

2015

# Brandon Community Food Assessment

Prepared by: The Brandon Neighbourhood  
Renewal Corporation, and funded by  
Neighbourhoods Alive!, The Province of  
Manitoba and Healthy Brandon, Healthy  
Together Now & Community Futures  
Westman

4/8/2015

## Acknowledgements

The Brandon Community Food Assessment was completed in 2015 through a partnership with the Brandon Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation (BNRC) and Brandon University. This project was supported with funding from Neighbourhoods Alive! (NA!) and Healthy Brandon, Healthy Together Now as well as numerous in-kind supports. This assessment was spear-headed through community consultations known as *Food Café's* led by Ryan Graves & Nancy McPherson.

This report was prepared by Erin May, Project Coordinator and Naomi Leadbeater, Community Development Coordinator with the BNRC. Amanda Dryden and Ariel Kuzmicki, nursing students from Brandon University, provided valuable support with data collection and Ms. Nancy McLennan was most helpful with statistical analysis. Additional writing and support were provided by Ms. Nancy McPherson, Assistant Professor, Faculty of Health Studies and Dr. Derrek Eberts, Associate Professor, Faculty of Science.

The logos below represent the numerous organizations that made this community based research project possible.



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## **Introduction**

### A Guide to this Document

The purpose of this document is to showcase the findings of a 16 month project led by the Brandon Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation (BNRC). While this is not a complete record, it strives to make available and transparent the community based research that took place. While many aspects of Brandon's community food assessment were similar to others that have taken place both in Manitoba and across Canada, there are a number of unique factors the Brandon approach.

During the environmental scan, no other food assessment in Canada had used a community university partnership, however we later found a project from Regina that had used a similar approach. This brought unique challenges and opportunities to Brandon's assessment that otherwise would not have happened.

Within the body of this document you will find summaries of the process, types of research conducted and community highlights of some of Brandon's valued and well used food services and programming. At the end of this document are 21 recommendations as a result of extensive research and community consultations. The appendices to this work include supplemental research that was spurred as a result of the food assessment taking place, an environmental scan of Brandon's food resources, common terms and other documents that may be of use to other communities planning food security research.

## Methodology

Methodology refers to a body of rules employed by a discipline and/or the analysis of the principles or procedures of inquiry in a particular field. (Merriam-Webster)

The community food assessment used community based research methods as a foundation for the research involved in completing the assessment of food security in Brandon. This community based research was a partnership between Brandon University and the BNRC as led by the Food Assessment stakeholders' committee.

Community based research can be defined as: community situated, collaborative and action-orientated. (Centre for Community Based Research) Trademarks of community based research include the relevance of the research topic, utilizing expertise within the community, and that research is driven by values and a desire for change. Community based research projects are intended to leave a legacy both in terms of the utilization of research results as well as future collaboration and action oriented recommendations.

The Brandon Community Food Assessment was made stronger through academic partnerships, the ability of the food assessment coordinator to communicate with both academic leaders and leaders in the community. As a result, the document provided shows ample recommendations for future partnerships and the opportunity for future research into food security issues faced by Brandon and surrounding area.

For the purposes of this assessment, several methods of research and data collection were involved. These methods included gathering data from: stakeholder committee meetings, community presentations and consultations, a community wide survey, key informant interviews and an environmental scan. The data was collected from October of 2013 until October of 2014 and then analyzed by a team comprised of Erin May, Food Assessment Coordinator, Ms. Nancy McPherson (Prairie Mountain Health & Brandon University), Naomi Leadbeater, Community Development Coordinator, BNRC and Ms. Nancy McLennan who was contracted to analyze quantitative data gathered by the community wide survey. Two students from Brandon University, Amanda Dryden, Ariel Kuzmicki also assisted in completing and analyzing key informant interviews and qualitative data from the community wide survey.

## *Community Consultations*

Community consultations to place in three forms including: stakeholder consultations through steering committee meetings, community presentations to groups in at-risk populations to determine their food needs, and informal meetings with non-profit organizations in the community interested in increasing food security for their clients.

A stakeholder committee of fifteen (15) local community members representing numerous organizations was formed in September of 2013 and held their first meeting on November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2013. Subsequent meetings were held in January, May and November of 2014. For a full list of committee members, please see Appendix A.

The first meeting held was led by Ms. Nancy McPherson and Erin May, Food Assessment coordinator to determine what direction a research partnership with Brandon University would take. After consultation, it was determined that the research question for the purposes of the academic partnership would be: "What is in place within the city of Brandon that promotes food security?" and "What ought to be in place within the city of Brandon to promote food security?" These research

questions then formed the basis for an application to the Brandon University Research Ethics Committee (BUREC).

Community presentations were conducted with a number of groups including Seniors for Seniors, Kin Village residents, the City of Brandon Poverty Committee, local producers and food resource providers and other non-profits including the Rotary Club of Brandon, and Westman Immigrant Services. In addition to presentations, informal interviews were held with managers from five (5) local large food retailers regarding their store food donation policies and inventory trend changes.

## ***Resident Survey***

After the development of research questions, a low risk application to BUREC was submitted to conduct both key informant interviews and a resident survey. The community wide household survey was made available in paper and on line. Promotion occurred through stakeholder networks, posters, social media, radio interviews, and presentations at community events. All survey respondents remained anonymous, and identifiers were stripped before given to a contractor (N. McLennan) to analyze the quantitative data. Qualitative Data were analyzed by Nancy McPherson and two nursing practicum students.

The survey questions focused on three areas of food security including access to food, interaction by the community with food resources, and awareness and behavior surrounding alternative food resources.

“The survey data were observed across the three question categories, Access to Food, Interaction with Community Food Resources, and Behavior Surrounding Alternative Food Resources, for the entire population (n=445) and then across four principle filters: dollars spent per month on groceries (<\$300), Age (>50 years), New to Brandon the past 5 years (yes), and Aboriginal (yes). While the last two filters generated fairly small samples (73 and 54, respectively) the results of the survey are intended to initiate observation and direction, not necessarily to report indisputable facts. Baseline analysis is indispensable. Further questions that arise from this discussion are important, even considering some possible limitations due to sample size.” (N. McLennan) Reports on the analysis of the survey can be found in Appendix B.

While sample size was limited, the household survey provides an excellent opportunity for continued collection of data, and provided a wealth of both qualitative and quantitative data to be considered for the recommendations of this paper as well as future decision making.

## ***Key Informant Interviews***

In conjunction with the survey, the application to BUREC included a request to perform semi-structured interviews with representatives from local community agencies that may be serving food insecure populations. Fifteen service providers were invited to take part in an interview, and of those fifteen, ten agreed to the request. Quotes from key informant interviews can be found throughout this report, and much of their information played a large role in the consideration of recommendations to increase food security for at-risk populations in Brandon, Manitoba.

The key informant interviews were conducted by Erin May, food assessment coordinator and two nursing practicum students from Brandon University. Results were transcribed by nursing practicum students, and analyzed by Nancy McPherson, Erin May and the two volunteer students.

Questions asked during the key informant interviews were:

1. What do you think is working well in our city regarding food availability, affordability, and accessibility?
  - Follow up: What are some programs or services that help your clients with their food needs?
2. What do you see as the issues and challenges in our city or your organization regarding food availability, affordability, and accessibility?
3. What do you see as the policy implications that we should consider? (Probe: hours of operation, by-laws around building, nutrition policy within the school system)
4. Are there other individuals or agencies that you think we should speak with?

