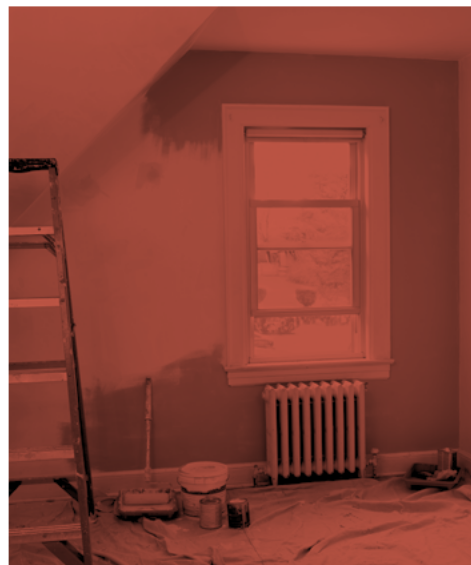


**BOLD
NESS**

**THE
WINNIPEG
BOLDNESS
PROJECT**

NORTH END HOUSING LAB SUPPORTING ACCESS TO SAFE, AFFORDABLE, AND APPROPRIATE HOUSING

**PROTOTYPING FOR CHANGE
FEBRUARY 2022**

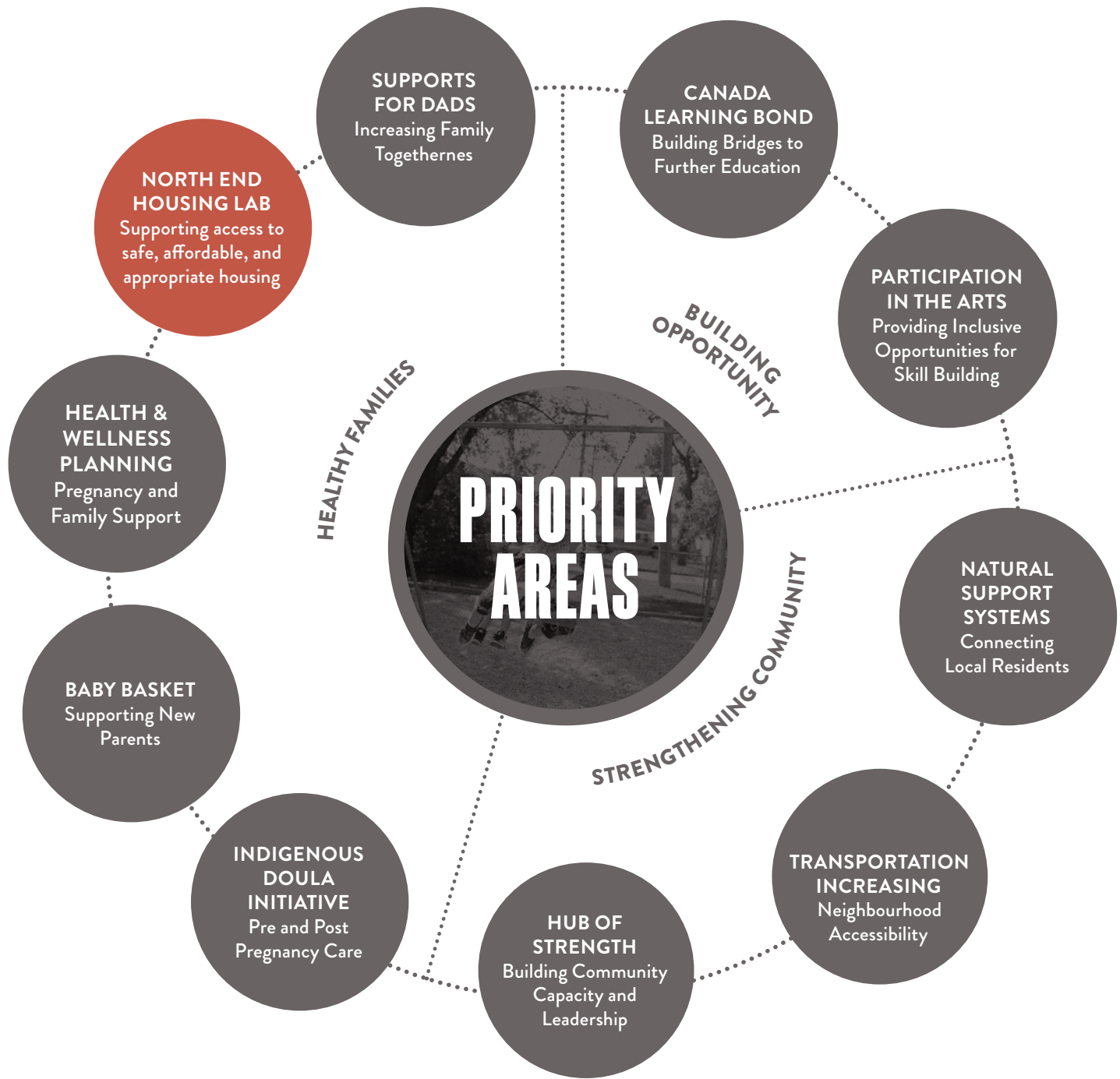




THE WINNIPEG BOLDNESS PROJECT IS WORKING
TOWARDS A BOLD GOAL:
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES IN POINT DOUGLAS WILL
EXPERIENCE DRAMATICALLY IMPROVED WELLBEING
IN ALL ASPECTS OF SELF: PHYSICAL, EMOTIONAL,
MENTAL, AND SPIRITUAL.

We are working with residents and groups in this neighbourhood to test new ideas to support the wellbeing of children and families. These prototypes which we are calling Proofs of Possibilities (POPs), support a vision for change in our community. We are exploring possibilities in the following areas:

PROOFS OF POSSIBILITIES



NORTH END HOUSING LAB SUPPORTING ACCESS TO SAFE, AFFORDABLE, AND APPROPRIATE HOUSING

COMMUNITY VISION

North End residents of all incomes, ages, backgrounds, and physical abilities have a safe place to call home.

The North End is home to a diverse range of families, including many Indigenous and newcomer households, with a tremendous community spirit. However, the housing and infrastructure in the community does not match what the community needs.

In Spring 2019, the Winnipeg Boldness Project and End Homelessness Winnipeg partnered with Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), The J.W. McConnell Family Foundation, and the Winnipeg Poverty Reduction Council to form the North End Housing Lab. The lab followed a social lab process as it explored the housing situation in the North End.

