity principles of sustainability, affordability and high-quality products.<sup>51</sup> And, in late 2011, a new, fine-dining restaurant, Elements, opened in the newly constructed, state-of-the art Richardson College. DFS added this facility to its on-campus sites of operation, as well.

All of this progress, however, did not yet translate into a positive bottom line. Diversity's financial management and reporting system did not keep pace with the company's growth. The cost structure of the business was changing and was not monitored consistently. The business struggled for several years.

## Expansion Phase

The hiring of a Chief Operating Officer (COO) in 2013 signalled a transition from start-up to growth and expansion. It was clear to the executive team of Diversity and to its Board members that even though delivering services on campus was stretching the capacity of the business, it needed to grow even larger by adding year-round off-campus sites that were not subject to the seasonal cycles of academic terms, or at least were counter-cyclical to them. The first component of the expansion plan was to grow the catering arm of the business. By 2014, Diversity Catering had reached the milestone of 10,000 orders for its services. At that point, the company's work force had grown to more than 70 employees.<sup>52</sup> A few years later, DFS created a partnership to run the café at FortWhyte Alive, a conservation area and environmental education non-profit.

In 2017, the Southeast Resource Development Council selected Diversity Food Services as food provider for its fully Indigenous-owned Players Golf Course in northwest Winnipeg. The café at the golf course created another 24 good jobs at that site, bringing Diversity's work force to more than 100 employees.<sup>53</sup> The year 2017 also saw the addition of two new campus operations: Tony's Canteen in the Leatherdale

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<sup>50</sup> As the University of Winnipeg's 2009 Report to the Community reported: "Ben Kramer will lead the venture as Executive Chef. Kramer put Dandelion Eatery on the Canadian map as one of the healthiest places to eat in Canada. Kirsten Godbout, former general manager of the award-winning café Bread & Circuses, is managing the operational side of Diversity." An early review of DFS's food quality, however, pointed out a number of areas needing improvement (C.J. Crosthwaite, Eating on Campus at the University of Winnipeg, The Uniter, October 14, 2009)

<sup>51</sup> According to UW's 2011 Report to the Community, in 2010-2011, Diversity Foods "won three other major awards: the 2010 Manitoba Excellence in Sustainability Award, the Golden Carrot Award from Food Matters, Manitoba for helping to revolutionize campus food services by providing sustainable, affordable, fair and delicious food and, last April, Executive Chef Ben Kramer and his team won the 2010 Winnipeg Iron Chef Competition, beating out some of the finest restaurants in the city."

<sup>52</sup> B. Reimer, Diversity Catering Reaches 10,000 Orders, Asterisk (Assiniboine Credit Union), September 23, 2014 [Blog](#)

<sup>53</sup> Nation Talk, Diversity Foods tee-ses appetites at Players Golf Course, April 20, 2017 [Link](#)

Hall expansion (developed by UWCR) and the canteen in the Duckworth Centre that had previously been managed by the Athletic Department.

As Table 3 shows, between 2013 and 2018, the expansion phase saw Diversity increase its annual revenue from \$2.7 million to nearly \$3.4 million. From 2013 to 2016, annual income from operations grew to nearly \$850,000; in fiscal years 2017 and 2018, however, a number of start-up and staffing costs for new operations on and off campus reduced income from operations. Still, in posting total revenue of \$3.4 million in 2018 and net income of \$168,000, Diversity has set a new level of business performance. The business projects total continued revenue growth for the foreseeable future, particularly with the addition of the golf-course café<sup>54</sup> and expanded university food operations.

**Table 3: Revenue and Expenses, Diversity Food Services, 2013-2018 (C\$ Thousands)**

Year	Revenue	Cost of Sales	Income from Operations	Administration, Training, and Other Expenses	Net
2013	\$2,700	\$1,974	\$726	\$844	-\$118
2014	2,794	2,032	762	675	87
2015	2,769	2,091	678	784	-106
2016	3,135	2,287	847	885	-39
2017	2,983	1,864	49	1,069	144
2018	3,365	2,154	-21	1,231	168

Source: UWCR Financial Statements, Diversity Food Services; All figures rounded

## Human Resources

An important element in the Diversity business model has been its permanent attention to and investment in the most appropriate mix of human resources to enable the enterprise to succeed. At its core, this investment is most evident in the comprehensive assistance it provides to its workforce. At DFS, 60-65% of its workers face recognized barriers to employment that can include addictions, prison time, disabilities, low educational attainment, inadequate English language skills, cultural and racial discrimination, and, for many, lack of experience functioning in a formal workplace setting. A large number of DFS workers are new Canadians from various parts of the world. Some are from Indigenous communities. The business aims to pay its staff a living wage; recently employees received an increase in their salaries of 50 cents per hour. Diversity offers a comprehensive benefits program that provides for life insurance, disability insurance, eye care, counselling services and a variety of other health related benefits.

A key long-term goal of both the Board and management of DFS is to promote increasing levels of employee participation in the business, through revenue sharing, governance and ownership. Accordingly, a number of models of cooperative enterprise are being examined. The Board and senior management continue active discussions on employee ownership models that are most relevant and potentially sustainable in light of the characteristics of Diversity’s workers and the substance of its operations.

<sup>54</sup> I. Vickers, Interview, February 22, 2018



The management team works hard in other ways to provide the guidance and training required for employees to succeed inside and outside the business. For example, the company covers the cost for each worker to complete the Food Safe Handling Course.<sup>55</sup> While the Province only requires that one in 20 employees in a workplace obtain this certification, Diversity funds this training for all of its employees because, first, it helps DFS workers take ownership over work processes in the business and, second, food-safety certification also opens potential career paths for its employees in the food and hospitality sectors.

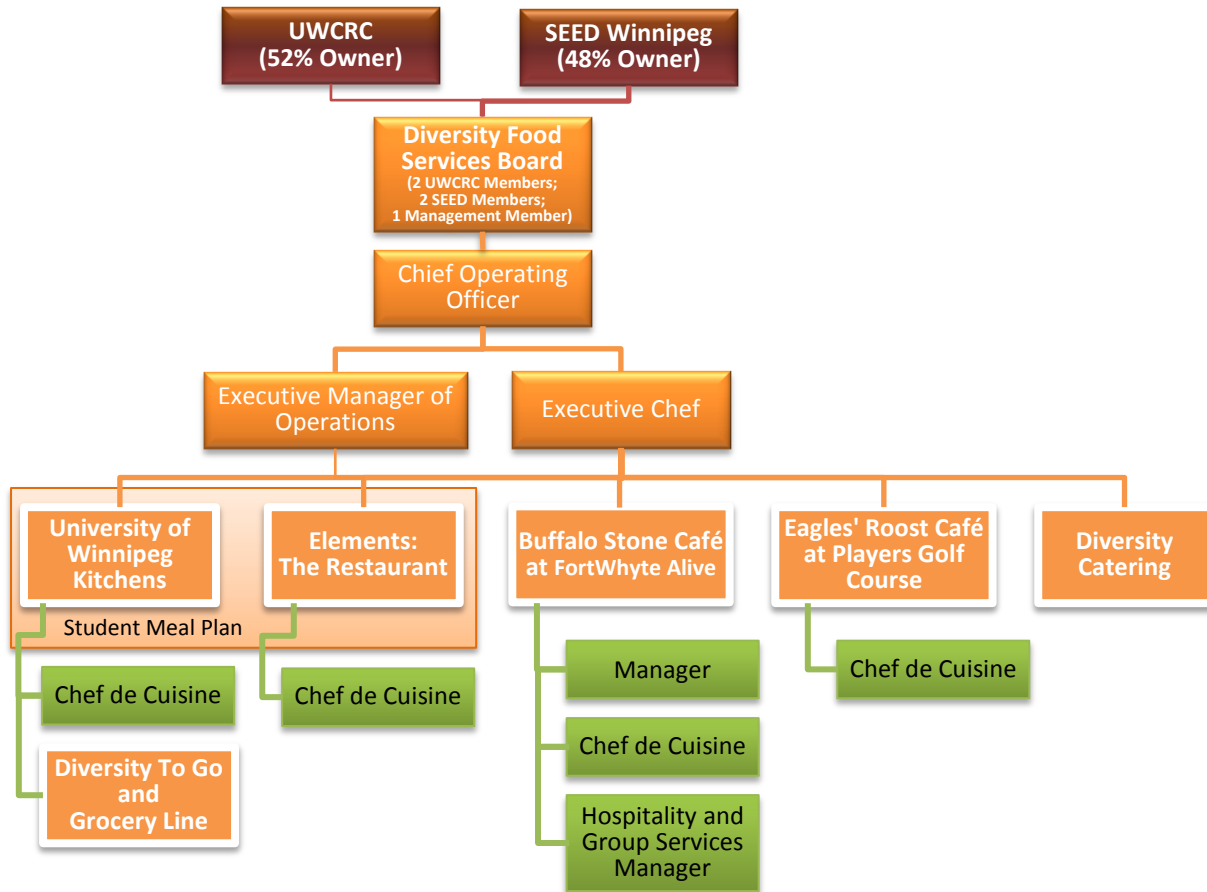
Moreover, Diversity has invested in its management team, recruiting for the skills needed first, to launch the business, and later to expand it. The founding Executive Chef was crucial to the success of the start-up phase. The subsequent hiring of the Chief Operating Officer has been key to implementing the expansion phase, as new systems were introduced to support the growth of the enterprise.<sup>56</sup> Furthermore, throughout its lifecycle, the business has benefited from the skill set, commitment and continuity of its Operations Manager. At the same time, there has been depth and continuity in knowledge and expertise by both SEED and UWCRC on the Diversity Board of Directors, with the Board providing the strategic guidance and partnered support—and the patience—to help DFS navigate forward.<sup>57</sup> Figure 8 presents the current organizational structure of Diversity Food Services.

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<sup>55</sup> The City of Winnipeg sponsors a one-day Food Safe Certificate Course taught by certified public health inspectors [Link](#)

<sup>56</sup> Research by the Center for the Advancement of Social Entrepreneurship (CASE) at Duke University underscores the importance in scaling social businesses of investing in both physical and systems infrastructure, putting “strong financial, program management, monitoring and performance management systems in place”; E. Worsham, *The Challenges of Scale and How to Overcome Them*, CASE, Duke University, 2018 [Duke](#). The COO brought the ability and commitment to put such systems in place as Diversity began its expansion process

<sup>57</sup> CASE’s research also confirms the crucial role of the knowledge and skills of boards of directors in the scaling up process, especially board members “who understand scale and are willing to take the risks and make the investments needed to achieve impact at scale,” which is exactly what the DFS Board has brought to the business



Source: UWCRC 2018

Figure 8: Organizational Structure, Diversity Food Services, 2018

## 4.7 Environmental Sustainability

In addition to promoting social, economic and cultural sustainability through its inclusive recruitment of marginalized citizens, provision of decent jobs and training, a good benefits package, and fostering a workplace of intercultural respect and understanding, Diversity has placed special emphasis on *environmental sustainability*. From the outset, as part of its effort to improve the quality of their food on campus, the business brought fresh, natural food into the university food system. Its kitchen philosophy calls for the creation of authentic food from fresh ingredients and adherence to sustainability standards, including premium, natural beef and pork, Ocean Wise certification for fish, and engagement of local artisanal vendors. It has committed to using local suppliers wherever possible, sourcing fair trade, organic coffee, and providing biodegradable and compostable take-out containers.<sup>58</sup> By 2014, only five years after opening, DFS was buying “65% of their supply from local family farms, 50%

<sup>58</sup> Diversity Food Services, Kitchen Standards [Link](#)

within 100 kms of downtown Winnipeg, supporting the livelihoods of nearly 100 local food producers.”<sup>59</sup> Today, with its well-tested suppliers’ list, Diversity sources fish, cheese, fresh greens, sprouts and game meat, among many other products from some of the area’s most respected producers.<sup>60</sup> Moreover, it helps to create sustainable micro-markets, as it does at the FortWhyte Alive café, where Diversity’s commitment to buy all pork products farmed at that site enables that partner to increase its own scale of livestock operations.

In fact, Diversity’s ambition for its sustainability work goes even further. “Our goal,” says the company, “is to educate our staff, customers, vendors and ourselves about the food experience and the effect it has on our global community.”<sup>61</sup> To this end, for example, in 2014 the business collaborated with Food Matters Manitoba to co-create a sustainable procurement toolkit.<sup>62</sup> And, in 2017, Diversity partnered with the University of Winnipeg Students’ Association to launch Food-Box, an on-campus fruit and vegetable pick up program for students, staff and faculty, for \$10 per week. “While the contents will be determined by seasonal availability,” the University announced, “each box will include a variety of Manitoba produce—such as carrots, beets, potatoes, onions and chickpeas.”<sup>63</sup>

## 4.8 Results

There are seven types of results achieved by Diversity Food Services that deserve to be highlighted:

- 1) By building up its catering service and operating off-campus cafés, as well as expanding its on-campus operations, Diversity has developed, tested and refined a *viable business model*. Through scaling and more systematic management practices, the leadership team at DFS (both Board and staff) has grown revenues and contained costs in a way that has positioned the business for profitability over the next few years. All told, this is an impressive achievement in its own right.
- 2) Overall, Diversity Food Services has achieved important results on *all four dimensions of sustainability* that matter to UWCR. Diversity puts natural, healthy food at the centre of its business model, advancing environmental sustainability through and for its suppliers, customers and host institutions. And its training and employment of marginalized citizens is an important contribution to social sustainability in the Winnipeg area. As a business, DFS provides jobs to citizens who otherwise would have to access public services, provides a ready market for its local suppliers, and at the same time offers UW an efficient food service; all of this promotes economic sustainability. Finally, the respectful and integrated way in which DFS treats the cultural diversity of its employees and the surrounding community strengthens cultural sustainability.