Key informant questions and the invitation list can be found in Appendix C.

## ***Environmental Scan***

Another undertaking of the food assessment was to determine what resources already exist within the community. Data were collected from Statistic Canada, Prairie Mountain Health, the City of Brandon, the Province of Manitoba and numerous community organizations that offer food programming and services. Other methods of collection included key informant interviews, online searches, telephone directories and business listings.

The information gathered was mapped in partnership with Brandon University, Department of Geography using Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping tools to create a map of food deserts in Brandon. Subsequent to the desert map creation, a store survey comparing the prices of staple items was developed and students from the Department of Geography conducted surveys at all sizes of grocers in Brandon. The GIS mapping visually identified the existing local food resources throughout the city of Brandon and also provided evidence of the built environment as a driver of food insecurity.

The environmental scan is included as Appendix D and features contact information for food retailers, services, and resources.

## **Key Themes**

Qualitative data gathered through resident surveys, key informant interviews, and community consultations identified four key themes about food security in Brandon. These themes included:

- food affordability & availability
- public awareness
- program design & delivery
- policy

In January 2015, a strategic planning session was held to develop recommendations based on key themes. Using open space technology & guided questions, a group of 20 members of the stakeholder committee and representatives from various not-for-profit organizations developed recommendations in the following categories:

- Food Choices (availability)
- Food Access (affordability)
- Food Skills (program delivery)
- Public Awareness (policy & program awareness).

## Food Choices

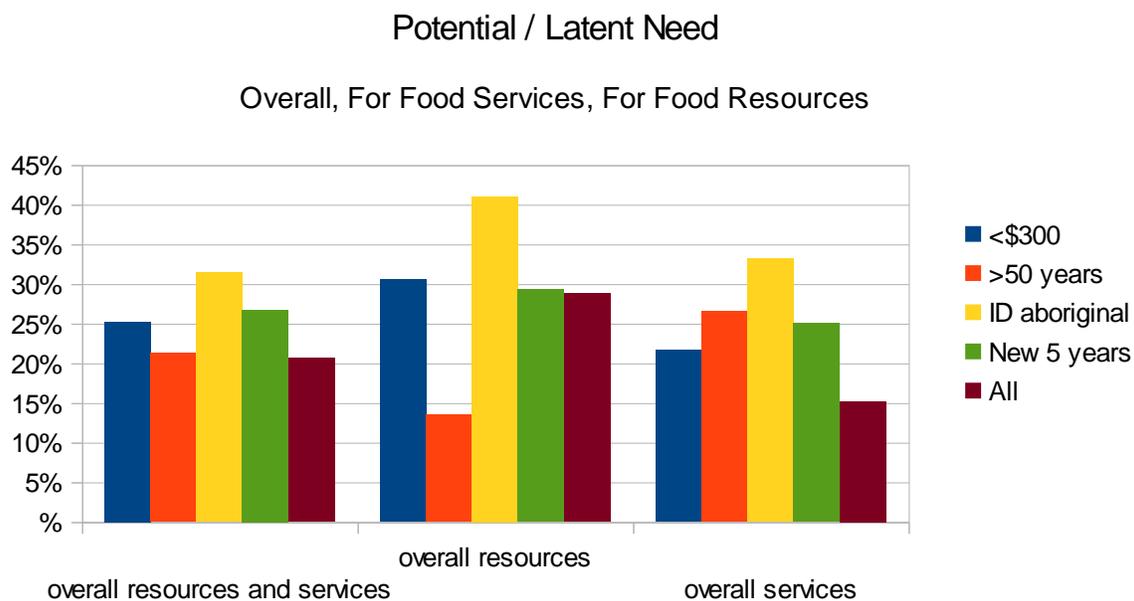
Food availability refers to all people having sufficient quantities of food available on a consistent basis. Food should be safe, nutritious, and culturally appropriate while also meeting dietary needs and preferences. All data gathered throughout the project indicates that while Brandon is mostly well fed, and there are many options for food choices, there are at-risk populations that are food insecure and cannot procure equitable food choices at all times.

### Summary of Findings

The resident survey included both qualitative and quantitative data. Comments from open ended questions included availability of appropriate food as being a barrier to having enough of the types of food they want to eat that are suitable for special dietary needs. Many comments also expressed that residents decide to buy from specific retailers if they carry items that accommodate their dietary needs such as gluten free or vegetarian. Residents who completed the survey expressed a notable interest and demand for more local and organic products. This was echoed by all five store managers who were interviewed. “We have noted the increasing demand for international foods, local and organic produce as well as specialty items such as gluten free options.” (S. M. Interviews)

A glance at Figure 1 below shows that respondents who identify as Aboriginal express higher need (lower “not needed” coefficients) for items on both the food resources list and the food services list. Respondents over 50 years, see a lesser need for items on the resources list, but have a potential need for items on the services list. Sub-samples of respondents who spend less than \$300 per month on food and those who are new to Brandon in the past 5 years both have a comparatively lower need than the other two observed sub-samples, for both community resources and services, but their latent need is still higher than the sampled population as a whole. (N. McLennan)

**Figure 1. Potential/Latent Need**



Both qualitative and quantitative data gathered from the resident survey indicate the need to address food choices (availability) for at-risk populations. Specific recommendations for addressing this issue are made at the end of this section and can also be found in Appendix E.

Key informant interviews conducted by the food assessment coordinator and nursing students from Brandon University clearly indicate that populations using food services and alternative food resources have unique needs that are not fully addressed in the community. Specifically, newcomer populations and those who use food banks were identified through the interviews as two populations that often experience food insecurity.

“For Newcomer families the quality and price of fruits and vegetables can deter them from purchasing the produce they are accustomed to in their home countries.” (Key Informant) Service providers also identified that finding different cuts of meat that Newcomer families are accustomed to can be difficult. There is appreciation for some butchers and retailers in Brandon that have begun to carry new cuts of meat to help fill this gap. In addition to this Key Informant interviews revealed that many newcomer families drive to Winnipeg to acquire cooking staples and supplies that are not yet carried by retailers in Brandon, and many are unaware of farmers’ markets that are currently operating in Brandon. These interviews clearly identified there is an interest in accessing more international food options in both retail and restaurant settings.

“Across the board, charitable food services/food hamper programs have seen a notable decrease in amounts of fresh produce and restrictions on meat.” (Key Informant). Within the charitable food sector, lack of availability of produce and proteins were noted as a concern by more than one key informant interviewee. As well, food choices are sometimes not appropriate for certain individuals such as clients who have unique dietary needs or prefer food traditional to their culture.

#### *Westman Immigrant Services, Family Cooking Time Spotlight*



Westman Immigrant Services (WIS) established the Family Cooking Time Program in 2014. In the first year, the program offered three, eight week courses to newcomer families. Family Cooking Time teaches newcomer parents and children to cook with ingredients and prepare meals that they are not used to having access to or don't have in their country.

*Family Cooking Time, Westman Immigrant Services*

The program curriculum covers a variety of topics including but not limited to:

- Healthy eating
- Budgeting
- Cooking skills and nutrition fact labels & ingredient lists
- Planning lunches for children
- Food safety
- Grocery shopping tours.

Sessions begin by talking with families about topics they would like to learn about. Westman Immigrant Services and program coordinators work together with families to customize learning sessions to include their clients' interests. The program aims to alleviate personal barriers of food access and increase skills in an inclusive environment. Child-minding is offered for Family Cooking Time sessions and guest speakers attend to share resources and information.