FORMING A DECISION-MAKING GROUP

The lab began by forming an Indigenous decision-making group to guide and share insight throughout the process:

- Belinda Vandenbroeck – Elder
- Damon Johnston – Aboriginal Council of Winnipeg
- Dana Riccio-Arabe – Executive Director, Wahbung Abinoonjiig Inc.
- Diane Roussin – Project Director, The Winnipeg Boldness Project



- Dodie Jordaan – Executive Director, Ka Ni Kanichihk
- Jarred Baker – Program Manager, Eagle Urban Transition Centre
- Levi Foy – Executive Director, Sunshine House
- Lucille Bruce – CEO, End Homelessness Winnipeg
- Jill Andres – Creating Value (Facilitator)
- Lissie Rappaport, Manager of Housing Supply, End Homelessness Winnipeg (Notetaker)

DOCUMENT SCAN

Because the community had already been over-consulted on the issue of housing, we focused on reviewing existing housing and homelessness action plans, gender-based analyses and strategies, surveys, task force reports, and housing research projects.

SYSTEMS MAPPING

During summer and fall of 2019, we explored and mapped the interconnected parts of the North End’s housing system with public, private, and community sector participants and discovered areas where transformative action is needed. .

IDENTIFYING PROTOTYPE AREAS

We aligned on four prototype areas to guide future work in supporting housing in the North End.



WHY DID WE FOCUS ON HOUSING?

A family’s home plays an integral role in children’s development. Housing conditions and environmental stress affect children’s physical health, interpersonal relationships, self-esteem, levels of achievement, schooling, and socio-emotional outcomes.