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<sup>59</sup> B. Reimer, Diversity Foods Provides Values-Driven Food Services, Asterisk (Assiniboine Credit Union), Winnipeg, October 24, 2014 [Blog](#)

<sup>60</sup> University of Winnipeg, Food Services: Sustainability Commitment, Winnipeg, 2017 [Link](#)

<sup>61</sup> Diversity Food Services, Kitchen Standards [Ibid.](#)

<sup>62</sup> B. Reimer, *Ibid.*, 2014

<sup>63</sup> Communications, Making fresh produce more affordable on campus, University of Winnipeg, Winnipeg, February 7, 2017 [Link](#)

- 3) As it has expanded, Diversity has also been able to improve the *quality of its products and services*. Evidence for this is found in online reviews. In particular, based on eight reviews between 2012 and 2017, Trip Advisor assigned an overall 4.5 rating to Elements restaurant, with 25% of reviewers giving Elements a rating of Excellent and 75% a rating of Very Good. For its part, based on 15 reviews, Buffalo Stone Café earned a Trip-Advisor rating of 4 (33% Excellent, 42% Very Good). The Pangea cafeteria on campus has received mixed reviews and needs attention. However, the catering business has earned a five-star rating on Facebook, including a glowing post from a wedding customer reporting that “the food was absolutely fantastic, and the service was even better!”
- 4) Furthermore, Diversity has built an impressive *sustainable procurement program*, which is highlighted by the University of Winnipeg as an important part of the University’s institution-wide green procurement policy and its overall Campus Sustainability Strategy. Good performance on green procurement is a key factor in the University’s own achievement of a Silver rating by the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE).<sup>64</sup> “Food and beverage purchasing is a key component of UWinnipeg’s sustainable procurement program,” notes the University. “Nearly 60% of the food and beverages sold on campus are recognized as environmentally responsible, and when it comes to animal products, which typically have greater environmental impact, only 36% of food items sold on campus are produced from animals, of which 75% are considered local, organic or sustainable.”<sup>65</sup> As noted, Diversity is an Ocean Wise certified kitchen, following the Vancouver Aquarium’s standards for all its seafood purchases.<sup>66</sup>

In addition, as the University also points out: “Diversity’s commitment to local and ethical purchasing has had important benefits for the agricultural economy in Southern Manitoba. Several of Diversity’s suppliers have been able to expand their operations as a result of UWinnipeg’s large, stable demand for local produce, dairy and meat, resulting in increasing market availability of sustainable food products in our province.”<sup>67</sup> At the same time, Diversity also adheres to fair trade principles in its procurement of chocolate, coffee, tea, rice and sugar.

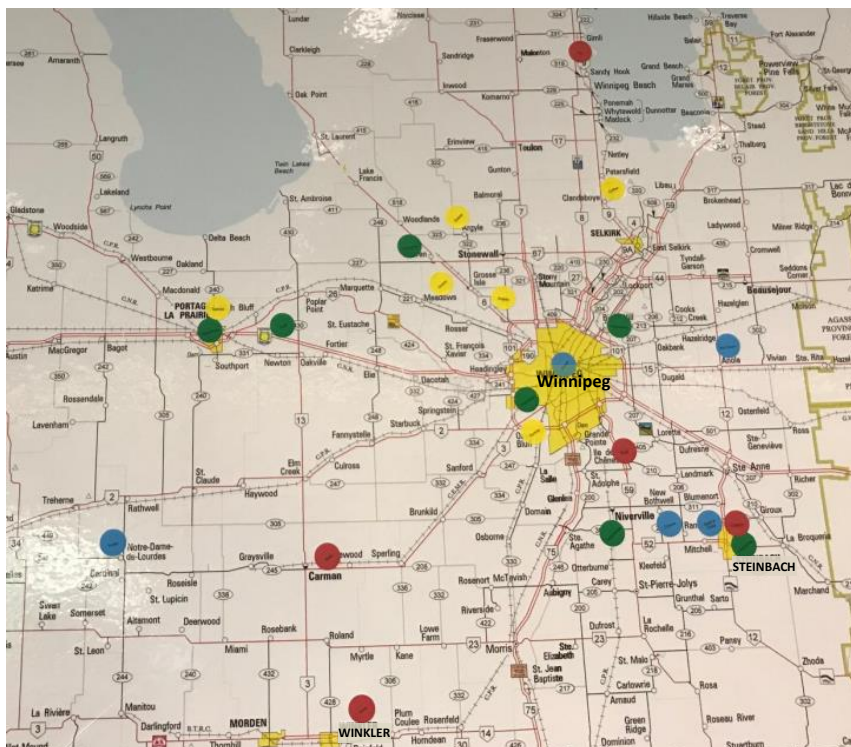
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<sup>64</sup> See the University’s AASHE scorecard at [Report 2015](#)

<sup>65</sup> Campus Sustainability Office, Purchasing, University of Winnipeg, Winnipeg, 2017 [Website](#)

<sup>66</sup> Vancouver Aquarium [website](#)

<sup>67</sup> Campus Sustainability Office, Ibid., 2017



Source: Diversity Food Services, 2018

Figure 9: Locations of DFS Food Suppliers

- 5) Furthermore, Diversity Food Services has earned a wide range of *external awards* for providing excellent, sustainable food, bringing pride and prestige to the University and to Winnipeg and reinforcing its own marketing efforts. Beginning in 2010, only one year from start-up, the earliest of these honours recognized the excellence of Executive Chef Ben Kramer and included local awards from the Manitoba Round Table for Sustainable Development and Iron Chef Manitoba, as well as Golden Carrot awards from the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine in the US. In 2014, Diversity earned Level 2 certification from LEAF (Leaders in Environmentally Accountable Foodservice), a Calgary-based green-restaurant ranking system and, in 2015, DFS was named one of Canada’s greenest restaurants by LEAF.<sup>68</sup> In subsequent years, Diversity has maintained its Level 2 status.

The year 2015 also saw DFS ranked second among campus dining facilities in North America (and earned the highest score in Canada) on the Sustainable Campus Index of the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education. In both 2016 and 2017, Diversity was ranked third on this index and stood alone as the only Canadian campus food-service in the top five facilities. Also in 2017, DFS tied for first place in Sierra Magazine’s Cool Schools Ranking in the food category among nearly 230 primarily undergraduate higher education institutions in

<sup>68</sup> A 2017 assessment of DFS by LEAF revealed stronger Level 2 performance, particularly through local purchasing, but not sufficient performance to merit Level 3 status, the highest rating level in the LEAF system. In the same year, a LEAF assessor visited Buffalo Stone Café at FortWhyte Alive and recommended Level 2 certification for the facility, noting “the dedication of the team to make their operation as sustainable as possible is exemplary” (A. Morozova, Buffalo Stone Café, LEAF Audit, Report, and Recommendations, 2017)

North America.<sup>69</sup> Commenting on this achievement, the Senior Advisor, for Research and Sustainability at the University of Winnipeg said: “Diversity Foods is a major asset on our campus and an important part of our overall sustainability vision. Diversity Foods offers the full package, as leaders in environmental health and human well-being.”<sup>70</sup> In early 2018, LEAF awarded Diversity Food Service’s campus operations Greenest Restaurant over 10,000 square feet in size in Canada.<sup>71</sup>

### Box 2: Diversity’s Purchasing Power for Sustainable Food

*Manitoba on the Menu* is a non-profit, funded by government grants and private donations that promotes sustainable food across the province. In 2015, the organization prepared a case study on the food purchasing practices of Diversity Food Services, showing how a major institution can procure local and sustainable food. As the Executive Chef and Operations Manager commented: “We have found that it is a myth that local food is unaffordable. It can be cost effective. We have the purchasing power to buy larger volumes of food which usually reduces the price.” At that point, DFS was regularly using “12 vendors for purchasing food, but we make multiple orders per week,” reported the team. The case study also highlighted Diversity’s education and awareness work with students. In one initiative, noted the team, the business ran a campaign titled “Eat like you give a damn,” publishing articles in the student newspaper that “talked about topics such as why we should be supporting local farmers, compostable and plant-based take-out containers and who we employ at Diversity.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> L. Dunne, Local and Sustainable Food Procurement: A Case Study of Diversity Food Services, *Manitoba on the Menu*, Winnipeg, 2015; the full report can be downloaded here [Report](#)

- 6) In addition, Diversity Food Services creates significant *social value*. A recent local impact analysis for 2016-2017 estimated that DFS procured more than \$740,000 in local products and services, representing 0.25 of every dollar spent by the business. The study noted that local procurement generates multiplier effects ranging from 1.4 to 2.6, circulating money into the community faster than buying imported goods. The same project carried out a social return on investment (SROI) analysis of Diversity Food Services, calculating that, in 2016-2017, the business generated more than \$1.4 million in benefits to society compared with nearly \$860,000 in costs. These benefits included reduced reliance on social programs by Diversity employees, increased local spending by employees, improved community safety and reduced crime rates, less reliance on food banks, and lower health care costs. Overall, this SROI assessment showed that for every dollar spent by DFS, the business produced \$1.68 in these and other social benefits.<sup>72</sup>
- 7) Finally, Diversity Food Services has demonstrated an innovative model of a *social-enterprise instrument* for sustainable food services at other universities and colleges that can be part of a broader effort by higher-education institutions to strengthen social infrastructure to help address society’s many challenges. The business regularly receives inquiries and invitations to talk about its work and, in some cases, explore whether it could help individual institutions

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<sup>69</sup> Sierra Club, 227 Universities & Colleges Participate in Sierra’s Cool Schools 2017 Rankings & Two Schools Ties for #1 for Food: Sterling College & University of Winnipeg, September 1, 2017 [Link](#)

<sup>70</sup> This quote is from Alana Lajoie-O’Malley, News Centre, Diversity Foods a leader in North America – Sierra Club magazine, University of Winnipeg, September 25, 2017 [Link](#)

<sup>71</sup> University of Winnipeg, Diversity named greenest large restaurant in Canada, March 5, 2018 [Link](#)

<sup>72</sup> This study was carried out by a University of Manitoba MBA student. See A. Akerstream, Diversity Food Services Local Impact Analysis, Asper MBA Program, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, 2017. It is also worth noting, as the SROI report does, that local purchasing keeps carbon emissions low. Long transportation distances make the carbon emissions of imported goods over 160 times higher than those of local products

adapt the DFS approach to their particular conditions and needs. A recent blog on the McConnell Foundation website profiled Diversity's multiple contributions, including reducing precarious employment by providing good-quality jobs, and offering nutritious, affordable and ethically sourced food. "In doing so," wrote the author, "Diversity Food Services activates the potential for the university's existing food services infrastructure to be a tool in solving wider social problems."<sup>73</sup>

## 4.9 Challenges

Diversity Food Services faces three main challenges. The first is maintaining, and ideally strengthening, its *business viability*. The approach taken here by DFS has been to expand its operations and activities on and off-campus. It was especially important for the business to break out of its early constraint of "seasonality" of academic terms, which defined when students were on campus and using cafeterias in large numbers. Adding operations off-campus helped address this issue.

The second challenge involves carrying the *social load* of the business. Hiring and managing new Canadians, Indigenous peoples, and workers facing other disadvantages such as addictions or recent release from prison, require extra time and sophisticated skills by the management team. In addition to SEED contributing grants for workplace training, the non-profit's expertise and networks have been key to helping workers access key programs and services. Furthermore, in its commitment to be a good employer, DFS aims to pay its employees a living wage, which places further strain on its budget.

The third challenge is to maintain *high quality* in its products and services. Like other food-service businesses, DFS must work to satisfy a broad range of customer expectations in a world of instant social-media reviews. Thus, again like other food-service enterprises, Diversity must also continuously monitor its online reputation and, sometimes, defend it. Supported by the Board, the DFS management team works hard to address these and other challenges.

## 4.10 Lessons

What are the main lessons to be drawn from the DFS experience to date? Five are worth noting:

- 1) University leaders must understand and be committed to investing in the social enterprise model of sustainable food service delivery for the long-term. They must be *informed and patient investors* and have some tolerance for risk as well as enthusiasm for the multi-dimensional sustainability potential of the DFS model.
- 2) The sustainable food-service enterprise must, from the outset, have access to the *full market of university food facilities*. The business must be contracted to deliver food-services at all university cafeterias and restaurants, including student residences that operate with mandatory student food plans. This guarantees that the social enterprise will begin with a reasonable level of scale upon which to build.

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<sup>73</sup> See P. Glennie, From food services to faculty, mobilizing the whole campus to solve social problems, McConnell Foundation, Montreal, March 28, 2018 [Link](#)

- 3) Moreover, the sustainable food-service business must also expand to *off-campus restaurants, cafeterias and catering*. This is the experience of Diversity Food Services. On-campus services are defined by academic terms and, as such, are seasonal. The business must add components that, in this sense, are “counter-cyclical”, such as facilities that are open in the Canadian summer, when students are not on campus, and other business lines with little seasonality (e.g. catering).
- 4) The university side needs a *skilled community partner* to make this model work. In Diversity’s case, SEED has not only brought proven, sophisticated expertise and systems for training and supporting marginalized citizens to become productive employees; it also brought grants into the enterprise early to get such training moving quickly. Moreover, this partnership should be formalized and encoded in an active, jointly-led, Board of Directors, as is the case for DFS, with authentic decision-making power.
- 5) Finally, the sustainable food business needs to recruit the right kinds of *human resources*, first to get the enterprise started, and second to expand it. Charisma and public-facing skills are useful in the start-up phase, but skills in more complex management systems and financial management are essential for expanding the business.