Westman Immigrant Services also offers translators to its clients and access to safe social environments where sharing culture is encouraged and enjoyed. Family Cooking Time receives support from the City of Brandon and Richmond Co-Op Marketplace. There is a maximum of 12 persons per class. In 2015, WIS aims to offer four eight week long courses.

Family Cooking Time is not the only food related resource offered by *Westman Immigrant Services*. Additionally, they involve cooking programming into their Youth Program. Healthy eating workshops for girls and women are offered with the assistance of a Prairie Mountain Health Community Nutritionist. Presentations are made once monthly by the Brandon Community Garden Network (BCGN) to newcomers in English as an Additional Language (EAL) classes raise awareness of community gardening within the newcomer population. During the past three (3) years, demand for garden space by newcomers has increased faster than the network can provide plots.

## Food Access

Food access refers to having sufficient economic and physical resources to obtain appropriate foods for a nutritious diet. Food cost, and ability to access transportation are two examples of food access. (World Healthy Organization (WHO))

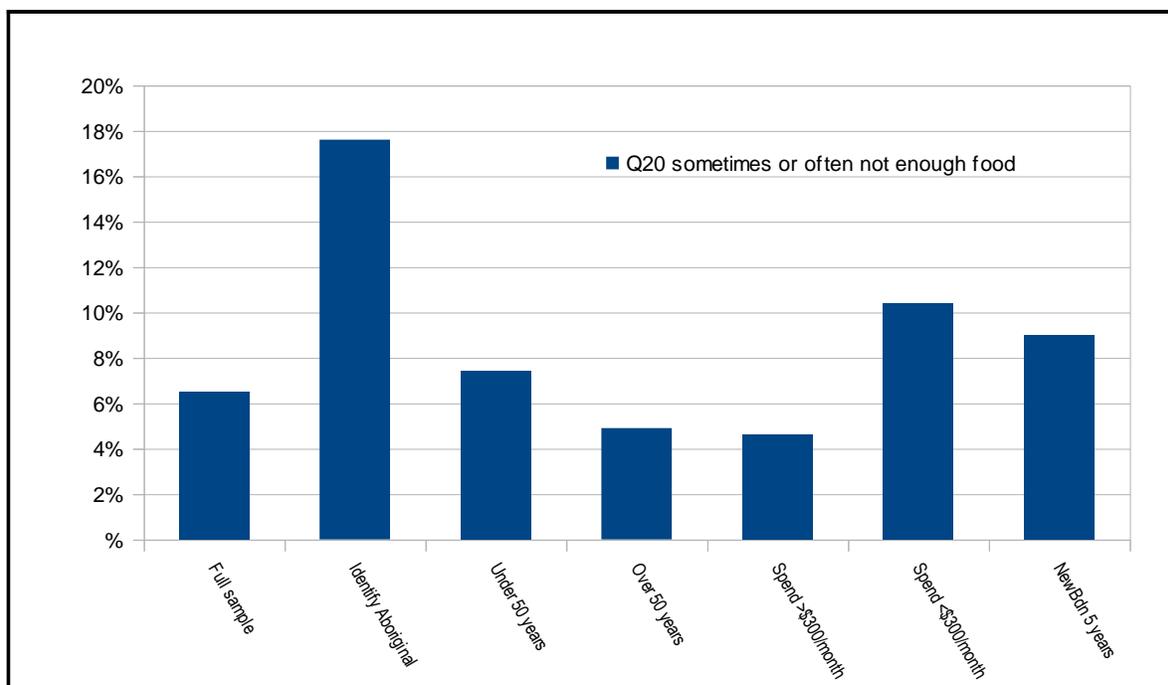
“For decades, the issue of access to food has been in the forefront of international concern over malnutrition in developing and war torn parts of the planet. In recent decades, developed countries have begun to address issues surrounding access to food along platforms of rural/urban disparity, food contamination, global preferences, food distribution issues, poverty, and health education. The prevalence of an imbalance of access to food has been recognized in community development research across North American.” (N. McLennan)

## Summary of Findings

In the resident survey, questions fifteen (15) to nineteen (19) were developed to look specifically at access to food. Questions included “Please estimate how much money you spend on food, for your household, per month?”, “Where do you usually purchase most of your food?” and “How do you usually travel to your preferred food shopping location?”

“Universally, survey respondents get most of their food from large supermarkets (92%). When asked to scale factors influencing their choice of shopping location, cost of food (91.24% (5 point scale: no, little, some large influence)) was cited as the most important reason for choosing the large supermarkets. Quality of food (81% for meat and 90% for produce) and ease of access (84%) were also highly influenced choice of food store.” (N. McLennan)

A more detailed look at the sub-samples of respondents who stated they *sometimes* or *often do not have enough food to eat*, (Fig. 2) indicates that those who do experience food shortages are making use of programs such as Soup Kitchens, Food Hampers and School Lunch programs. Of the most vulnerable: households who have children, and who spend less than \$300 per month on food 20% indicated that sometimes/often there is not enough food.

**Figure 2. Samples/Sub-Samples where respondents experience a food shortage.**

Many residents allocate budgeting towards monthly costs of living such as rent, utilities, and schooling ahead of food. Residents with fixed incomes find budgeting restrictions leave them without enough of the foods they want to eat and increases in food costs are noted from many residents. (K. I. Interviews)

Food cost was a common concern identified in key informant interviews. The comparative cost of processed foods to fresh, nutritious produce is identified as a barrier to many residents by those who were interviewed. The ability to access transportation where residents do not have access to their own vehicle was also noted by Key Informant Interviewees, and during the food assessment, a project began with the Geography Department of Brandon University to uncover what travel times to grocery stores are by varying methods. This project resulted in mapping of food deserts in Brandon. For a detailed map of food deserts and where grocery stores are located in Brandon, please see Appendix F. This appendix also includes other reports of Community Based Research projects currently in process with Brandon University.

### *Stan's Fine Foods: East End Spotlight*

Stan's Fine Foods was a family owned and operated a grocer in Brandon's East end neighbourhood. Stan's offered delivery service to a number of senior's accommodations as well as contributed to many community organizations and the local food banks. Stan's Fine Foods was in operation for 37 years and closed in October of 2014. This presented some challenges for the project in conjunction with the Department of Geography at Brandon University as the maps created had to be re-done to accommodate the loss of this grocery store to the area.



The resident survey which collected data during the month of October had a number of comments regarding this closure including “...the closing of Stan’s really hurt us.” (Resident Survey)

Community consultations with seniors after the closure of Stan’s Fine Foods revealed a desire to have a mobile food market visit their residences on a weekly or bi-weekly frequency. Others expressed interest in the introduction of a Good Food Box program at their residences and identified that a box designed to suit their dietary needs.

## Food Skills

Food use can be defined as appropriate knowledge of basic nutrition, care, food safety, and sanitary conditions to choose, prepare, and distribute food safely for all family members. (World Healthy Organization (WHO)) Another aspect of food security, the knowledge and skills needed to prepare healthy food are also essential to a food secure population.