There is also a deeply connected relationship between housing and the child welfare system. Housing is one of the key factors that are considered for apprehension due to neglect, as well as for reunification.

Supporting access to affordable, appropriate, safe, and well-maintained housing is a needed part of supporting children’s healthy development. Reducing the number of Indigenous children in care and keeping families together is action that has been called for by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. Supporting access to safe, affordable, and appropriate housing is an important step in giving children the best care possible.



WHAT BLOCKS ACCESS TO SAFE, AFFORDABLE, AND APPROPRIATE HOUSING?

Racism and discrimination

Indigenous families face racism and discrimination throughout the housing system, including landlords who avoid Indigenous families as tenants, as well as the National Occupancy Standards’ role in determining ‘suitable’ housing for the purposes of reunification. These standards do not align with the living situations of Indigenous families and the housing available to them.

Lack of power and influence

Indigenous people have very little power and influence over the housing system, from the policies that influence what types of housing stock gets built to ownership and management of housing itself. This creates a gap between the housing that is available and the housing that Indigenous families need to thrive.

Mismatch with community needs

The housing available in Point Douglas does not match families’ needs. The community needs housing that can accommodate larger families (e.g., three or more children) and multigenerational families. However, the vacancy rate for 3+ bedroom housing in the North End is 0% (compared with 3.7% for 3+ bedroom housing across Winnipeg). The housing in the North End does not match what the community needs.

Lack of appropriate funding and zoning

Municipal infrastructure in the North End is old and needs major repairs and upgrades. If developers wish to build housing that is more dense than single family homes, it falls to them to upgrade on-site infrastructure. Similarly, while CMHC funding is available to support affordable rentals, the required minimum of 5+ units on a site is more than many sites in the North End can handle. Developers then default to building more single-family homes, rather than the housing that is needed.

Interdependence between Housing and other systems such as Child Welfare and Income Assistance

Income supports such as Employment and Income Assistance (EIA) are tied to family size. Meanwhile, housing is a key part of apprehension and reunification considerations. A single parent living on EIA whose children are apprehended will see their income drop from \$862-\$1,050 per month (depending on the number of children) to \$576 as a single. Reunification depends on being able to provide ‘suitable’ housing, but the parent’s lower income now prevents them from being able to do so.

PUTTING THE CHILD-CENTRED MODEL INTO ACTION

The Child-Centred Model – a way of working for positive change developed by the community of Point Douglas – helps us find the best ways to support access to housing plan.