## 4.11 Prospects

As of early 2018, after a decade of operations and refining of the Diversity business model, and expansion off campus, Diversity Food Services increased its revenues to \$3.4 million and realized a solid profit. As long as the quality of food and service can be maintained at a solid level across the various DFS facilities, and (especially local) suppliers can meet the needs of the business for fresh, sustainable fruits, vegetables and meats, it would seem that this social enterprise can operate successfully for another five to ten years.

Apart from maintaining quality, there are several other priorities that must be addressed in order for Diversity to continue to succeed. The first is succession of Board leadership. In particular, over the next five years, it is likely that the Board Chair, who is also the Managing Director of UWCRC, will consider retiring. So too may the former Vice Chair of the Board. If either or both of these scenarios transpire, there will need to be a smooth shifting of responsibilities for the leadership of the DFS Board to the incoming Managing Director of UWCRC and to a new Board appointee from the SEED side of the joint venture.

A second priority is managing the relationship with the executive of the University of Winnipeg. Currently, there is very strong support for Diversity Food Services by the President, who has been appointed to a second term, and by other executive leaders. But the UW leadership team, like their peers at other Manitoba universities, is presently coping with a provincial government that has frozen university operating grants but is allowing some flexibility on tuition fee pricing. Continued pressure on and changes to the UW budget may result, in turn, in increased expectations for both DFS and UWCRC to generate larger surpluses to contribute to University revenues.

The third priority is related and involves the organizational viability of SEED Winnipeg. As the provincial government reduces spending on social programs, the matching funds that SEED was able to mobilize from the province in order to access federal training dollars for its programs with new Canadians and



low-income citizens, and to support skills development among Diversity's employees, may be more difficult for the non-profit to raise. Still, SEED's work in recent years to diversify its own revenues should serve it well while it navigates in this uncertain policy environment. In any case, SEED will need to raise more private donations and even major gifts.

All the parties involved in Diversity Food Services—Board members, staff, the University executive, SEED and UWCRC—are aware of and working to address these threats to future success. They must continue to do so.<sup>74</sup>

## 4.12 Replication

Through news stories, awards and word of mouth, the Diversity Food Services model has been disseminated quite widely. The business has received inquiries from a wide range of universities and colleges exploring the appropriateness of the DFS model for their situation. These inquiries have come from small urban universities like UW, from large urban institutions and from schools that are based in rural regions, in Canada, the United States and elsewhere. Because Diversity does not have the extra staff time to respond to these inquiries or consult with peer institutions on the suitability of the model to their needs, DFS' responses to such interest is usually muted and insufficient.

On the other hand, if there were grant funds provided by a foundation or government agency (or both) for Diversity to hire replacement personnel that would permit current staff to respond more fully to these inquiries, this would facilitate greater adaptation and replication of the DFS model on other campuses. Such grant funds could cover the time of the Diversity staff person to consult with interested institutions, perhaps through face to face site visits and advice on detailed feasibility studies. One of the most important functions of a DFS representative would be to present the Diversity experience, methods and results directly to the leadership of the inquiring institutions.

In the next few years, it may be worth exploring the possibility of setting up a Diversity Food Services *franchising strategy* and selling franchises to higher education institutions and non-profits working jointly, in all parts of Canada and the United States. Of course, this would require hiring a manager to run the franchising component and raise their own salary through franchise sales and ongoing care.

These various options could be tested, refined and expanded through a range of academic and professional associations in Canada and the United States, including those concerned with community engagement and partnership (SSHRC, CIHR), university administration (e.g. CAUBO), sustainable food security (e.g. Food Secure Canada, the Sierra Club, AASHE, etc.) and fresh and local food networks.

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<sup>74</sup> As noted earlier, discussions are proceeding with the Board and senior management of Diversity on the possibilities for moving the business to an employee-owned model. While such a shift may confer some benefits on the business (i.e. enhanced employee motivation), the likelihood of most workers at DFS, who make a living wage but not much more, buying into the company is probably low. Perhaps, over time, as wages rise, there will be an opportunity to revisit this idea. In the meantime, other employee participation channels, notably revenue sharing and governance, may gain more traction

### III Social Real Estate

## 5 Social Real Estate

### 5.1 Overview

For more than a decade, between 2007 and 2018, the University of Winnipeg Community Renewal Corporation catalyzed an ambitious program of designing and building state-of-the-art facilities—residences, office and classroom buildings, recreation facilities—in order to promote multiple forms of sustainability in the downtown core of Winnipeg while improving campus infrastructure. Drawing on the expertise of its volunteer Board of Directors and benefiting from the support of the University’s Board of Regents and senior leadership, UWCRC initiated and coordinated ten major real estate projects worth over \$200 million, including some \$90 million in provincial financing and over \$20 million in private donations.

These were *social* real estate projects in that they were carried out with extensive community consultation and often in partnership with local non-profits and governments and were designed to advance community cohesion while respecting cultural diversity. Nearly 90 units of affordable housing were integrated into three of the buildings, several host non-profit organizations or social businesses, and a range of facilities were opened to community use, including a major recreation complex. The projects were also very green. Two of the new buildings achieved the Gold LEED standard and three were certified LEED Silver. UWCRC’s real estate portfolio has demonstrated place-based social infrastructure at its most sustainable.



### 5.2 Impetus

In 2005, there were several pressing issues facing the University of Winnipeg that UWCRC was intended to address: meeting the needs of a larger student population, renewing and expanding the downtown campus, promoting environmental sustainability and contributing to the institution’s Kyoto commitments, and opening the University to the neighbouring community. This gave rise to the Corporation’s four-pillar approach to sustainability. In order to meet the needs of an expanded student population and enliven the campus, an expanded fitness centre, new residence leases and buildings, and a relocated and expanded day care were identified as early projects, followed by a series of other

buildings, all designed to LEED standards. New classroom, research and office facilities followed, and then the recreation complex was built. The Downtown Commons was a turning point in integrating a variety of purposes into a single project: affordable housing for students and revenue streams from market-rate and premium units, and a property management role for the Corporation for its own residential asset beyond its development, project management and previous student residence-management roles. Once the downtown campus was expanded and renewed, the mixed-income residential-property management model was pursued by UWCRC 2.0 in the downtown core and also outside of the city. Here the impetus was not only to deliver multi-dimensional sustainability, but also to generate new revenues to share with the University.

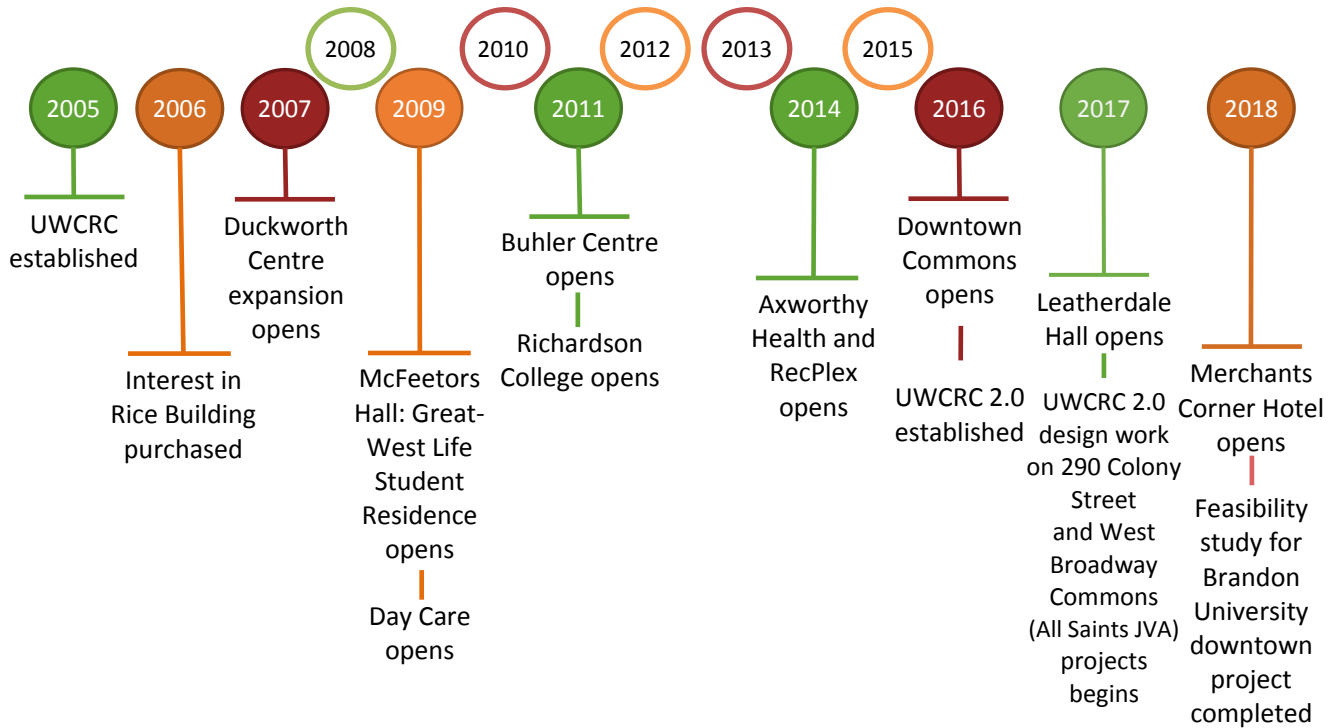


Figure 10: Fourteen-Year Timeline of UWCRC Real Estate Projects

### 5.3 Proponents

The main proponents of the real estate projects of the first decade of the Corporation’s work to benefit from the new builds were the University, the UWCRC Board and staff, as well as private donors and the key academic faculties and departments, and their professors and students. In assembling the professional teams necessary for the design and construction work, the Corporation engaged architects, engineers and construction companies, along with financial institutions. There were often consultations with community groups, as well. In the projects involving affordable student housing, Manitoba Housing, a provincial agency, and other provincial programs, became strong advocates of these projects, as well as important funders. In more recent years, a variety of more formal partnerships is evident (e.g. Community Access Advisory Committee for the RecPlex, the North End Community Renewal Corporation in Merchants Corner Inc., New Journey Housing in the Downtown Commons, All Saints Anglican Church

for the West Broadway Commons project, Artspace in the 290 Colony Street project, Forks Renewal Corporation in the Railside Project, and Brandon University for its downtown campus development project). Under the federal Liberal government, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation has become an important funder and, to some degree, also a proponent. The Corporation's collaboration with the Government of Manitoba and the City of Winnipeg continues, but more frequently through tax-credit measures. Finally, UWCRC is beginning to engage with foundations and other impact investors.

## 5.4 Community Partners

Three examples illustrate the nature and range of community partnerships involved in the Corporation's social real estate projects. First, for the Axworthy Health and RecPlex, there is a Community Charter of principles of access and responsibility, a community-access application form, and a Community Access Advisory Committee that, together, guide the various reciprocal relationships between the RecPlex and sports, youth, social, cultural and educational groups in the surrounding community. The second example is that of the broad-based Steering Committee coordinating programming at the newly opened Merchants Corner Hotel facility. That body includes representation from the North End Community Renewal Corporation, the Winnipeg Housing Renewal Corporation and other municipal government departments, the Boldness Project, Manitoba Housing, SEED Winnipeg, CEDA-Pathways to Education and Selkirk Avenue Biz, as well as the Urban and Inner-City Studies Department and UWCRC, with Urban Studies playing a key advisory and facilitative role. The third example is that of the All Saints Anglican Church, a non-profit religious organization that is actually composed of two congregations, each with representation on the joint project committee with UWCRC 2.0 for the West Broadway Commons tower project. As with engagements of community organizations of any type, all of these relationships and the politics within the community partners, as well as with the community partners, must be managed by the Corporation.

## 5.5 Instruments

The University of Winnipeg Community Renewal Corporation deploys an array of instruments to carry out its work in the social real estate space. One type of instrument involves agreements between the corporate entity created for the new development, on the one hand, and UWCRC, on the other, contracting the Corporation to serve as project developer, project manager and, in recent years, property manager. These arrangements may involve joint venture agreements with non-profit or for-profit partners in the project. There are also the contracts that UWCRC executes with its professional providers for design, architectural, engineering and construction services which are procured on a competitive basis. In addition, a large basket of instruments is drawn upon by the Corporation to build customized financing packages for each development. Among the financing instruments utilized are mortgages and mortgage insurance; government capital and program grants, tax credits and loan guarantees; private donations from high net-worth families, foundations and corporations; leases; and equity in the form of land, each of which is governed by a contract, contribution agreement or other form of legal covenant. It is the ability to mobilize and employ the appropriate mix of these and other

instruments in a timely fashion that makes a social-infrastructure developer like UWCRC effective and efficient.

## 5.6 Stages of Development

It is useful to step back and look at the various stages of development through which UWCRC acted, reflected, learned and evolved. Since its inception, the University of Winnipeg Community Renewal Corporation has tested, refined and expanded its role in four stages. Figure 11 depicts this trajectory.

Stage 1 involved start-up. In fact, while the Corporation was creating its principles and ways of working, it had an opportunity to buy 25% ownership of the Rice Building (at 491 Portage), where it set up its offices and, over time, increased its ownership position. As an owner and manager of the property, the Corporation was able to benefit from cash flow from leases and to secure financing against this asset. During the start-up period, UWCRC was also charged with the responsibility of improving and managing three student houses on Balmoral Street.