“People must also have the knowledge and basic sanitary conditions to choose, prepare, and distribute food in a way that results in good nutrition for all family members.” (World Health Organization)

As part of the environmental scan, information for agencies in Brandon that provide food skills programs to target populations such as expecting and new mothers, newcomers and seniors were gathered. Some of these organizations include; The Brandon Friendship Centre, Prairie Mountain Health, and Westman Immigrant Services. Individuals also have access to food skills workshops for free or a small fee through Brandon Community Garden Network, Brandon Fruit Share, and Westman Immigrant Services. A number of family resource centres also provide food and food skills workshops throughout their programming despite it not being their central focus such as the Brandon Literacy Council, and Elspeth Reid Family Resource Centre. For a full list of agencies that provide food programming in Brandon please see Appendix D.

Demand for food skills training was identified by service providers and residents through key informant interviews and community consultations respectively. Agencies report that many programs offered are attended at capacity and on-going waiting lists exist for new participants. For example, World Cooking Classes offered twice a year by Westman Immigrant Services are often sold out and have waiting lists. Many agencies lack staff capacity to implement and deliver food programming and key informant interviews identified lack of service providers to deliver additional nutrition and food skills workshops. Two agencies reported difficulty in sustaining food programming while their funding had remained status quo for more than five years. (Key Informant Interview) Some interview participants identified that their clients may not have the food skills to prepare items included in hampers, while others found that contents of hampers were not appropriate for the dietary needs of their clients.

Community consultations revealed that residents in Brandon are interested in learning a variety of nutrition and food skills. Food safety, storage, preserving, and fermenting foods were identified as food preparation skills residents would like to learn. Budgeting, basic food preparation skills, gardening and growing food, as well as meal preparation for single servings and for a week were identified as areas of interest for individuals.

Engaging community for food skills workshops and programs can be a challenge. Many residents identified a lack of awareness of programming for food skills workshops that they would like to attend. Another issue noted in the resident survey was that many find they lack the time to attend workshops, or workshops are scheduled when they are working. One comment noted in the qualitative data was; “The Heart Smart classes are only offered during 8-5 hours, not helpful for workers” (Resident Survey).

One example of food skills programming in Brandon is prenatal and postnatal programs which provide free classes to expectant mothers and mothers with newborns with a focus on wellbeing, nutrition, and parenting. These classes offer the opportunity for mothers to get together in a social and supportive environment. Participants enjoy nutritious snacks, homemade meals, and learn about nutrition, health, pregnancy, and their baby's development. Baby weight and measures are offered and guest speakers attend to inform on a variety of topics. Separate prenatal and postnatal programs are offered in Brandon by the Brandon Friendship Centre and Prairie Mountain Health.

The Brandon Friendship Centre (BFC) offers prenatal and postnatal programming for women through the *In a Good Way* (IAGW) program. In addition to nutritious snacks, the prenatal class includes a group cooking class in the centre's approved kitchen that participants can take home. Postnatal class participants receive meal bags with a free recipe and ingredients minus perishables items. Recipes and ingredients are taken home so that they can be prepared after the class with some of the cost barriers removed. IAGW encourages breastfeeding and has a special committee to promote breastfeeding. All participants attending IAGW and BFC programs are provided free transportation for themselves and their children with certified drivers and car seats.

*Healthy Beginnings* is a *Healthy Baby Program* offered by Prairie Mountain Health (PMH). Expectant mothers, couples and couples with children under 1 year old are welcome to attend the prenatal or postnatal program in full or on a drop in basis. Healthy Beginnings will assist with bus tickets milk coupons, and provides information and assistance with applying for Manitoba Prenatal Benefits. Healthy Beginnings runs year round once per week. Participants can request an interpreter for assistance if needed.

Expectant women who have a net family income of less than \$32,000 are eligible for Manitoba Prenatal Benefits. The Manitoba Prenatal Benefit provides monthly supplements to help purchase healthy foods needed during pregnancy. Benefits are available beginning the 14th week of pregnancy. The benefit amount is based on income and ranges from \$10.00-\$81.41 per month.

## Policy and Public Awareness

Public awareness about community food resources is most successful when it takes a multi-pronged approach involving community members, corporate entities, non-profit and service organizations working together. Public awareness of food security should provide information on food and nutrition, how to access food, food skills, and how to become involved in food action.

There is a strong sense of inter-agency awareness in Brandon. Emergency food providers, not-for-profit organizations, Non-governmental Organizations, and family resource centres have awareness of and commonly work together on various initiatives. The annual Resource Guide distributed by the BNRC was noted as a valuable resource for agencies to use as reference for clients. Agencies often refer clients to other agencies as well as share excess donations and resources amongst each other when possible. (K. I. Interviews)

### *Emergency Food Services*

Through survey comments and key informant interviews, it is evident that misconceptions and stigma associated with accessing emergency food resources exists among residents of Brandon. Examples of some comments included; "people who own vehicles do not deserve access [to emergency food]" and "working people aren't in need of the soup kitchen." (Resident Survey) Many service providers noted that these are commonly held beliefs, but that the appearance of a car, or the fact that people work does not always mean they are abusing the system. For example, one key informant stated "newcomers don't always know what kind of car to buy" and further explained that they may get into a lease agreement

which is too expensive or not fully understood. This may lead to a family having a lease they cannot easily get out of, and not enough resources to provide food for the home. It was noted in another interview that the combination of only one income or part time employment, and high rental costs resulted in not being able to provide enough healthy food at home.

Food banks aim to supply individuals and families in need with nutritious, appropriate food in respectful ways. Some food banks operate as registered charities while others are faith based and collect resources from their congregations to supply food hampers. Food resources for hampers come from multiple suppliers throughout the community including food retailers, local producers, community members, and businesses. Hamper contents are reliant on community and corporate donations. Throughout the year, food drives coordinated by food banks and other community organizations gather additional donations to supplement hampers. Some food banks have small amounts of financial resources to purchase supplemental food for their hampers and others connect to larger distribution chains such as Food Banks Canada. Hamper contents are meant to be supplemental and often provide sufficient food for two to three days. Volunteers play an important role at many food banks through donations of their time in receiving and sorting donations and packing and distributing hampers. There are a total of 6 food banks that support residents' food security in Brandon.

The ability to pick up a food hamper varies among food banks; weekly, bi-weekly, and monthly access are options at the various food banks in Brandon. Samaritan House for example, allows pick up every 2 weeks except in emergency cases and distributes approximately 1200 hampers per month.

Hunger Count is an annual survey of Food Banks across Canada. Hunger Count 2013 reported a 48.8% increase in food bank use between the years 2008-2013 and that 44.7% of people assisted were under 18 years of age.

Survey question 29 asked about usage of resources:

*We are interested in knowing why you or anyone in your household **did not use** community food services in the last 12 months. Please check all that apply.*

The responses "not needed" and "did not know about it", were the significant responses in this question's matrix of responses. These responses paint a reverse image of awareness and usage. Although it is a counter-intuitive way to ask, when a respondent states they did not use a resource or service because they "did not know about it" (awareness), they may be exhibiting a latent expression of need for that service because they have chosen that response over "not needed" (need). (N. McLennan) Food banks and soup kitchens were statistically both the most used and most well known food resources according to the resident survey. "And, new Brandonites saw both time and money as more pertinent issues than do those over 50 years old." (N. McLennan)

Brandon also has five smaller food banks that supply food resources to residents. Two of these are focused on student populations at Brandon post-secondary institutions, ACC and Brandon University. Large food retailers in Brandon have developed supportive food redistribution partnerships with local charitable agencies. Food store donation policies are established at regional and national levels. Many generous donations from local food retailers assist in feeding our community. Local food bank agencies reported significant decrease in the quantity of fresh produce redistribution in the past three to five years. Interviews with large food retailer managers in Brandon identified that donations to food banks are predominantly bread products.