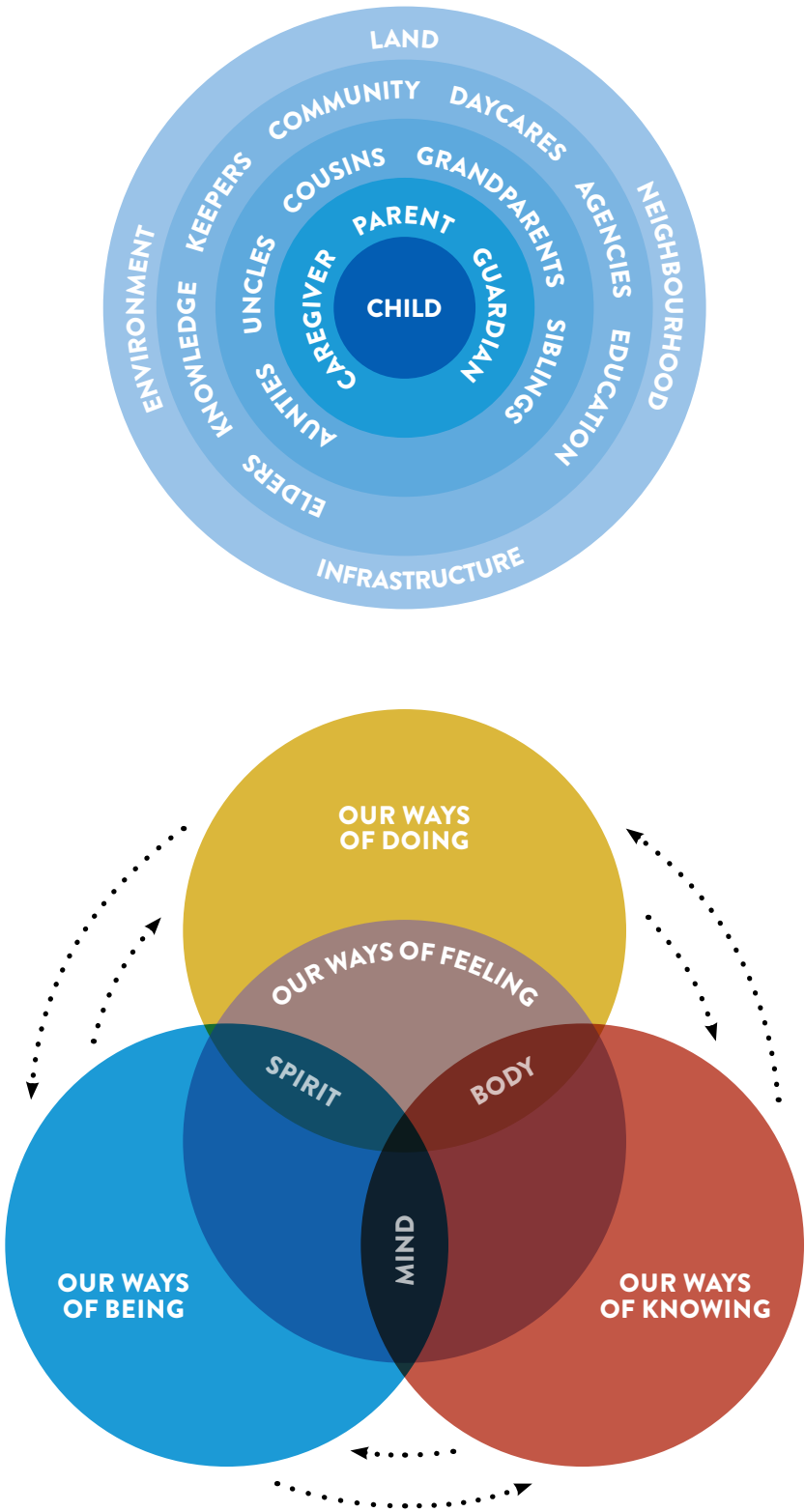
We focus on community-generated solutions rather than replicating existing practices and approaches.

We treat housing as interconnected with children’s wellbeing rather than as a separate infrastructure issue.

We seek to understand the housing that this community needs rather than assuming that a one-size-fits-all approach will work.

When we work with the Child-Centred Model as our guide, we are able to support positive change for children, parents, families, and the community.

To learn more about the Child-Centred Model, read the full report at winnipegboldness.ca/childcentredmodel



“THE DAY I LOST MY KIDS, THAT’S THE DAY I WAS HOMELESS. AND I WAS HOMELESS FOR A COUPLE YEARS. THEY CAME IN AND TOOK MY KIDS AND EVERYTHING WAS SEIZED. ALL THE CHEQUES FOR THE RENT STOPPED. I HAD NOWHERE TO GO.”

“MY LAST PLACE I LIVED IN, IT WAS ALREADY TRASHED WHEN I MOVED IN. THE SINK IN THE WASHROOM WAS BROKEN; THE FLOORS WERE WRECKED. THEN, WHEN I MOVED OUT, THE LANDLORD BLAMED ME AND DIDN’T RETURN MY DEPOSIT.”

“LIVING IN MANITOBA HOUSING HAS GIVEN ME PURPOSE BECAUSE I HAVE SOMEWHERE THAT IS HOME, SOMEWHERE I CAN COUNT ON. I FEEL LUCKY TO HAVE SOMEWHERE.”

“THERE NEEDS TO BE MORE TRANSITIONAL HOUSING AND NOT PUT PEOPLE ON EXTENSIVE WAITING LISTS. ESPECIALLY FOR PEOPLE EXITING CFS (AGING OUT) AND MOMS AND KIDS.”