In stage 2, the Corporation served as the University of Winnipeg's owner's representative, providing development and project management services for several key projects on the west campus, including McFeetors Hall residence, the UWSA day care, and Richardson College of the Environment and Science Complex. These were, and remain, university-owned assets with some community leaseholders and community use. UWCRC continued its roles as the developer as well as project manager for the next tranche of new university buildings, particularly the Buhler Centre and Axworthy Health and RecPlex. Again, these were (and are) university-owned assets with some community tenants and users.

Stage 3 proved to be an inflection point, in several ways. During this stage, the Corporation not only played the roles of developer and project manager, but added the roles of consultant, owner and, post-construction property manager. UWCRC played its project manager role in building the Leatherdale Hall annex to the University's iconic Wesley Hall on the central campus. However, at the same time, it diversified its functions through other projects, particularly by becoming an owner and, later, property manager of the Downtown Commons. In the case of the Merchants Corner project, the Corporation became a joint member with another development corporation of a non-profit that owns part of this facility. In addition, UWCRC acted as a consultant to the University of St. Boniface on a student housing plan. For the most part, the stage 3 projects involved buildings that were primarily not owned by the University of Winnipeg. As such, the corporation's Board of Directors supported the creation of a new vehicle, UWCRC 2.0, to carry out projects that are not related to the University of Winnipeg.

The current stage of development, stage 4, sees activities undertaken by both UWCRC and UWCRC 2.0. The two main 2.0 projects currently underway are West Broadway Commons—where the Corporation is developer, project manager and part owner with All Saints Anglican Church, and, after construction, will serve as property manager—and 290 Colony Street, where it also serves as developer, project manager, and sole owner and property manager. The pivotal difference between UWCRC and UWCRC 2.0 is that the latter can carry out projects unrelated to the interests of the University of Winnipeg.

Two observations are worth making here. First, this phased development was not perfectly linear. That is, right from the outset UWCRC became owner and property manager, in a limited way, and then put those roles aside to concentrate, for about a decade, on advising on the building of university assets. It wasn't until the end of the first decade, and the onset of a new generation of projects (particularly the Downtown Commons) that the Corporation returned to its ownership role, this time in a more robust and sustained fashion. Second, it was *by doing* projects, often opportunistically, that the UWCRC team gained insights into how the Corporation's mandate and structures should, and could, evolve. Educators refer to this as a process of *learning by doing*. Management consultants talk about it as *adaptive management*. The social-justice phrase, *we make the road by walking*, also accurately characterizes this process.

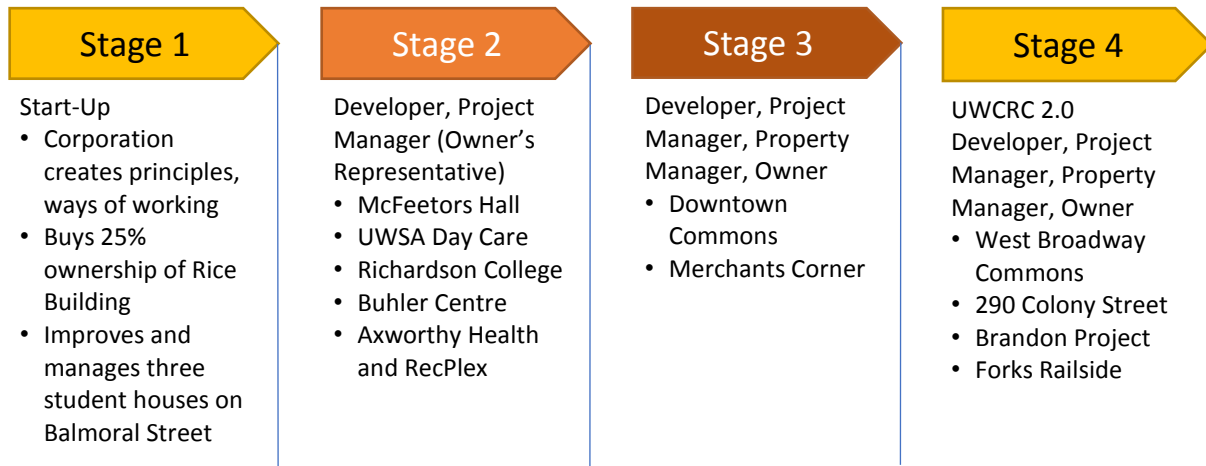


Figure 11: Stages of Development

## 5.7 Projects

### UWCRC Projects

Profiled below are ten real estate projects realized by UWCRC between 2006 and 2018. This portfolio of projects is worth a combined value of more than \$200 million. Key financing components included about \$90 million in provincial-government grants, loans and subsidies as well as over \$20 million in private donations, which were channelled through the University of Winnipeg Foundation. All told, the economic impact of these projects has been \$320 million. Nearly 90 affordable housing units were constructed. These projects are diverse in their architectural, engineering, financing, environmental and social features, but all are aimed at improving facilities and services for students and faculty members, meeting high sustainability standards, and providing for substantial community partnership and use.

### Axworthy Health and RecPlex

A LEED Gold, state-of-the art, \$41 million health and recreation facility that is open to the local community, this complex is named in honour of former UW President Dr. Lloyd Axworthy. Construction

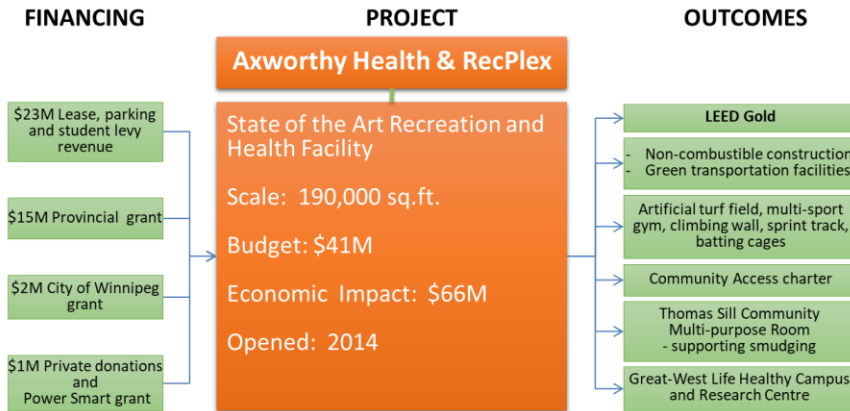


Figure 12: Axworthy Health and RecPlex

on the 190,000 square-foot facility began in 2012<sup>75</sup> and it was opened in 2014.<sup>76</sup> With an artificial-turf field, multi-sport gym, climbing wall, and sprint track, and offering a multi-purpose community room for smudging ceremonies and pow-wows, the RecPlex is run on the basis of a Community Charter for all users—students, faculty,

staff, and people of all ages from the urban core area and the city of Winnipeg more generally. Seven principles underlie the Charter and guide the facility’s operations: openness, inclusivity, accessibility, respect, development (enable the achievement of personal and collective goals, and support social and economic development of the community), accountable (monitoring and reporting to the University and the community), and sustainability (both fiduciary and environmental).<sup>77</sup> In one notable example of an integrated use of the RecPlex, a former Iraqi refugee led a soccer camp for Syrian youth there in the summer of 2016.<sup>78</sup> Two components played pivotal roles in the financing of this project: first, lease, parking and student levy revenue (\$23 million), and, second, a provincial government grant (\$15 million). Smaller contributions came from a City of Winnipeg grant plus private donations and a Power Smart grant.

### Buhler Centre

Of this group of projects, the LEED Silver Buhler Centre was an early on-campus real estate initiative that followed the new McFeetors Hall: Great-West Life Student Residence. A comparatively smaller project worth \$15 million, it was notable for its high ratio of private

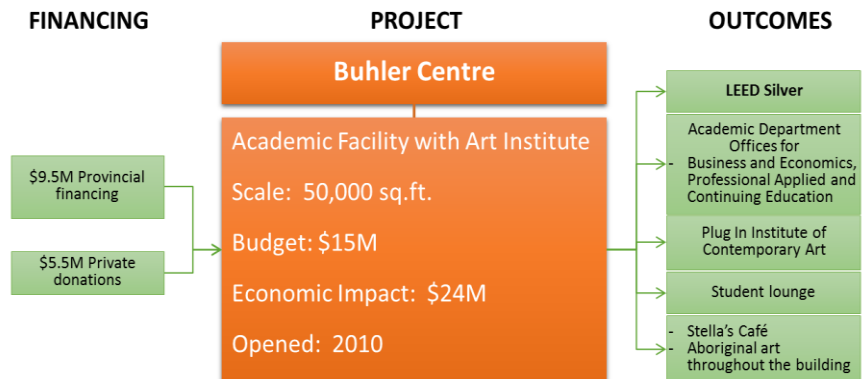


Figure 13: The Buhler Centre

<sup>75</sup> N. Martin, U of W vows RecPlex open to inner city, Winnipeg Free Press, September 7, 2012 [Link](#). There was some uneasiness among local residents about the possible negative impacts of the new facility; see A. Groening, Sportsplex Sod Turning the Beginning of an Uncertain Era, The Uniter, September 12, 2012 [Link](#)

<sup>76</sup> N. Martin, U of W’s new RecPlex friendly to inner city, Winnipeg Free Press, June 18, 2014 [Link](#)

<sup>77</sup> University of Winnipeg, About the Facility, Axworthy Health and RecPlex, Winnipeg, no date [Link](#)

<sup>78</sup> CBC News, Former refugee holds summer soccer camp for Syria kids in Winnipeg, July 16, 2016 [Link](#)

donations to public funding from the province. Indeed, the private donation component, which was led by a \$4 million contribution from the Buhler family, accounted for an impressive 37% of the total financing package. UWCRC worked with the President and the University Foundation to steward these donations. The main purpose of the Buhler Centre was to house the Business and Economics Faculty in leading-edge teaching and office facilities. That Faculty along with UW’s Professional, Applied and Continuing Education Programs occupy this building. Amenities include an attractive student lounge and upbeat café, as well as a partnership with the Plug In Institute of Contemporary Art, with public art displayed throughout the building.<sup>79</sup>

### Downtown Commons

Downtown Commons is a 14-storey, 112,000 square foot, apartment tower. The \$31-million project began construction in early 2015<sup>80</sup> and opened in fall 2016. It has generated an estimated \$50 million worth of economic activity in the Winnipeg region. This mixed-used, mixed-income residential development contains 102 apartments (including one-, two- and three-bedroom options). There are 56 affordable units: 46 Manitoba Affordable units, (32 of which receive rent geared to income supplements, and include units reserved for UW students with families and 15 for immigrant students with families; five for Syrian refugee families; and another five units rented at CMHC affordable rates (discounted to 90% of market). The other 56

units are offered to students and the community at large at market-rate rents, including 18 units with premium rents. Downtown Commons also includes a second floor devoted to the tenant community, with a lounge, terrace, meeting room and smudging area. Promoting sustainable urban transportation, the building also offers an electric car charger, an electric co-op car and a secure bike rack.

At the building’s launch, President Trimbee remarked: “High quality, affordable housing makes education more accessible,

particularly for non-traditional students from under-represented communities such as parents who are juggling family life and studies.”<sup>81</sup> The Managing Director has noted that Downtown Commons was substantially occupied within three months and there is a “pretty significant waiting list.”<sup>82</sup> The largest

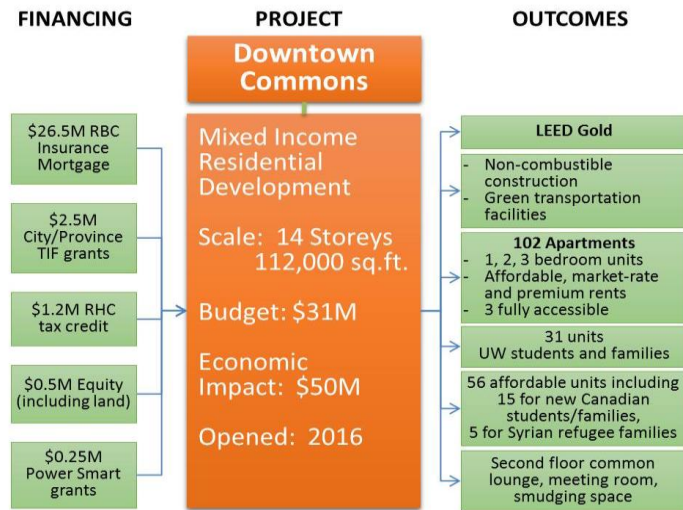


Figure 14: Downtown Commons

<sup>79</sup> University of Winnipeg, Buhler Centre, Winnipeg, no date [Link](#)

<sup>80</sup> M. McNeill, Innovative U of W project offers housing for multitude of income levels, Winnipeg Free Press, June 23, 2015 [Link](#)

<sup>81</sup> University of Winnipeg, Downtown Commons Grand Opening, Winnipeg, September 23, 2016 [Link](#)

<sup>82</sup> M. McNeill, Downtown Commons: the sequel, Winnipeg Free Press, August 14, 2017 [Link](#). Given this unmet demand, Downtown Commons is the model being pursued by UWCRC 2.0 for a second mixed use, mixed-income residential development, on Colony Street nearby. The Colony Street project is designed to create 119 units; 46 of which will be rented at affordable rates



financing component for Downtown Commons was a \$26.5-million mortgage from a private vendor, RBC Insurance,<sup>83</sup> supported by a provincial loan guarantee, which was offered on terms that were competitive with those available through the provincial borrowing authority. By successfully negotiating these terms with RBC Insurance, the UWCRC limited direct pressures on the public purse, which was received favourably by the government of the day. The advice to go through this private mortgage route was contributed by a Board member of the Corporation.