Other comments of note from the key informant interviews and resident survey included: "Across the board, food banks in Brandon have seen an increase in demand while seeing decreases in donations of fresh produce from food retailers.", and "a lack of protein and produce donations inhibits our potential of providing nutritious food for clients" (K. I. Interviews). Resident survey comments on the topic of food hampers included; "hours of operation of emergency food resources make it difficult for them to

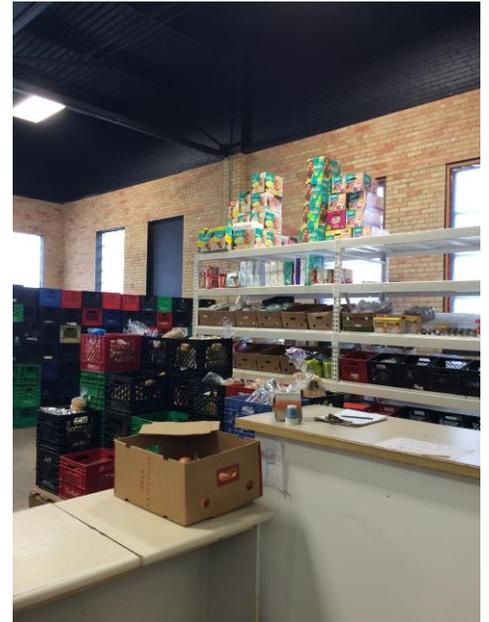
access services.” “there’s a lack of safety and the environment isn’t always safe” and finally “I feel stigmatized, so don’t use food hampers.” (Resident Survey).

### *Spotlight on Emergency Food Services in Brandon*

#### *Samaritan House Ministries*

Samaritan House Ministries is Brandon’s largest community food bank and was established in 1986 and is a registered charity and as part of Food Banks Canada National Food Sharing System acts a hub for Southwest Manitoba to provide support to regional food banks. Samaritan House has seen an 89% increase in food bank use since 2008.

In addition to food hampers, Samaritan House offers clothing and household items, as well as drop in programs that focus on literacy, training, and employability opportunities. Through a partnership with Brandon Community Garden Network and Brandon University ENACTUS students, Samaritan House assists clients in planting and maintaining their own community garden plots. Samaritan House also uses un-rented beds to plant and supplement food hampers. At the ENACTUS North garden location, 60 of the 80 garden plots were used by Samaritan House clients in 2014.



*Samaritan House Food Bank*

#### *Helping Hands Soup Kitchen*



*Helping Hands Volunteers & Chef Sharon Craig*

Helping Hands Centre of Brandon, Inc. is a vital community service for Brandon. Helping Hands opened their doors in January of 1990 and offers Brandon residents one free, nutritious, hot, three-course meal, five days a week. When possible, Helping Hands also gives out daily donations of bread and produce from local producers.

Helping Hands operates with two paid staff members and generous support from a wide variety of community members. The organization operates with sponsorship from the United Way of Brandon as well as corporate, food retailer, community resident, and City of Brandon support. Additional donations come from Hutterite Colonies, local small scale farmers, and individuals from the surrounding region.

Many volunteers contribute at Helping Hands by providing assistance in the kitchen, serving, and general maintenance, and clean up. Volunteer support comes from residents, faith based groups, school groups, and individuals. Volunteering at Helping Hands offers a social environment, skill building, and community engagement to participants.

Anyone who expresses a need can access the service by signing in at the door. Those in need are not asked for personal information, and signing in serves as a way to track need in a non-judgmental manner. As with food banks, Helping Hands has seen a steady increase in youth and children attendance. According to Helping Hands sign-in information, rates of usage for children nearly doubled between June-October 2013-2014. One of the possible reasons children are more likely to use Helping Hands in the summer may be the lack of nutritional programs offered over the summer which are limited by school closures.

### *Other Emergency Food Services in Brandon*

Brandon & Westman Christmas Cheer is an annual Christmas Hamper program that assists Brandon and rural residents. In addition to hampers, The Christmas Cheer Registry provides a Christmas dinner and gifts for families in the Westman area who would otherwise go without. The City of Brandon hosts an annual *Fill the Bus* campaign to assist the registry by collecting donations of non-perishable food items and unwrapped toys on regular bus routes instead of transit fare. Additionally, this campaign collects non-perishable food, toys and monetary donations at local food retailers. Many individuals, churches, and local organizations assist in the hamper and dinner delivery and fundraising events such as the UCT Bingo, the Original Christmas Craft Sale, and Brandon Wheat Kings. In 2013, 952 hampers were delivered.

### *Community Opportunities: Food On The Move Spotlight*

Saskatoon's "Food on the Move" is a program of The Salvation Army in that city, and is based on a model of corporate social responsibility. Saskatoon's Food on the Move program serves an average of 5,500 bagged lunches each summer at 10 inner-city park locations and is sponsored by PotashCorp. Food on the Move addresses child nutrition and food security by filling the gap that school breakfast and lunch programs fill throughout the school year and is an example a program that partners with a corporation to fulfill a need in the community. For more information, please visit: <http://www.salvationarmysaskatoon.org/familyservices/FOTM.html>.

### *Community Resources*

Many initiatives take place in Brandon to address food security through the continuum of short term, capacity building, and system redesign. Community food services assist individuals and families with food access and nutrition skills that they might need to improve. It was highlighted in community consultations and key informant interviews that there is a demand for many of these initiative as well as a lack of public awareness of these programs. Residents identified they would like to know what programs exist, why, and who can access them in both the resident survey and community consultations. Additionally, residents said would like to know what other programs exist and what ways they can support these community services if they do not use them.

Two of the more unfamiliar programs to Brandon residents according to the resident survey are congregate meal programs and meal delivery options. More familiar programs include school lunch programs and breakfast programs. Brandon has a number of programs that serve to increase food access and nutrition skills. We have chosen to highlight Food For Thought and The Brandon Friendship Centre's programs as two examples of highly successful and high demand programs in Brandon.

Congregate meal programs offer on-site hot lunches or dinners for a reduced fee. Brandon has a number of seniors' accommodations offering congregate meal programs with varied frequency. (See Appendix D) Of sixteen (16) seniors' accommodations in Brandon, seven (7) offer congregate meal programs. These services vary between one to three times per week to daily. Prairie Oasis and Seniors for Seniors provide catered lunches to various accommodations. Manitoba Housing accommodations provide meals for residents through their Congregate Meal Program. Lunch and supper costs range from between \$5.00-\$12.00. Prairie Oasis Seniors Centre offers a daily congregate lunch service that is open to the community at their location for a cost of \$8.00.

"Citizens over 50 years were the lowest users of community resources and respondents who identify as Aboriginal most frequently used at least one community resource. Low use of resources could be because lack of need, lack of awareness, lack of access, or stigma and conversely, higher use can be

because of higher need, but also may reflect increased awareness, or improved intra-community communication and acceptance.” (N. McLennan)

In the area of meal delivery, Meals on Wheels is one of the more well-known programs in Brandon. Meal delivery programs provide nutritious, affordable, home delivered meals for a reduced fee to eligible residents. Prairie Oasis has operated Meals on Wheels in Brandon for the past 30 years. With the help of volunteer drivers, Meals on Wheels delivers approximately 70-100 meals a day, 5 days a week. Meals for the weekend can be ordered in advance for Friday delivery. Meals on Wheels was formed in 1972 by the Assiniboine Kiwanis Club and is financially supported by Prairie Mountain Health.