“DISCRIMINATION OFTEN BEGINS WHEN THE LANDLORD HEARS YOUR ACCENT, OR THEY SEE YOUR FACE, AND THEY KNOW YOU ARE ABORIGINAL.”

The map is a way to summarize what people from different parts of this 'system' have been saying about housing in the North End. It does not tell the whole story, but it does provide a community lens on the housing challenge. It shows a system that is not working and points to some places where changes to the status quo could make a difference. The question behind this map is:

“How might we create an actionable approach to building homes and community in Point Douglas (and the North End, more broadly) through a meaningful engagement process that centres the voices of the people who live here*, identifies and mobilizes the resources needed to ensure these homes are completed and lived in, and creates opportunities for people in the area to gain housing-related skills and jobs?”

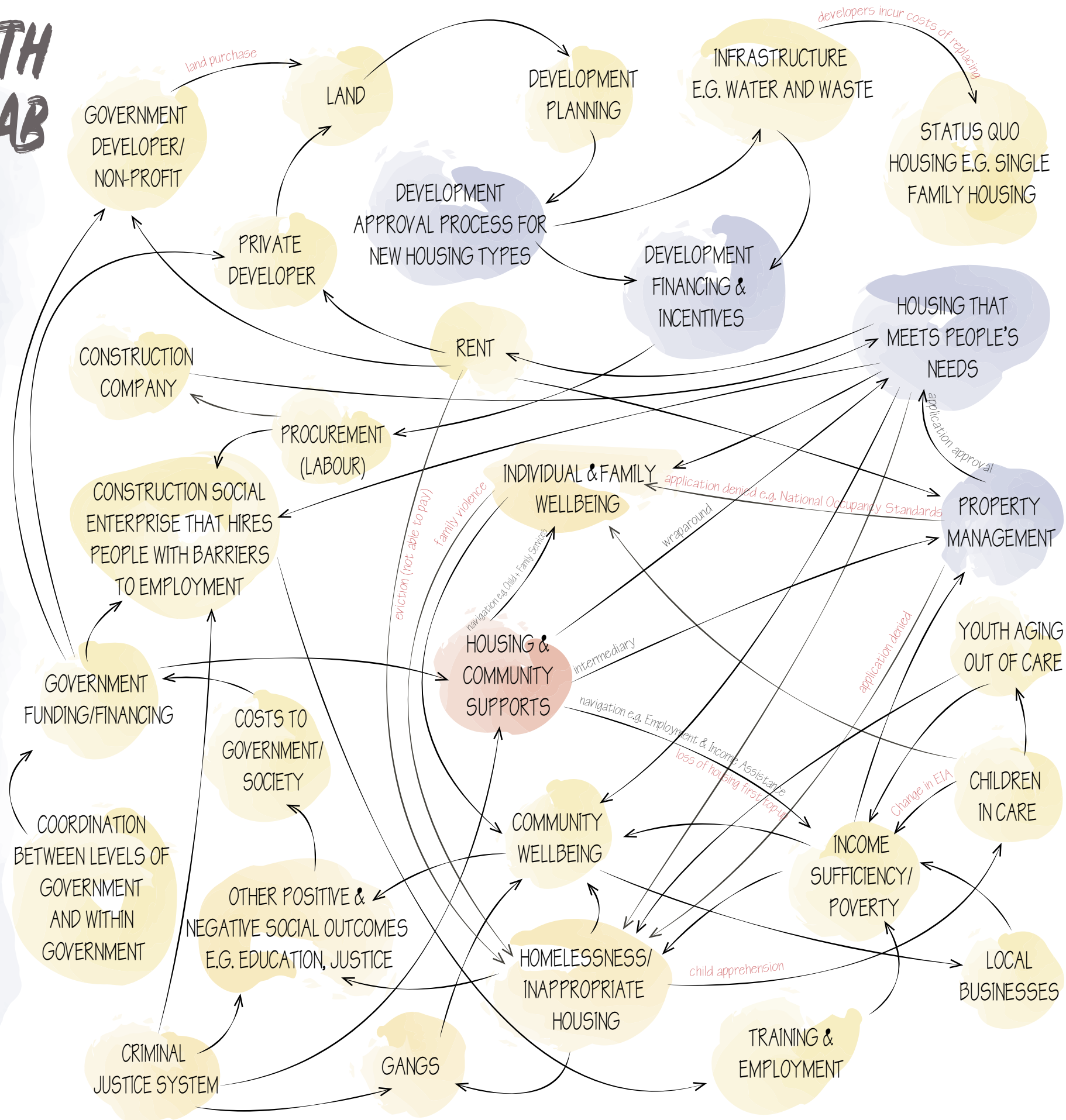
*Includes people who are chronically homeless who spend time in the Point Douglas (or surrounding) area.