### Duckworth Centre

Another early project that UWCRC managed for the University involved an expansion of a fitness facility at the Duckworth Centre, a multi-use facility on campus. This expansion

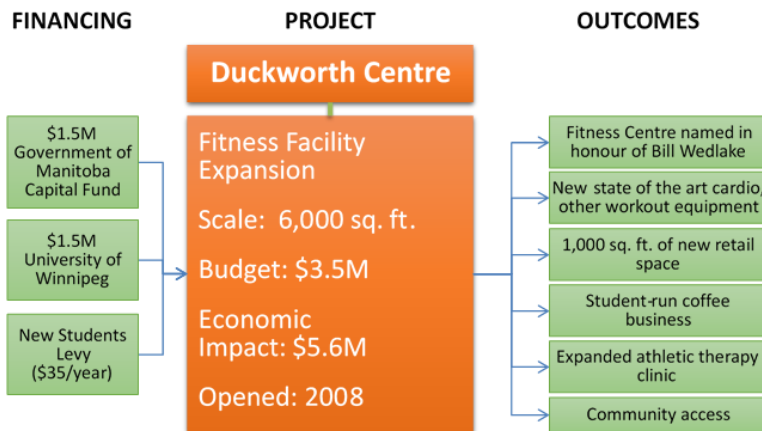


Figure 15: Duckworth Centre

included new, state of the art cardio and other workout equipment, new retail space, a student-run coffee business, an expanded athletic therapy clinic and policy opening the facility to the community. Not only was the purpose of this project to upgrade the facilities and equipment, it was part of a broader effort to reduce the barriers between UW and residents of the downtown core.

### Leatherdale Hall

One recent project for which UWCRC served as developer and project manager for the University was the on-campus addition to the university's iconic Wesley Hall, the Leatherdale Hall expansion. Led by a \$2.5 million donation by the Leatherdale family and a campaign that raised an additional \$1.5 million from other local donors and alumni, this project created a 150-person, multi-use space open to community use and re-opened a popular canteen. This is another project that benefited from the expertise and administrative capacity of the University of Winnipeg Foundation.

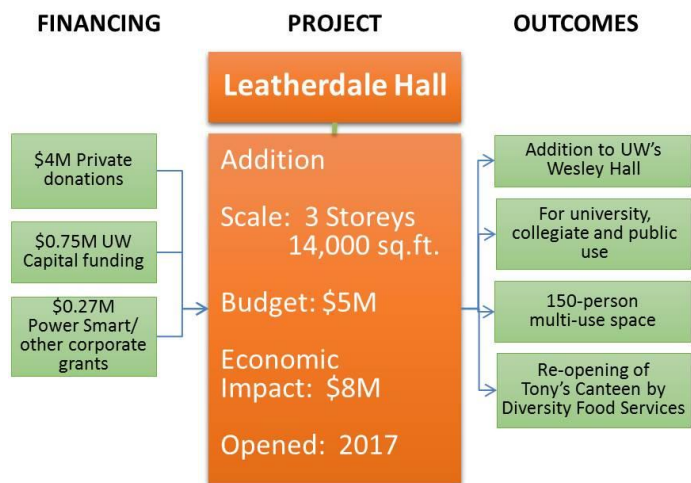
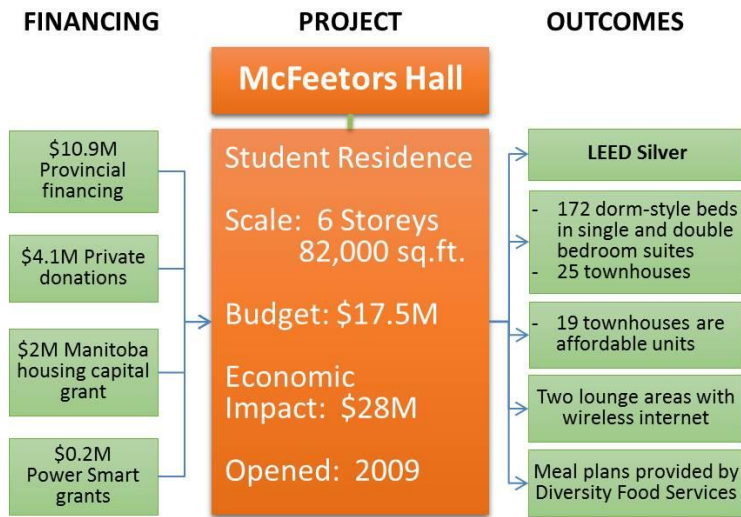


Figure 16: Leatherdale Hall

<sup>83</sup> UWCRC, Downtown Commons, [Website](#), 2018

### McFeetors Hall: Great-West Life Student Residence

As its inaugural newly-built real estate project, UWCRC developed and constructed the University of



**Figure 17: McFeetors Hall: Great-West Life Student Residence**

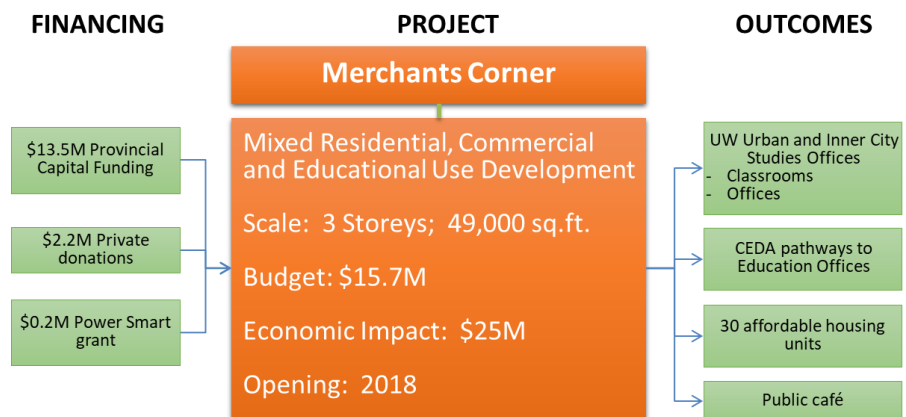
Winnipeg’s McFeetors Hall, a crucial piece of the strategy to revitalize the campus while meeting expanded student numbers. It opened in 2009, which was also the first operating year of Diversity Food Services, which assumed management of the residence cafeteria and served resident students with mandatory meal plans. Among the 172 dorm-style beds and 25 townhouses in this six-story, 82,000-square foot, LEED Silver building are 19 affordable townhouse units as well as two fully accessible two-bedroom apartments and four fully accessible

dorm rooms. Each floor offers one room that is wheel-chair accessible. There is Braille on all signage for appliances in common spaces.<sup>84</sup> Nearly \$11 million in provincial financing was central to the construction of this project. Other financing components included significant private donations from the McFeetors family and Great-West Life, his former employer, as well as grants from Manitoba Housing and the Power Smart program.

### Merchants Corner Hotel

Working with the North End Community Renewal Corporation and UW’s Department of Urban and Inner-City Studies, UWCRC has served as developer and project manager for the southern portion of the Merchants Corner

redevelopment. The structure on the south side of the site is a three-story, mixed use development that houses the University’s Department of Urban and Inner-City Studies and the non-profit CEDA-Pathways to Education, a tutoring and support program for early-teen youth.<sup>85</sup> The property also offers 13 affordable



**Figure 18: Merchants Corner Hotel**

<sup>84</sup> University of Winnipeg, McFeetors Hall Fast Facts, Winnipeg, no date [Link](#)

<sup>85</sup> CBC News, Construction begins to convert Merchants Hotel into affordable housing, September 16, 2015 [Link](#)

housing units in addition to the 17 that have been developed by the Province on the northern portion of the site. In addition, there are common spaces for use by the local community.<sup>86</sup> A Steering Committee has been planning uses of the development and includes representation from Indigenous Elders, the two development corporations, CEDA-Pathways, SEED Winnipeg (which partners with UWCR on Diversity Food Services), Winnipeg Housing Renewal Corporation, Manitoba Housing, the City of Winnipeg and other provincial and municipal government agencies.<sup>87</sup> Some 86% of the costs of the project were covered by provincial capital funding.<sup>88</sup>

### Rice Centre (491 Portage Avenue)

At the request of the University, the first major initiative of UWCR was to purchase a major interest in a nine-storey office tower at 491 Portage Avenue, known today as the Rice Centre, on the eastern edge of the UW campus. The building was valued at \$9.7 million in 2005 and was originally owned by three partners, including a majority owner with a 50% interest and two partners with a 25% stake each. Structured as a share purchase, the Corporation bought one of the 25% interests for \$2.4 million. Since UWCR was only then starting up and had very few assets and modest cash reserves, this purchase, completed in 2006, was financed by a loan from Manulife Insurance Company, nearly \$500,000 in charitable contributions from the two remaining partners, a small charitable contribution from a UW donor, and a smaller contribution from the vendor of the 25% that the Corporation purchased.

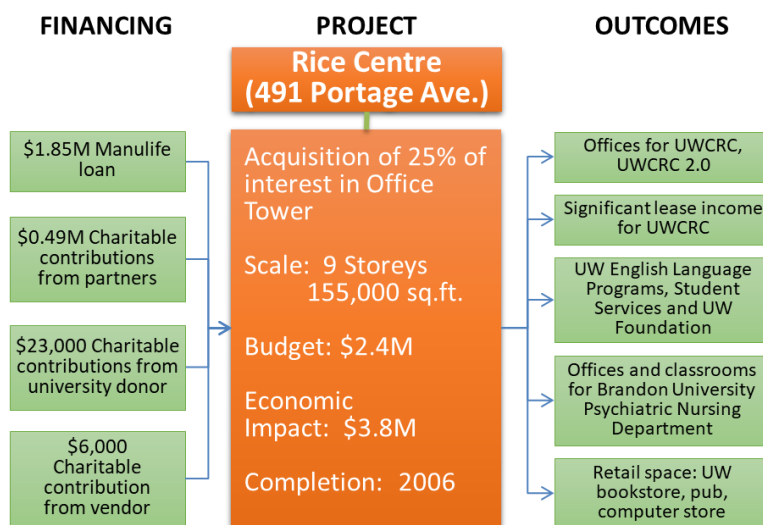


Figure 19: Rice Centre

UWCR located its offices in the tower. In 2009, the Greyhound bus operation left the complex and its space was converted for retail purposes, including a bookstore, pub and computer store. Other lease holders in the tower included the University of Winnipeg Foundation (which was a key player in structuring this deal), UW Student Services, the University’s language programs and, later, Brandon University’s Psychiatric Nursing program. In terms of outcomes, the departure of Greyhound removed a

barrier between the campus and the community. Partial ownership of the building also gave UWCR positive cash flow and enabled it to pledge this asset as security against financing for future projects. Indeed, it marked the first time that the Corporation became an owner and a property manager, roles it would return to more than a decade later with the Downtown Commons and the new 2.0 projects.

<sup>86</sup> CBC News, Merchants Hotel closer to ‘transformative’ affordable housing, education in the North End, March 25, 2017 [Link](#)

<sup>87</sup> The Merch, website, undated [Link](#)

<sup>88</sup> UWCR, Merchants Corner Hotel, website, 2017 [Link](#)

### Richardson College for the Environment and Science Complex

Nearly 2,000 students, faculty, staff and visitors make use of this state-of-the-art teaching and research facility that houses three science departments, more than 30 laboratories, a four-storey atrium, a rooftop greenhouse and a high-end restaurant run by Diversity Food Services. With its computer-programmed air flow system for the labs and heat-recovery technology, the building captures, cleans, and recirculates air, gaining significant energy savings in the process.<sup>89</sup> About half of the financing for this project came from a \$32-million provincial government grant with an additional \$18 million coming from federal infrastructure funds.