### *Food for Thought Spotlight*

Brandon’s Food for Thought program was established in 1998 with 3 schools. As of 2015, the program serves a nutritious breakfast and snacks to 19 schools in total. Food for Thought now serves over 45,000 meals a year to 150 children. Food for Thought aids in building strong families and successful learning opportunities for children by addressing children going to school hungry, promoting community awareness, and assisting in providing nutritional education. This program began with funding from the Canadian Living Foundation and continues with the support of United Way of Brandon, fundraising, community donations, and most recently, a five year sponsorship from Maple Leaf Foods totaling \$170,000. Committed, long term sponsorship from Maple Leaf Foods for this program is one example of successful Corporate Social Responsibility partnership helping keep our community well fed.

In addition to the Food for Thought program, École New Era also offers a breakfast and lunch program. New Era is a designated community school through the Government of Manitoba Community Schools Partnership Initiative (CSPI) and receives support from the Government of Manitoba, Healthy Schools Grant to run its breakfast and lunch program. With additional funding and support from CSPI, Healthy Brandon, and the Brandon School Division, New Era has been able to implement additional unique programs for its students. These programs include the incorporation of a community garden on school property, an indoor garden to start seeds throughout the year and a salad bar cart to provide healthy food options and foster nutritional education and food skills to students and families.



*In a Good Way Post-natal Meal Package*

### *The Brandon Friendship Centre Spotlight*

“The Brandon Friendship Centre is a non-profit organization committed to empowering and strengthening families in our community. All of the programs are open to all people with an emphasis on Aboriginal people. We provide programs to support and enhance healthy life choices. We are



*Brandon Friendship Centre, In a Good Way Pre-natal Program*

Brandon Friendship Centre’s multi-generational programs and four feasts are held a year for participants and community.

### *Alternative Food Resources*

While residents are interested in having greater access to local farmers for produce, eggs, and meat, many residents also reported a lack of awareness regarding how to source and locate local producers. There is demand for year round access to local food resources through farmers markets yet many residents express a lack of awareness of existing markets and market stand activities that currently run in Brandon, both seasonally and year round. Store managers noted a steady increase in demand for local and organic produce.

Local producers identified that there is difficulty identifying the best means of advertising locally. Additionally, many small scale producers lack the work capacity to engage in marketing activities and others identified that media they do use does not bring in customers. Additionally, some local producers do not advertise as they are at capacity for programs such as Community Shared Agriculture (CSA). Manitoba Agriculture, Food, and Rural Development (MAFRD) compiles an annual Manitoba’s Local Produce Guide for regional producers, but it is not a complete listing, and producers send information in to be included in this document. This is one communication avenue producers may not know about, and an easy form of marketing themselves. Small Farms Manitoba and the Down to Earth Guide to Organics in Manitoba compiled by Organic Manitoba work to compile guides of smaller farms and producers to assist with regional food access and put effort and focus on a local and sustainable food system. The latter publications are compiled by small organizations which many not have the necessary resources to gather information province wide. As a result, they often feature more farms located closer to Winnipeg, and less in rural and Northern areas.

committed to working with the community to raise awareness of food security that affect many people living in Brandon.” - Barb Desjardins, CPNP Coordinator, In a Good Way, BFC

The Brandon Friendship Centre offers a unique community response model of family programming. The combination of prenatal, postnatal, and the Seedlings Preschool Preparation Program offers a seamless learning environment for families. Seamless learning plays an important role in establishing family and child bonds and relationships that continue to grow through continuous and fluid learning experiences. Seedlings Pre-school Preparation Program is open to children three years of age.

The Brandon Friendship Centre offers additional family programs with Kokum’s Little Friends Daycare, Little Teaching Lodge Head Start Program, and the Parent and Child Centre. Food security and nutritious snacks are integrated into all of

### *Community Gardens Spotlight*

Community gardens offer residents the opportunity to grow their own food in a social environment. Community gardening increases access to fresh produce for residents, establishes local connections with our food and community, and enhances knowledge and skill development. Through partnerships with community centres, the City of Brandon, Brandon School Division, and post-secondary institutions, land is developed into raised or ground level beds that are available for community members to increase healthy food options in their diet.

There are a total of 16 community garden locations in Brandon with a total of 833 plots See Appendix D for a full list of gardens and plot sizes. The first community garden in Brandon was built in 1998 at Park Community Centre. Through the work of Samaritan House, community garden development resumed in 2000. The Community Garden Network was formed in 2000 and has developed with the support of the Brandon Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation, Neighbourhoods Alive!, the City of Brandon and Healthy Brandon as funding partners. Many other organizations such as, Agriculture and Agri-food Canada's Brandon Research Station, Samaritan House, Manitoba Metis Federation and many others. Gardens have been developed on land provided by the City of Brandon,, Brandon School Division, Brandon University, and residential properties including Argyle Courts. In the future, the Brandon Community Garden Network hopes to partner with landlords and Manitoba Housing to provide access to healthy food to residents who do not have access to a private yard space.

In addition to volunteer garden coordinators for individual sites, the Brandon Community Garden Network provides educational workshops throughout the summer on gardening and food skills. With the support of the City of Brandon, a garden coordinator position was funded for 3 years to establish the workshop series, coordinate garden site development, and create a mentorship training program for residents to assist in sharing gardening skills with other residents and create greater sustainability for the network coordination. The Brandon Community Garden Network incorporated

in October of 2014 and will continue to receive support from the City of Brandon through board support, monetary assistance, land use

collaboration, and in-kind supports of labour and equipment. Neighbourhoods Alive! has granted the BCGN funding to employ a garden network coordinator for two years to facilitate additional garden expansions, draft a sustainability plan, further engage and train community volunteers, and host the free workshop and mentorship series. Despite the addition of 208 garden beds between the years of 2011-2014, waiting lists for community garden plots remain.

Land use agreements vary from garden to garden. There are concerns with the sustainability of some gardens based on location, zoning, and long term land use agreements. The length of land use agreements on some properties cannot be renewed for more than one year at a time. This presents challenges for long term planning of the BCGN. As of 2014, the majority of land use agreements concerning garden network properties are expired.



*New Era Community Garden*

### *Hummingbird Community Garden*

Located in the South-west corner of Brandon, Hummingbird is the largest community garden with a planned expansion for 2015 this garden will host 433 beds. The gardens at Hummingbird are a majority ground plot with approximately 50 raised beds. Residents come from all areas of Brandon to access this garden and the waiting list as of January 2015 is 75 people. Hummingbird is made possible through a land use agreement with the Brandon School Division. This agreement stands for six to 12 months at a time.

### *Assiniboine Food Forrest Incorporated*

Assiniboine Food Forrest (AFFI) is volunteer based and works towards a healthy, food secure community through the creation of an educational food forest on a plot of unused city property. With assistance from Manitoba Heritage Corp., the City of Brandon endorsed the food forest in March, 2013, granting AFFI a renewable five year lease to manage the land. AFFI will begin by restoring the wetland and prairie habitat, cultivating native vegetation. Through long term creation of sustainable perennial and annual garden beds, the food forest will provide educational opportunities for Brandon residents to learn about gardening, permaculture, wildlife, and prairie ecosystems. AFFI is located on the south banks of the Assiniboine River east of The Green Spot on Rosser Avenue East.