Simply put, **what housing does the North End community need, what is getting in the way, and what changes are needed?**

→ Connections between the different parts of the system

Current Prototype

Central, critical, and vulnerable to changes in funding



SINCE TIME IMMEMORIAL,
INDIGENOUS PEOPLES HAVE LIVED ON
THE LAND WHERE WINNIPEG SITS.

IN THE NORTH END OF WINNIPEG,
INDIGENOUS PEOPLES MAKE UP 29%
OF THE POPULATION. YET, OUR
CURRENT HOUSING SYSTEM REFLECTS
ENTRENCHED RACISM AND OPPRESSION.


SOLUTIONS MUST RESPECT AND EMBED CULTURAL IDENTITY AND INDIGENOUS WAYS OF KNOWING, BEING AND DOING.

IN THE NORTH END:



15% OF HOUSEHOLDS
HAVE 5 OR MORE
PERSONS

0% THE VACANCY RATE FOR
3+ BEDROOMS IS 0%

 THE WINNIPEG-WIDE
WAITLIST FOR SOCIAL
HOUSING IS GREATER
THAN 2,500 FAMILIES

 MOST OF THE HOUSING IS
IN NEED OF REPAIRS,
WHILE 15% IS IN NEED OF
MAJOR REPAIRS

 75% OF HOUSING WAS
BUILT BEFORE 1960

NORTH END HOUSING LAB FOCUS AREAS FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

The lab found four interconnected opportunities to make a big impact on housing in the North End.

INDIGENOUS-LED HOUSING VENTURES

There is very little Indigenous leadership or control over the elements of the housing system, so Indigenous perspectives are not embedded throughout the design and management of housing supports. Housing ventures that are Indigenous-led will lead to a housing system that better meets the needs of the North End community.

Current initiatives

Purpose Construction, Building Urban Industries for Local Development (BUILD Inc.) and North End Community Renewal Corporation (NECRC) are exploring the creation of a collaborative Indigenous-led property development and management social enterprise.

Wahbung Abinoonjiag is taking over the management of 50 Manitoba Housing units and is developing their own property management social enterprise.



INDIGENOUS MODELS OF HOUSING

There is a dearth of housing options that reflect the needs of families in the North End. The community needs housing that accommodates larger families and different family configurations (such as multi-generational families), as well as spaces to gather in the community. Building housing based upon Indigenous models will help housing stock in the North End better align with the needs of the community.

Current initiatives

As part of a collective of nine women’s organizations and supported by End Homelessness Winnipeg, Wahbung Abinoonjiag will be the lead owner, operator, and manager of 24 new units of transitional housing for children, youth, and women. Suite configurations will include 8 four-bedroom units.

ZONING AND REGULATION

Both housing stock and infrastructure (such as water, transportation, and waste management) is old and in disrepair. Combined with existing zoning and regulations, this incentivizes developers to build single-family homes or to leave land vacant, rather than building the homes that the community needs. We need changes to zoning and regulation in the North End to incentivize repairing and upgrading existing housing stock, as well as to create new affordable infill rental housing.

Current initiatives

The City of Winnipeg has been administering Federal Rapid Housing Funds. First-round intakes noted that several zoning requirements for multi-family developments were creating issues. For the second intake, the City amended the development procedures by-law, where density beyond the base zone can be expanded to a certain point without re-zoning. This change was helpful for second round applicants.