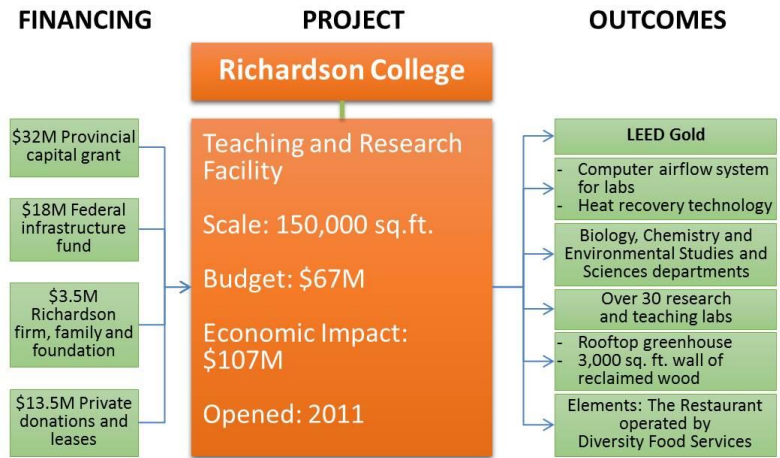


Figure 20: Richardson College

The Richardson family, through several channels, contributed \$3.5 million with other private donations and specialty leases accounting for another \$13.5 million. In 2015, Richardson College achieved LEED Gold certification, one of only 25 buildings in Manitoba at that time to have attained that status. Today, together with the Axworthy Health and RecPlex, the College is one of two LEED Gold buildings in the UWCR portfolio. Also in 2015, the Richardson complex won first place in the Technology Awards of the American Society of Heating, Refrigeration, and Air-Conditioning Engineers.<sup>90</sup>

### UWSA Day Care

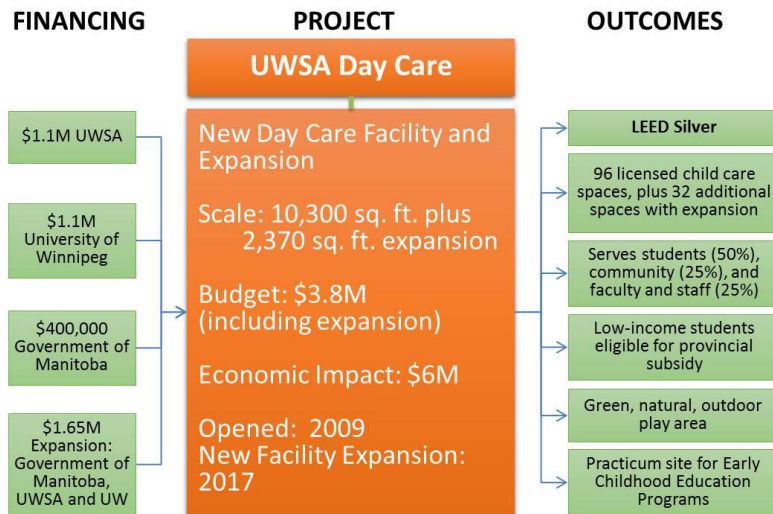


Figure 21: UWSA Day Care

In 2008-2009, UWCR managed the construction of a new day care facility adjacent to the new McFeetors Residence. Responding to a growing student population, especially those with children, the new centre provided for 96 licensed child care spaces. The day care serves students (who are allocated 50% of the spaces), the community (25%) and faculty and staff (25%). Involving a number of complexities and delays, the project was financed by contributions from the University

<sup>89</sup> University of Winnipeg, Richardson College for the Environment and Science Complex-Fast Facts, Winnipeg, 2014 [Link](#); B. Bellamy, New Science Centre a work of art, Winnipeg Free Press, June 27, 2011 [Link](#); and University of Winnipeg, Historic Grand Opening of Richardson College for the Environment and Science Complex, June 27, 2011 [Link](#)

<sup>90</sup> Winnipeg Free Press, Richardson College at U of W earns LEED Gold certification, September 28, 2015 [Link](#)

of Winnipeg Students' Association (UWSA), the University of Winnipeg, and the Government of Manitoba. In 2017, the day care underwent an expansion worth nearly \$1.17 million, adding 32 more child-care spaces, with funding from the same three sources.

## UWCRC 2.0 Projects

Through UWCRC 2.0, the Corporation is also pursuing four major projects whose combined value could reach nearly \$150 million, which would, in turn, generate about \$240 million in economic impact. All of these projects draw on the Downtown Commons model, proposing to build new, mixed-use, mixed-income residential towers with 25% to 50% of their units being designated affordable. Furthermore, all of the projects would be designed to high LEED standards and would also include provisions for community use and retail, social-enterprise, educational programs, art and culture facilities (e.g. art galleries) and other community tenancies. In each case, UWCRC 2.0 and UWCRC would serve as developer, project manager, property manager and owner. The fees accruing to the Corporation from these various roles in the pre-construction, construction and post-construction phases of each project would stabilize the finances and staffing complement of UWCRC and position the Corporation to continue to grow and return revenue to the University.

### 290 Colony Street

In 2017, design work began on 290 Colony Street, a UWCRC 2.0 project in which the Corporation is serving as developer and project manager, and, post-construction, owner of the property. The project is a 14-storey mixed-use residential tower with retail and shared space on the ground floor. There will be 119 units, 46 of which will be affordable by provincial regulations. The business model for the tower is based on that of the Downtown Commons project. The bulk of the financing for the project is being provided by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. UWCRC 2.0 began construction on this project in summer 2018.

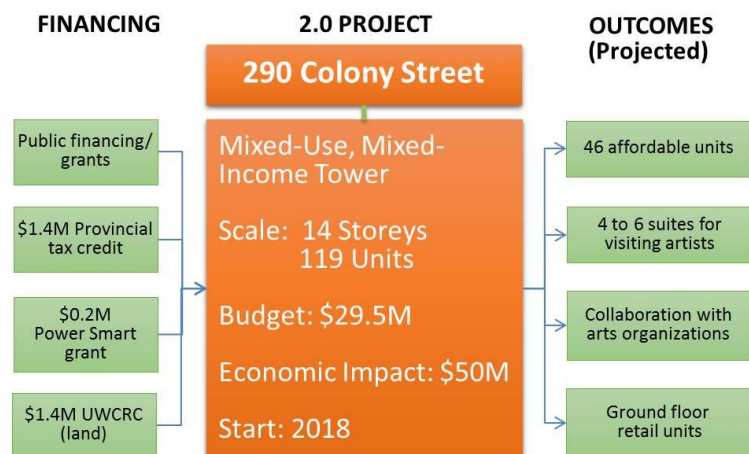


Figure 22: 290 Colony Street

### Brandon University

In 2017-2018, through UWCRC 2.0, the Corporation was contracted on a fee-for-service basis by Brandon University to prepare a feasibility study on options for the development of the downtown campus in that city, and to support consultations with university and community stakeholders on

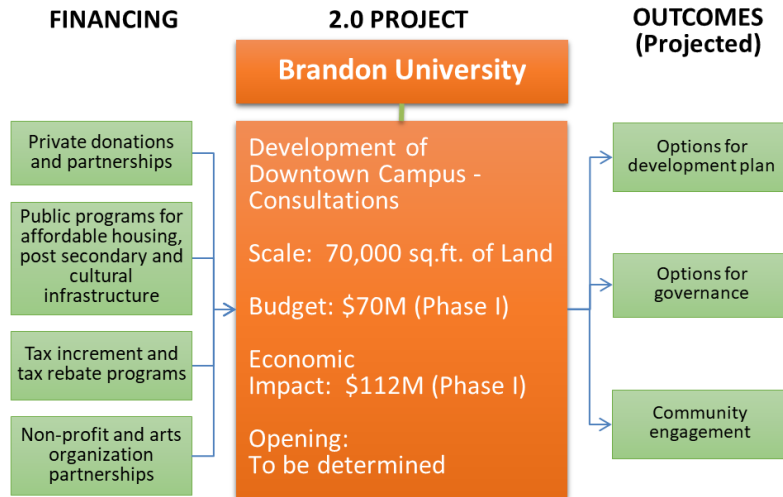


Figure 23: Brandon University

associated options and implications. In both of the two main scenarios of the feasibility study for the initiative, a mixed-use residential tower was proposed as a centrepiece of the downtown development. The business model for the tower was based on that of the Downtown Commons. This past summer, Brandon University issued a development RFP for a residential, commercial and university infrastructure project on its downtown campus.

### West Broadway Commons (All Saints)

The third new project being actively pursued by UWCRC 2.0 is the West Broadway Commons, and is being undertaken as a joint venture with All Saints Anglican Church. Here too the Corporation serves as project developer, project manager and, post-construction, joint owner. The focus of this \$28.7-million project is the construction of a mixed-use, mixed-income, commercial/residential tower, also based on the Downtown Commons model. With

110 units, 56 of which will be affordable, the tower will be highly energy efficient and will support green transport options (i.e. transit, car sharing and cycling). The project will also involve renovations and improvements to the church annex. The financing strategy for this project, combines various government financing, funding and tax credit supports, supplemented by private donations, a foundation impact- investment, and an energy grant from Manitoba Hydro.

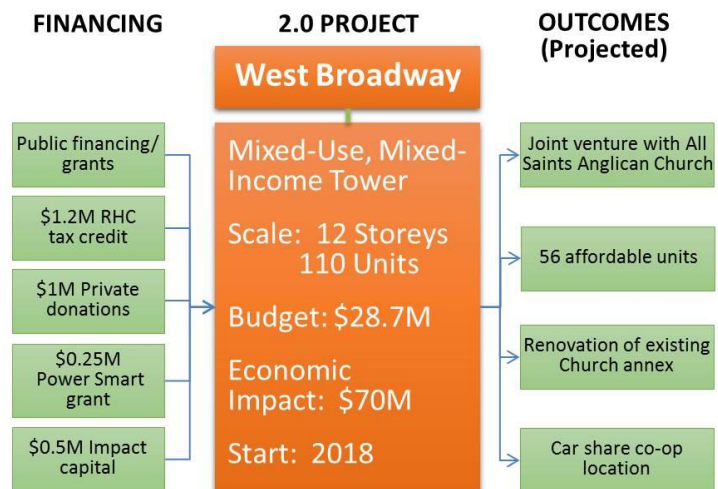


Figure 24: West Broadway Commons

### Forks Railside Housing Project

In 2016, UWCRC pre-qualified to participate in the new Forks Railside Housing Project led by the non-profit Forks Renewal Corporation (FRC), which aims to spur \$250 million worth of mixed-use,



Figure 25: Forks Railside Housing Project

sustainable, residential development on the Forks site just outside the downtown core. In 2017, UWCRC responded to a request for proposals by proposing the design, construction and management of several six-storey buildings worth \$45 million. After a detailed review process, FRC invited UWCRC to design, build and own a \$19.5 million, 65-unit mixed-use, mixed income building on the Forks site with 30% affordable, 30% market

and 30% premium units. UWCRC is presently negotiating with a major non-profit partner for this project. The new building would offer live-work units to artists and professionals and would be integrated into the broader geothermal heating system planned for the larger Forks development.

## Environmental Sustainability

By catalyzing the design and construction of two new buildings that achieved LEED Gold certification (Axworthy RecPlex and Richardson College) and three others that were certified LEED Silver (McFeetors, Buhler and the UWSA Day Care), UWCRC has performed at a very high level in terms of advancing environmental sustainability on the University of Winnipeg’s downtown campus. In fact, this green out-performance in real estate was crucial in enabling the University to exceed its 2012 and 2016 Kyoto commitments and reducing its ecological footprint while it was expanding its infrastructure. The greenest of all of its developments in the Corporation’s portfolio is Richardson College, which features computer-controlled air flow, heat-recovery technology, reclaimed wood and a rooftop greenhouse. Moreover, the UWCRC’s engineering team employed a lean integrated project delivery approach and target value design to deliver one of North America’s most energy efficient laboratories.<sup>91</sup> For these and other contributions, together with the natural-food procurement and products of Diversity Food Services, UWCRC won the UW Campus Sustainability Recognition Award for 2014.

## 5.8 Results

The social real estate activities of the University of Winnipeg Community Renewal Corporation have generated important results at significant scale. Highlights include:

<sup>91</sup> M. Guy: [Lean Project Vignette](#), [Shift2lean.ca](#), and Target Value Design: An Assessment of the RCFE Project, LeanLab.ca, March 2, 2016 [Link](#)

- 1) *New market:* By assembling a portfolio of more than \$200 million in mixed-use university and residential properties, UWCRC has demonstrated that there is a market for social real estate developments in the inner city that private developers aren't interested in and for which governments need help in mobilizing matching funds. The Corporation had to create the new market in order to prove that it exists.
- 2) *New access for the community:* A variety of projects, most notably the Axworthy recreational facility, but also the Buhler Centre's art gallery and Merchants Corner's common space, provide new access points for community groups to University infrastructure, with more formal partnership arrangements under-girding some of these relationships.
- 3) *New space:* The Corporation has catalyzed the design and construction and subsequent usage of nearly 650,000 square feet of new, green facilities across the University's downtown campus. Its three new projects in the planning stages by UWCRC 2.0 would bring it close to the benchmark of producing one million square feet of new space by 2020, only 15 years after the establishment of the Corporation.
- 4) *New housing:* Through three projects in particular—Downtown Commons, McFeetors Hall and Merchants Corner—UWCRC built 141 new housing units. In addition, the residence provided 172 dorm-style beds in single- and double-bedroom suites. The new projects planned for the downtown core, and another at the Forks, would add 294 additional units to the Corporation's Winnipeg portfolio, bringing its projected total to 435 housing units by 2021.
- 5) *New affordable housing:* Integrated into the same three developments were 88 affordable housing units, making UWCRC a major social-housing developer in the inner city. With UWCRC 2.0's construction of the planned Colony Street and West Broadway Commons (All Saints) towers, and another 20 affordable units in a potential building at the Forks, the Corporation would add another 66 to 122 affordable units to its downtown affordable housing stock, bringing its total to more than 200, or about 40% to 45% of all of its units.
- 6) *Economic impact:* Using standard multipliers for public infrastructure projects, the direct, indirect and induced effects of the real estate portfolio are significant and are estimated to be between \$320 million and \$360 million, primarily benefiting Winnipeg and southern Manitoba.
- 7) *Increased energy efficiency:* Through its design and construction of five LEED-certified buildings, UWCRC has significantly increased energy efficiency, and reduced its ecological footprint. Richardson College is the most advanced example in this regard.
- 8) *New green building practices:* In the work on Richardson College, in particular, the Corporation supported the testing of lean project delivery and target value design in achieving best-in-class energy efficiency gains for laboratories and other facilities.
- 9) *New revenue models:* At the level of individual projects, the Downtown Commons model of mixed-income residential development that generates revenue from premium and market tenants, as well as those with subsidies is a breakthrough initiative. Moreover, assuming normal maintenance expenses and reasonable rent increases, these revenue streams will continue to yield valuable income for the Corporation for decades to come.
- 10) *New tenant living services:* Residential towers with a mix of income, cultural and ethnic groups need a specialized kind of property management that is sensitive to the dynamics within and across tenant groups and can manage diverse perspectives and possible tensions. With Downtown Commons, especially, UWCRC is testing ways of delivering these services.