AFFI will be conducting a perma-blitz lawn makeover program at two sites this summer:

- 1) Neelin High School's central courtyard
- 2) Argyle Park community gardens

The goals of the blitz are to turn resource-wasteful lawn into permanent, self-sustaining gardens yielding food and beauty for wildlife and humans. The perma-blitz makeovers will be done following the principles of permaculture, including harvest of all precipitation, no-till gardens, emphasis on biodiversity / local species, and 100% organic techniques. There will be great volunteering opportunities for those who want to learn how to do this at home. Your labour will be your ticket to some great permaculture experience with qualified teachers.

### *Fruit Share Spotlight*

Fruit Share Brandon was established by a group of community members with the help of Fruit Share Manitoba in 2013. Fruit Share connects fruit owners with fruit pickers to harvest and share the crop throughout the community. When homeowners have surplus fruit produced by their trees, Fruit Share Brandon mobilizes a team of volunteers to pick the harvest. The harvest is then shared equally between the owners, the pickers, and community organizations. In its first two years, Fruit Share Brandon has harvested over 14,000 lbs of local fruit and donated fruit to 13 local organizations including Samaritan House, Helping Hands, and Salvation Army.

Fruit Share programs offer multi-generational volunteer opportunities for community members. Volunteers involved include youth, young adults, seniors and parents. In addition to increasing availability of fresh fruit for individuals, Fruit Share encourages community involvement and connections to local food while contributing to community beautification through minimizing waste. In 2014 second year, Brandon Fruit Share expanded its programming to include a variety of workshops on cooking and preserving skills, partnering with Community Garden Network.



*Market Vegetables at the Brandon Global Market*

### *Farmers' Markets and Manitoba Health*

Health Inspectors play an important role in ensuring the food safety of alternative food resources. Manitoba Health has created regulatory guidelines for entrepreneurs and operators on food safe handling and operation responsibilities. A permit issued by Manitoba Health is required to operate a Farmers' Market and must be issued at least 14 working days before starting the operation. Operators must additionally submit a list of known vendors for the market and unless otherwise approved by a Public Health Inspector, the operation of a Farmers' Market is restricted to a maximum of two days per week. (Province of Manitoba)

Vendors wishing to sell foods classified as potentially hazardous are required to obtain a separate health permit from a local Public Health Inspector and products for sale must be prepared in an approved food handling establishment. Examples of potentially hazardous foods include: cabbage rolls, cream or dairy products, meat or meat products, egg products, and salsa. A list of Potentially Hazardous Foods are available from Manitoba Health or online. Items not on the list may be considered potentially hazardous at the discretion of the Public Health Inspector. It is the responsibility of vendors and operators both to ensure that a permit is in place before the sale of potentially hazardous items.

Farmers' Markets are short-term operations for the sale of produce and prepared food products. Farmers' Markets bring several producers together in one location to sell their goods directly to producers. Alternatively, Farm Stand is a roadside or parking lot stand on or near the farm property or at a parking lot of a local business. Producers pick the produce and bring it to the location to sell. Some stands specialize in a few food choices, while others have a large selection of products. In addition to the farmers markets and market stands in Appendix D, residents can find various local producers at truck stands in parking lots such as Safeway, Canadian Tire and Dairy Queen at intermittent times throughout the summer months depending on the availability of produce.

As noted in the resident survey and community consultations, many people in Brandon desire more farmers markets, and farmer's markets that are available five days a week. During the Environmental Scan, the food assessment coordinator noted that Brandon has two year round Farmers' Market in operation. While it would be ideal to have farmers' markets that operate seven days a week, guidelines from the Province of Manitoba do not allow for farmers' markets to be open more than 2 days per week currently. (Province of Manitoba) Additionally, farmers who currently operate at markets do not always have capacity (either in terms of man power or product availability) to operate more than a few days a week. (Consultations)

Brandon has two year round Farmers' Markets in operation. During peak growing season from July to September, there are a total of seven markets and market stands in operation weekly. Combined there are markets open a total of four days each week. Three locations operate on Saturdays, and two locations operate on Wednesdays.

According to the resident survey: "...the alternative community resource, Farmers Markets reported both the highest use and the highest need, as well as a low likelihood (7.64%) that lack of awareness prevented use of this resource. Conversely, Fruit Share and Community Shared Agriculture reported over 30% lack of use due to unawareness, over 85% had never used the resource, and high, but not the highest not-needed coefficients. Under further scrutiny, this suggests that expression of a lack of need, could stem from a lack of awareness. So, a modest need expressed for a resource or service that exhibits a low awareness coefficient, could reflect a net, greater need." (N. McLennan)

### *Approved Food Handling Establishments*

There are a number of approved food handling establishments in Brandon that offer a range of rental opportunities for community usage. Approved food handling establishments are regulated by Manitoba Health. Public Health Inspectors can distribute lists of approved kitchens and regulations to interested individuals. Activities that are approved for each kitchen are designated by Manitoba Health. Manitoba Health may require special permits depending on the activity and which community food handling establishment is used.

Even with a variety of approved kitchens available for rent in Brandon, rental costs, availability, capacity, and hours of operation have been noted as some of the barriers for organizations and individuals to accessing approved kitchens. (K. I. Interviews) Some programs for families require adequate space and layout to provide child-minding. Also noted during community consultations, there is some uncertainty and confusion regarding what is allowed at various kitchens, and what constitutes a commercial kitchen versus a community kitchen.

### *Community Kitchens*

Community kitchens operate with a variety of functions and are organized in diverse ways. Community kitchens can be organized as teaching kitchens or collective kitchens, where attendants cook and share meals, or as rented spaces. Community kitchens have the potential to serve as learning kitchens where capacity building takes place, as a processing kitchen, and food can be processed for distribution to the charitable food sector.

In Brandon, kitchens used by the community often have rental fees attached, and as indicated by Key Informant interviews, rental fees are often a barrier to providing programming. Additionally, the demand for these spaces is high as they are often held within another business, or community hall that rents to a much larger audience than those providing food skills and programming workshops.

### *Farmers' Markets Spotlight*

Brandon Farmers' Market has been operating in Brandon since 1978. Originally located at the Prince Edward Hotel, the market now operates year round based out of the Town Centre parking lot from mid-June to mid-Oct and indoor at the Towne Centre from Thanksgiving weekend until mid-June.

### *Brandon's Global Market and Community Kitchen*



The Global Market Community Kitchen is open to all community members, CMHA clients, and Global Market vendors. The community kitchen provides a safe, government inspected kitchen for all to cook, buy, and learn healthy, nutritious, low cost, and alternative food and food preparation. The Global Market Community Kitchen plans to open June of 2015.

*Brandon Global Market, Summer 2014*

*Spotlight on Policy: City of Brandon Food Charter*

A food charter represents a community's voice, values, and priorities for a healthy and self-reliant food system. The city of Brandon Poverty Committee developed a Brandon Food Charter that was accepted by Brandon City Council on April 10, 2014. This is the second food charter to be endorsed in Manitoba. The first food charter was the Manitoba Food Charter, drafted in 2006.

The Brandon Food Charter outlines principles and provides reference to govern decisions about food policy development and food initiatives in Brandon. As a guide, Brandon's Food Charter can help promote the development of food initiatives and link municipal policy and community action.

The food charter articulates a vision for Brandon's overall food policy stating that: "all citizens, regardless of economic and social status, have access to sufficient, affordable, and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and to be free from hunger."