SOCIAL FINANCE FOR DEVELOPMENT

Funding to develop new low-income housing in the North End is scarce. There are funding sources and models, but they aren’t appropriate for the North End. Community housing in other cities uses mixed-market housing to subsidize lower-income units, but market rates in the North End cannot generate the revenue needed to subsidize lower-income units. Meanwhile, the tools available through CMHC are better suited to places with different challenges, such as Vancouver or Toronto.

Current initiatives

End Homelessness Winnipeg’s Housing Supply Action Committee is building a new social finance approach to build low-income housing. This financing approach, similar to a public-private partnership, will bring the operator, financier, and the government together to design, build, finance, operate, and maintain housing infrastructure that serves a public need.

WE NEED CHANGE TO SUPPORT CHILDREN AND FAMILIES:



SUPPORTING ACCESS TO HOUSING TODAY

As long as today’s systemic barriers exist, the best ways that we have found to support access to safe, affordable, and appropriate housing for families are:

LET FAMILIES DEFINE THEIR NEEDS

Appropriate housing matches a family’s culture and context. Learn from families to understand what their unique needs are as part of supporting them in accessing housing.

SUPPORT INDIGENOUS LEADERSHIP IN HOUSING

Indigenous leadership is needed to ensure that housing matches community needs. Champion and support initiatives that center Indigenous leadership.

HELP FAMILIES NAVIGATE DISCRIMINATION AND EXPLOITATION

Families shouldn’t be denied housing or repairs because of their culture. Helping families overcome these barriers and hold landlords to account is needed to stem discrimination and exploitation.

SUPPORT YOUTH ACCESS TO HOUSING

Youth are at a critical transition point, especially those leaving care. Affordable and transitional housing, life skills and independent living programming, and community supports are all needed to prevent and alleviate youth homelessness.



CHANGING THE SYSTEM FOR TOMORROW



Through this work we found that there are large barriers that affect families and community members. We need governments, non-profits, and businesses to:

1

SUPPORT INDIGENOUS LEADERSHIP IN THE HOUSING SECTOR

Indigenous perspectives and leadership are needed throughout the housing system, from property development, management, and policymaking. We need broad Indigenous leadership throughout the housing system to enable the system to meet Indigenous families’ needs.

2

UPDATE ZONING AND REGULATIONS FOR APPROPRIATE HOUSING

We need changes to zoning and regulations to encourage the development of more multi-family units, repairs on existing housing stock, as well as housing that can accommodate larger or multi-generational families. Zoning and regulations need to change to support housing that is appropriate for the community.

3

FUND INDIGENOUS MODELS OF LOW-INCOME HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Funding is needed to create new housing development that is affordable for families living on low incomes and meets community needs, such as accommodating larger or multi-generational families. Community resources such as businesses, social services, parks, open spaces, and waste management are all needed to make safe places that families can call home. Support infrastructure and community resources along with supporting housing.

4

SUPPORT HOUSING ACCESS FOR FAMILIES AND CHILDREN ENGAGED WITH GOVERNMENT SYSTEMS

Access to appropriate housing is a critical part of avoiding apprehension, supporting reunification, and supporting youth transitioning out of care. Help keep families together by providing housing supports for families and children that are involved with Child and Family Services and other systems.

If you would like to learn more about the barriers that families in Point Douglas face to safe, affordable, and appropriate housing, read the full POP report [reference], read our report on helpful ways to work with Point Douglas [reference], and explore our other POP reports [reference],



**“WE ARE THANKFUL TO
OUR ANCESTORS WHO
ENTRUSTED US WITH
THE CARE OF THIS
GENERATION, AND THE
GENERATION WE WILL
NEVER KNOW.”**

—(MacNeill, 2014, p.29)

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the development and implementation of our prototypes, including our guide groups, partners, community organizations, local residents, and the North End community as a whole.

Many thanks to our funders for their continued support in the project, including the Province of Manitoba, the J.W. McConnell Family Foundation, and United Way of Winnipeg.



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