## 5.9 Challenges

There are several challenges that have been faced by the University of Winnipeg Community Renewal Corporation in the conduct of its social real estate work. Some of the challenges worth noting are as follows:

- 1) *Knowledge:* Real estate design, development and construction, project management and post-construction management, are all specialized areas of professional and business practice that require advanced skills and knowledge of architecture, engineering, construction, finance and management. And even more specialized are social and green real estate projects. It has taken some time for UWCRC to build and prove its capacities in these competencies. It is a permanent task to continue to renew and improve this knowledge base through staff development, new hires and thoughtful use of experts and sub-contractors. One valuable source of advice and knowledge development has been the developers and other construction professionals on the Corporation's Board of Directors.
- 2) *Finance:* Much has been said already about the challenges faced by the Corporation in navigating a changing policy context over time. This requires constant agility and intelligence gathering, even in a well-networked place like Winnipeg, on the ebbs and flows of funding programs for social and affordable housing, infrastructure, Indigenous affairs, inner-city and higher education. It also requires both the vision and practical skills to design, sell and close customized financing packages for new developments. This calls for a high-performing leadership team.
- 3) *Land:* Access to land is another factor constraining the Corporation's growth and replication efforts. In its first decade, UWCRC had good access to land because it was an instrument of the University and its projects were all on University land or land that could be acquired by UW. Inside the downtown core, affordable land is in short supply. The prices for land that is available are driven upwards by private developers in a scarce market.
- 4) *Revenue:* Some revenue sources take time to activate, and sometimes, don't yield meaningful results at all. The Corporation is poised to engage networks of churches (e.g. the Catholic Church and its parishes and social services in Manitoba) rather than individual congregations. It will require careful staff planning to approach larger aggregations of potential partners and clients among religious organizations. The pace of market development is also slow with First Nations, whose decision-making cycles can be affected by local politics, changes to funding programs, and even weather and transportation. While the Indigenous Liaison staff person (who is also the Chief Financial Officer) on the Corporation's senior management team is generating good consulting income, there have been no big capital projects to date in that sector. This, too, will take time and effort.
- 5) *Succession:* The current Managing Director is expected to retire in the next three to five years. The Chief Operating Officer is well-positioned to assume this role and is back-stopped by a strong professional staff. The current Managing Director has brought, and continuously strengthened, his very unique skill-set in law, finance, social business, community development and real estate. With the Corporation, he has honed his fundraising and deal-making skills and built a wide range of institutional, business, professional and policy networks at the local, provincial and national levels. For UWCRC to continue its successful path forward in social real estate, the organization's succession plan will need to include ways and means of ensuring that

these capacities can be accessed through a combination of the Managing Director, senior staff, Board and consultants.

## 5.10 Lessons

The social real estate work of UWCRC and now UWCRC 2.0 has been varied, scaled and effective in delivering multi-dimensional sustainability to the University community and to a range of stakeholders outside the campus. While this experience provides a host of rich insights, seven lessons in particular are worth noting:

- 1) *Proving market demand:* There is a market for green, social real estate projects on campus and in the inner city at large. UWCRC showed how a multi-dimensional approach to real estate design and construction could renew UW's downtown campus and, at the same time, generate benefits for the broader community. Partnerships with non-profits, architects, construction companies, governments and financial institutions demonstrated tangible market demand. Now, the early work of UWCRC 2.0 is beginning to tap demand by a much larger market for green, social real estate development, including among other higher education institutions, churches and First Nations.
- 2) *Demonstrating the value of a special entity:* A special-purpose non-profit, charitable development corporation can mobilize the human and financial resources necessary to generate multi-dimensional sustainability outcomes from a scaled social real estate portfolio. The experience of UWCRC has shown that focusing the knowledge of developers and community organizations as well as the University through the entity's Board of Directors is an efficient and effective means of pooling and accessing specialized expertise. Such expert knowledge has enabled the Corporation to, among other things, forge solid partnerships, design integrated projects, achieve green standards, secure favourable and appropriate financing, and increase access to facilities for the neighbouring community.
- 3) *Building green, affordable housing:* Deploying this special entity also showed that the University could build affordable housing in a way that did not disadvantage it institutionally and also advanced its environmental sustainability agenda. The approaches used for the Downtown Commons and Merchants Corner demonstrated how affordable housing units could be integrated with market-rate units (both mid-range and high-end), together with space for non-profits and university departments. All told, UWCRC's building of nearly 90 new affordable housing units was a significant contribution to affordable housing stock in the downtown core.
- 4) *Deploying an array of key skills:* The UWCRC development team—especially its managing director, chief operating and financial officers and project managers—brought to each social real estate project an array of proven skills in forging partnerships with the non-profit, public and private sectors, constructing and securing financing packages, closing deals, and engaging and supervising architects, engineers and construction companies. Moreover, project budgets must be structured in such a way as to pay for staff time to provide these services during the 18-24 months of construction for individual projects. In addition, providing post-construction property management and programming services, especially for buildings with diverse occupants with special needs (e.g. Indigenous and new Canadian renters), also requires specialized skills—and must be paid for, as well. UWCRC and UWCRC 2.0 have found ways of doing all this.

- 5) *Benefiting from university leadership support:* Even with careful and extensive stakeholder consultations, new building construction can be controversial. Especially in a fiscal environment in which there are serious constraints on provincial funding for universities, and hence real limits on faculty and staff hiring, capital projects can attract opposition from several quarters. This was the case for a few of the projects built by UWCRC, but strong and continuing support from the University President, Vice-President Finance and Administration, and the Board of Regents enabled the Corporation to proceed with its development work. In fact, many of its builds created state-of-the art research and teaching facilities for faculty members and did not impinge on the main operating budget of the University in any material way. But managing these politics had to be led by the University senior executive team.

The role of the University of Winnipeg Foundation should be recognized here, as well. The Foundation received, stewarded and managed the major private donations received for the real estate projects. It was an important advantage to UWCRC to benefit from the expertise and systems of the Foundation. This is one of a number of advantages the Corporation has enjoyed as a consequence of its status as an affiliate of the University of Winnipeg.

- 6) *Managing an evolving policy environment:* The cap placed on tuition fees by the previous NDP provincial government and the current reduction in the annual operating grant by the current Progressive Conservative government have both severely reduced the University of Winnipeg's room for maneuver to improve its programs and services. While UWCRC accessed a range of provincial programs promoting social housing and green construction under the previous provincial government, the present government is currently reviewing and has put on hold such grant and loan-based programs, preferring to use tax credits to advance social policy. Since its inception, therefore, UWCRC has had to navigate and manage changing policies at both the provincial and federal levels in order to find ways of putting together adequate and appropriate financing packages for its social real estate projects.
- 7) *Creating diverse revenue streams:* Given tight fiscal conditions inside and outside the University, UWCRC has had to be continuously disciplined and creative in securing diverse revenue streams to sustain its operations. In its social real estate portfolio, that has meant generating consulting fees on the design and construction phases of its projects. Other sources of business revenue have included rental income and property management fees, which could, potentially, grow over time. It is also possible for the Corporation to become a more active buyer and seller in the real estate market and realize gains on its sales. In any case, the task of finding the money to sustain and even expand its real estate operations is a permanent and crucial one.

## 5.11 Prospects

The current projects being pursued by UWCRC 2.0 are advancing. At Brandon, a public consultation process surfaced some opposition to the project, but also galvanized important interest and support. Brandon University has recently issued an RFP for a development project in the city's downtown, building on UWCRC 2.0's work and positioning that project to proceed. The 290 Colony Street project has received confirmation of CMHC direct financing support, while the West Broadway Commons project awaits funding and financing approvals. UWCRC's proposal to the Forks Railside Housing Project is being reviewed.

Still, these and other even newer initiatives, with Indigenous communities and various church denominations, are confirming that there is a substantial market for the Corporation's services inside

and outside Winnipeg. The Corporation is advising on the design and construction of a small mall on a First Nations reserve. And discussions have begun relating other community-based religious and health organizations, which could be another source of new business for UWCRC 2.0.

In the short to medium term, UWCRC must maintain a broad menu of strategies, models and instruments that must be combined and tailored to the unique needs and conditions of each individual project. “Every project is different,” says the Corporation’s Managing Director. “And each financing package is as varied as the projects are.” In light of the continuous changes in the housing-policy environment, flexibility and agility are imperative for an organization like UWCRC.

There are other positive signs, as well. In the short term, interest rates remain generally low. For certain projects, good financing terms can still be obtained from banks, credit unions or insurance companies in the private market. Moreover, using its status as a university affiliate, UWCRC can sometimes access guarantee financing at the same preferential rate the University receives from the provincial government.

At the same time, interest in impact investing is growing among foundations, high net-worth families, financial institutions and corporations. What UWCRC needs, however, is access to impact investments in the form of grants, loans and guarantees that are *at appropriate scale*. For example, for a \$25 million build, a \$500,000 impact loan is insufficient; to make a real difference, what is actually required is a loan, on good terms, in the range of \$2 million to \$3 million, in order to lever a robust overall financing package that reduces barriers to thoughtful design, timely construction and viable ongoing management. While the real estate business involves fairly low-risk, hard-asset lending, impact investors must be prepared to engage at this level to make a substantial difference in this important type of social infrastructure.

Plus, there are some positive signals in the policy environment. Notwithstanding its own fiscal constraints, the federal government is engaging more purposefully in Indigenous and affordable housing. New national policy directions may open opportunities to help finance 2.0 projects. The newly created Indigenous Services Canada is now responsible for the capital facilities maintenance program that assists on-reserve housing projects. For its part, CMHC operates an on-reserve First Nations housing fund and a First Nations market housing fund.<sup>92</sup> In addition, CMHC offers a suite of programs in the affordable housing space, including seed funding with a contribution (grant) component, mortgage insurance, and a new direct lending and financing program. CMHC has also recently introduced an affordable rental innovation fund, “to encourage new funding models and innovative building techniques in the rental housing sector.”<sup>93</sup> At the same time, the provincial government appears to remain open to supporting affordable housing initiatives, though its preference is to use tax measures. UWCRC is learning to work with these new trends at both levels of government.

In the long term, the Corporation’s prospects could be very bright, indeed. Full or partial ownership of buildings that generate a perpetual and predictable cash flow from residential and commercial

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<sup>92</sup> Indigenous Services Canada, First Nation On-Reserve Housing Program, Ottawa, 2017 [Link](#)

<sup>93</sup> CMHC, Affordable Rental Innovation Fund, Ottawa, 2016 [Link](#)

tenants—supplemented by government grants and tax credits for ongoing improvements—could sustain the Corporation for decades to come. It has been suggested that the Corporation buy buildings that currently house government departments and agencies, gain new efficiencies on costs through tax-supported retrofits, and serve as a long-term landlord to the public sector on a larger scale. The extent to which UWCRC should build this type of permanent property management of public-sector tenants as a core business line is being considered by the Corporation’s Board of Directors and senior management.

## 5.12 Replication

The University of Winnipeg Community Renewal Corporation is currently pursuing a clear *internal strategy* for replication through the special entity of UWCRC 2.0. Based on the model of the Downtown Commons, UWCRC 2.0 is seeking to replicate that approach at two sites in the downtown core (290 Colony Street and West Broadway Commons), at the Forks Rainside site, and with Brandon University in downtown Brandon. This model could be replicated even more widely through partnerships with other churches and non-profits across Manitoba and beyond. The main constraints on replication are related to financing and funding. With the Manitoba government reviewing its direct funding of affordable housing projects, the Corporation faces significantly reduced access to grant funds from that source, though not necessarily from tax-incented support. UWCRC is now working hard to engage various federal agencies, particularly the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, private lenders and impact investors. The Corporation is making progress on these fronts, but learning about new programs and building new working relationships are labour-intensive and time-consuming tasks. Access to a large-scale, pan-Canadian impact investment fund for social real estate could reduce these barriers and accelerate and widen the downstream sustainability impacts of this work.

## IV Implications for Other Universities

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### 6 Implications for Other Universities

#### 6.1 Overview

The engagement and impacts of the work of the University of Winnipeg Community Renewal Corporation have been inherently place-based, with the Corporation's core mission focused on Winnipeg's inner city of which its downtown campus is part. However, it is also a model that should be of interest to universities and colleges in other cities and towns. UWCRC has demonstrated that it is possible for higher-education institutions to catalyze, at significant scale, multiple forms of sustainability for their own stakeholders as well as the broader communities in which they are located. Two dimensions of the implications for other universities should be considered. One relates to the dissemination, adaptation and replication of the UWCRC model. The other involves mobilizing new sources of capital to enable university development entities to build social infrastructure that will make the greatest impact possible.

#### 6.2 Replicating the Model

The model of the University of Winnipeg Community Renewal Corporation that has been developed and tested by the University of Winnipeg is relevant to a wide range of higher education institutions that seek to promote the sustainable development of the neighbourhoods and regions in which they are located. The core of the model involves a separate, non-profit and charitable corporate instrument mobilizing community talent and knowledge through social enterprise and social real estate to advance a multi-dimensional sustainability that is at once economic, social, environmental, and cultural. Moreover, in the UW case, the Corporation has been obliged to generate its own revenue and has not relied on substantial operating funds from the main University budget.

As the case of UWCRC shows, this approach has generated many benefits for citizens, community organizations, private businesses and governments as well as for students, staff, faculty members and the University as a corporate body. It helps to make inner cities greener, safer and more prosperous. It reduces poverty. It contributes to social peace and reconciliation. Ultimately, the model demonstrates precisely why governments and donors should continue to support public higher education.

So, how could this model be replicated, in practice, on a significant scale? One barrier to replication is lack of *information*. More university and community leaders must be made aware of the creative strategies employed and impressive results achieved by the UWCRC. A second challenge relates to insufficient or underdeveloped *skills* on the part of university and college leaders to actually adapt and execute the model. A third factor that limits full-fledged replication is reluctance by some university administrators to commit to long-term implementation—that is, to at least ten to 15 years—in order to

permit the university development corporation to start up effectively, expand its portfolio, navigate forward, and optimize and manage results.

The following actions are therefore recommended to both address these barriers and accelerate the replication process. Universities and colleges, foundations, private donors, governments and corporations should collaborate to:

- 1) Commission *further research*, in the form of case studies, evaluations and policy analysis on the operations and results of higher-education development corporations that embed community voices and knowledge in their structures and deploy social enterprise and social real estate to achieve multi-dimensional sustainability improvements in their neighbourhoods and regions.
- 2) Design and conduct a *communications campaign* on the structure, methods and benefits of UWCRC and similar organizations in enhancing communities and campuses at the same time; the components of such a campaign should include a dedicated website, social media feeds, blogs, opinion pieces in the mainstream media hooked to current news stories, refereed journal articles, and conference presentations.
- 3) Convene and facilitate *briefing sessions* on the nature and potential of the model for a) university Presidents and their executive teams, and perhaps their Boards of Governors, on an institutional basis; b) the annual conferences of university and college associations, university business officers, research events and other sector meetings; c) relevant anti-poverty, social-economy, educational and cultural community-based organizations in inner cities; and d) various levels of government departments and agencies (local, provincial/state or federal) concerned with poverty, jobs, social inclusion, housing, environment and other relevant policy files.
- 4) Sponsor the creation and dissemination of a *step-by-step guide* to design and implement this model by universities and colleges and their community and government partners; this guide should include examples of feasibility studies, legal structures for businesses and financing packages, joint-venture agreements and property-management contracts, among other tools.
- 5) Design and offer an *executive development training course* for university executives and administrators, community-organization leaders and government policy makers on adapting and executing strategies for social enterprise and social real estate development in both urban and rural settings. This course could be delivered nation-wide through a combination of face to face lectures and group exercises, webinars, podcasts and online discussions.<sup>94</sup> A version of this course could also be tailored to international markets in the United States and Europe first, and perhaps later to new-power markets such as China and India and Brazil as well as emerging markets in Africa.

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<sup>94</sup> In Canada, one possible route to explore here could be a collaboration with the Centre for Higher Education Research and Development at the University of Manitoba, which runs a suite of certificate programs for university and college administrators [Link](#); other potential collaborators in this course might include Universities Canada [Link](#), Colleges and Institutes Canada [Link](#), the Canadian Association of University Business Officers (CAUBO) [Link](#), the Canadian Community Economic Development Network [Link](#), and other philanthropic, community, immigrant and Indigenous networks and associations

- 6) Support efforts to *franchise*<sup>95</sup> elements of the model, particularly Diversity Food Services, in partnership with higher education institutions and community organizations in other Canadian and American cities. This effort would require multi-year grant funding for DFS, UWCRC and SEED to develop a business plan and franchising agreement templates for this set of activities.
- 7) Develop and execute a strategy for engaging a wide range of *impact investors* in understanding and investing in replications of the model. These impact investors would include private foundations, public and community foundations, corporations, financial institutions (banks, insurance companies, credit unions), pension funds, venture funds, and non-profit funds, each with distinct risk tolerance, return expectations and regulatory environments. Engagement with the impact investing sector should focus on concrete examples of investment opportunities in social real estate and social business.

This is an initial list of actions aimed at replicating the UWCRC model. Over time, other actions will emerge. A concerted replication program along these lines should be capable of producing significant results. It is not unreasonable to expect that, by 2030, the target year of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, this work will have resulted in \$1 billion in public and private funds mobilized by universities and their community partners for social enterprise and social real estate. That would be a meaningful contribution to the achievement of the SDGs.

### 6.3 Building New Investment Vehicles

Another line of action entails universities and colleges collaborating with foundations and governments to set up a *Pan-Canadian impact investment fund for social infrastructure*. There is a need for capital for university-community investments that can match financing components from all levels of government, private donors and the proponent universities themselves. As political parties rotate in and out of government, particularly at the provincial level, multi-level government financing of university-based social infrastructure projects will be uneven at best, and, at worst, will swing from one policy and fiscal extreme to another, rendering public financing of social enterprise and real estate unpredictable and too often incoherent. A new source of impact capital is necessary to reduce uncertainties, consolidate financing packages in a timely manner, and multiply social impacts.

This initiative would, in fact, be focused on Canada and would actually encompass two sub-funds, informed by the UWCRC experience: one for *social enterprise* and another for *social real estate*. The *social enterprise sub-fund* would provide loans and guarantees and other forms of patient capital for start-ups and expansions that adapt and replicate scalable social businesses on university campuses, in food-services in particular but in other areas, as well. Such financing would be paired with grant funds for business advisory services to help local proponents carry out feasibility studies, prepare detailed business plans and financing packages, form university-community partnerships involving local non-profits, and train senior personnel to manage the commercial and social elements of these promising social businesses during their start-up and growth phases. Capital for this sub-fund would be raised

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<sup>95</sup> Social Capital Partners, a social venture group that has been active in Winnipeg, tested a strategy for social franchising that could be relevant to replicating DFS. See K. Harji, *Franchising for Social Good*, Carleton Centre for Community Innovation, Carleton University, Ottawa, 2008 [Link](#); in 2006, Social Capital Partners published its *Franchise Financing Strategy*, which included relevant strategies for replicating DFS [Link](#)



from governments, foundations, high net-worth (HNW) families, venture capital funds, corporations, banks and insurance companies, pension funds and religious and cultural organizations.

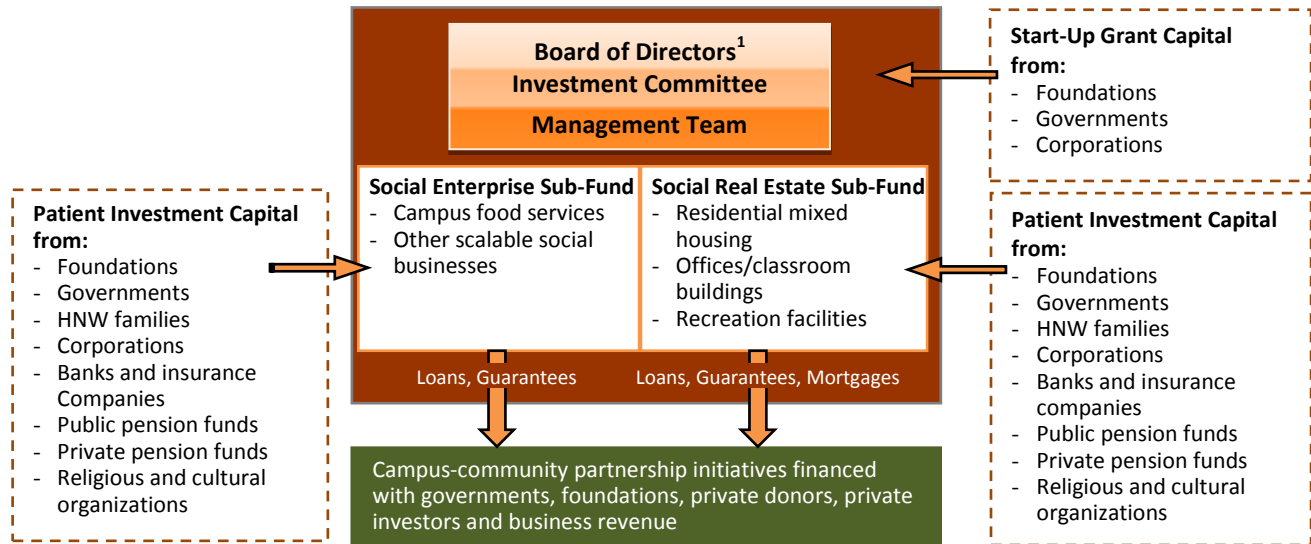
For its part, the *social real estate sub-fund* would pool capital from governments, foundations, HNW families, corporations, banks and insurance companies, and public and private pension funds. It would provide loans, mortgages and other forms of debt financing to university social real estate projects, including student residences that also provide affordable and market housing for the community; classroom and office buildings shared with community-based organizations; and recreation facilities for use by the university and broader community. Both sub-funds would provide patient capital seeking a range of financial returns. The social enterprise sub-fund would offer investors a broad spectrum of returns ranging from market rates to below market rates and even, in a few instances, zero financial return. In contrast, the social real estate sub-fund would generate a range of only market-rate returns for its investors, especially institutions like pension funds that operate within specific regulatory regimes.

It can't be emphasized enough that the impact investments to be offered by this new fund must be at a scale appropriate to make a real, material difference in the financing of major social real estate projects. Such projects can range in size from \$20 million to \$50 million, even more. The money that is most difficult for university developers to find is private capital that is large enough to lever significant public and other funds—and is also patient. The requirement here is for loans of \$1 million to \$3 million over, say, a ten-year repayment period, and 25-year mortgages in the range of \$20 million to \$30 million. These types of impact investments will be pivotal in unlocking other capital from governments, high net-worth families and commercial finance actors.

The UWCRC could play a number of roles in relation to the new social-infrastructure impact fund. First, as a leader in this field, the University of Winnipeg should be invited to sit on an advisory committee to oversee the design and launch of the fund. As a potential investee, UW and/or UWCRC should not be represented on the eventual Board of the fund itself. Second, UWCRC may seek to access investment capital from the new fund to complete financing projects in which it is taking a lead or brokering role in Winnipeg and elsewhere in Manitoba. Finally, UWCRC should be engaged as a key consultant by the new fund and by proponent universities and colleges to advise on structuring financing deals that layer impact capital into financing packages involving several levels of government, private donors and commercial investors.

There are other design features to be considered in planning the fund. For example, there should be a way for the fund to be accessible for multiple, sequential projects by smaller post-secondary institutions in smaller provinces and more rural regions, rather than a large majority of funds being absorbed by the bigger projects of major universities in large metropolitan areas. It also may be useful for the fund to set thematic priorities and to track the performance of investees on, for example, metrics related to affordable housing, employment and training, healthy and affordable food and nutrition, energy and water efficiency, and so on.

Figure 26 depicts the structure of the social infrastructure impact fund proposed here.



<sup>1</sup> Board of Directors would have representation from investment funds, foundations, universities and colleges, the Government of Canada, provincial governments, community-based organizations, and legal and financial professionals

Source: E.T. Jackson, 2018

**Figure 26: Pan-Canadian Social Infrastructure Impact Investment Fund**

## 7 Conclusion

Through its creation and support of its Community Renewal Corporation, and the UWCRC’s many innovations and achievements, the University of Winnipeg has shown how higher education institutions can catalyze multi-dimensional sustainability for themselves and the communities in which they are located. Through authentic, effective partnerships with community-based organizations, professionals, investors and all levels of government, and the advice of a talented and focused Board of Directors, the Corporation has generated significant outcomes in the areas of both social enterprise and social real estate—at meaningful *scale*. And in doing so, UWCRC has made important contributions to the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals, and to bringing inclusive-growth policies alive.

There are no perfect development models, including this one. But the case of the University of Winnipeg Community Renewal Corporation is rich in insights and lessons that can be drawn upon by other universities and colleges to help make the cities and towns where they are based cleaner, fairer, more inclusive and more prosperous. With thoughtful adaptation, its strategies, instruments and tools are *highly replicable*. Further research on other models and experiences, a step-by-step guide, and executive education would do much to widen and accelerate the replication process and, correspondingly, the scale and reach of its impacts. However, to fully optimize these results, one other component is necessary: an impact investment fund for social infrastructure that can provide loans and guarantees for large scale real estate projects as well as patient capital for early-stage and growing social enterprise. Working closely with post-secondary education institutions, foundations are well-positioned to work with other institutional investors, like banks, insurance companies and pension funds, together with high net-worth families, non-profits and governments to drive the design and implementation of this fund.

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## Annex B: Persons Consulted

Jim August, Board Chair, University of Winnipeg Community Renewal Corporation 2.0

Lloyd Axworthy, former President and Vice-Chancellor, University of Winnipeg

Bill Balan, former Vice-President Finance and Administration, University of Winnipeg

Cindy Coker, Director, Diversity Foods Inc.; former Executive Director, SEED Winnipeg Inc.

Wayne Flamand, Chief Financial Officer and First Nations Business Analyst, UWCRC

Kirsten Godbout, Manager of Food Operations, Diversity Food Services Inc.

Murray Guy, CEO, Integrated Designs Inc.

Sherman Kreiner, Managing Director, University of Winnipeg Community Renewal Corporation;  
President, Diversity Foods Inc.

Sandi Mielitz, Member, All Saints Anglican Church

Mark Olson, President and CEO, Landstar Development Corporation

Mala Sachdeva, Principal Consultant, MS Consulting

Annette Trimbee, President and Vice-Chancellor, University of Winnipeg; Board Chair,  
University of Winnipeg Community Renewal Corporation

Ian Vickers, Chief Operating Officer, Diversity Food Services Inc.

## The Author

Edward Jackson is a university professor, management consultant and author specializing in community-university partnerships, social finance, social enterprise and program evaluation. A former associate dean and tenured faculty member in public policy at Carleton University, he has advised foundations, development agencies, governments, universities and non-profits in all regions of the world.