## Opportunities and Recommendations for Action

### *Food Access & Food Choices*

Explore the creation of a grocery store shuttle to increase access to healthy food. This was identified as needed by populations over 55 and community consultations with seniors' residences. Possibilities include working with non-profits such as the Brandon Friendship Centre, Seniors for Seniors and Healthy Brandon. Funding could be accessed through Manitoba Community Services Council, Brandon Area Community Foundation, Neighbourhoods Alive!, Community Projects and other foundations.

Determine opportunities for a downtown grocery store through a social enterprise or co-operative model. The BNRC recommends working with the City of Brandon and Renaissance Brandon to determine what business model will be most successful. As shown in the GIS maps created during the food assessment, Brandon has a food desert located downtown, and although the closure of Stan's has affected the East End, Shoppers Drug Mart does carry some staple food items. The Global Market which now operates year round with the addition of an indoor market during winter-months fills some of the healthy food gap downtown, but cannot provide staple items like milk and fresh meats. There are also opportunities to explore working with specialty grocers downtown to help them include staple items such as dairy products in their store.

Create an alternative food distribution model such as a Good Food Box program to increase lower priced fresh produce available to residents. During the course of the food assessment, a sub-committee was formed to begin planning for a Good Food Box. At present, strategic planning is complete and a host organization is needed to lead this project, but a group of interested partners has met for initial meetings. Potential groups that could organize the first good food box for Brandon include The Global Market Community Kitchen, Salvation Army, and Manitoba Metis Federation.

Develop group buying models to assist agencies in acquiring lower priced food for their programming is needed. If possible, groups offering similar programming should work together to reduce the cost of food by buying in bulk. Such a model could benefit multiple programs in the community. In other communities, group buying hubs are structured as co-operatives, or held within a non-profit or other organization that takes orders on a regular basis to ensure food is fresh.

### Considerations for a Good Food Box & group buying models

- Corporate partnership may be beneficial to buying models for both
- Different populations interested in these programs may have different dietary needs
  - Ex: Seniors, newcomers, expectant mothers, dietary restrictions
- Resources to increase skills can be included in deliver
  - Ex: recipe cards to accompany lesser known food items such as squash
  - Healthy Brandon and students at Assiniboine Community College and Brandon University are willing to partner on this portion of the project.
- Other models used in Winnipeg provide sweat-equity points for volunteers which can be used in exchange for good food boxes.
  - New programs should partner with agencies serving at risk populations such as Neelin Off-Campus, Westman Immigrant Services, Assiniboine Community College Adult Collegiate, and Youth for Christ to ensure the program is affordable and accessible to all individuals.

### ***Food Skills***

Encourage agencies already hosting food skills workshops and training to develop monitoring methods that will help them determine ongoing needs of their clients. During community consultations, it was discovered that sometimes people interested in workshops cannot access them for a variety of reasons. Timing of workshops was a factor in ability to attend for many residents. The resident survey also indicated that some workshops such as budgeting and meal planning are in more demand than others. Monitoring methods could include

- Feedback on the type and timing of workshops
- Effectiveness of workshop training (ex. Do clients need to take training on an ongoing basis or is one time training effective?)
- Encourage partnerships with post-secondary institutions such as Brandon University, Assiniboine Community College and Assiniboine Community College Adult Collegiate to create and deliver more and diverse workshop programming



*New Era Indoor Garden*

Create more community kitchens that are approved for food skills training, food re-sale, and are available with child minding facilities as a cost inclusive rates. The Global Market Community Kitchen will open in the summer of 2015, and while other kitchens are available such as those at Seventh Street Health Access Centre or The Brandon Literacy Centre, Community Kitchens cannot always meet the demand for space, and may not be big enough for larger workshops. The City of Brandon plans to develop a community kitchen at 638 Princess Avenue in the McDiarmid Complex, and should it move ahead as planned, this addition will alleviate some of the demand for affordable spaces open to the public.

Advocate for development of school division based nutritional education in all schools, modeled after pilot programs developed at École New Era. Programs at this school have been developed through Healthy Schools and Healthy Brandon, Healthy Together Now

Funding. Considerations for future expansion of these programs include:

- Work with schools that already have food programming or a school community garden to expand on their impact. Both Crocus High School and Riverview School have developed greenhouses and a community garden respectively.
- Working with Manitoba Health to ensure food safe standards are met when preparing food in schools. Schools that have a certified kitchen or lunch room are at an advantage when launching an initiative of this nature.
- Ensure that programming links to the Manitoba Curriculum, and where applicable, breakfast and lunch programs are supplemented with healthy food from school community gardens.
- Access the resources of the Brandon Community Garden Network and resources developed for salad cart and indoor gardening by École New Era to assist teachers and parents in other schools.
- Establish community gardens and/or indoor growing stations at all Kindergarten to Grade 8 schools in the Brandon School Division.

## ***Policy & Research***

The Community Garden Network and City of Brandon should develop new land use agreements and policy. At present, policies that affect community gardening are included in the Greenspace Master Plan for the City of Brandon, but these policies do not fully address future expansion and development of the Garden Network. At the end of 2014 many of the land use agreements in place were expired, the incorporation of the Brandon Community Garden Network adds a new dimension to renewing land use agreements, and both the City of Brandon and Garden Network have expressed interest in working together.



*Manitoba Metis Federation Garden Build, 2013*

Considerations for implementation

- Adhering to risk management standards on community garden sites.
- Unique needs of garden sites including such things as fencing for protection against wildlife, tool and equipment storage and access to potable water.
- Utilize other resources such as policy developed by the City of Kingston and the City of Kamloops.

The City of Brandon Poverty Committee should develop a local food procurement policy such as Food Matters Manitoba Local Sustainable Food Procurement Program with partnership at the municipal government level. There is also an opportunity for the Poverty Committee to work with the City of Brandon, and Department of Geography at Brandon University to develop GIS maps to develop deeper insight into municipal issues such as where to locate new food retailers in existing food deserts. New policies should not be cost prohibitive to the municipal government, and benefit local business.

- New policies must align to purchasing policies already in place.
- There is an opportunity to include both Fair Trade and local procurement policies as the City of Brandon was named a Fair Trade city in 2014.

The Brandon Community Garden Network and other organizations such as Healthy Brandon and the Brandon Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation have the opportunity to collaborate with Department of Geography and GIS mapping programs to identify potential future community garden development and other projects that deal with food security.

Database creation and website design by post-secondary institutions for non-profits and agencies with limited staff and time capacity can lend meaningful support for organizations as well as meaningful experience within the community for students.

#### Opportunities:

- Survey, assess, and map food affordability at food retailers throughout the community
- Partner with post-secondary institutions to create GIS mapping of Brandon to help identify areas of high need for future garden development
- Sociological Research regarding family units and impacts of community gardening



*In a Good Way  
Nutritious Snack  
provided by Brandon  
Friendship Centre.*

## **Public Awareness**

Community Partners of the original food assessment project should explore the creation of a **Food Action Network** to implement, guide, and monitor supportive food actions and results based programs and partnerships in the following areas:

- Public Awareness
- Food Access
- Food Skills Programming
- Food Policy

Ideally such a network would partner with local farmers markets, Manitoba Health, MAFRD, and independent such as Small Farms Manitoba to use collaborative approaches to compile and share local producer resources. There is a possibility of working with many groups already formed in the community such as Healthy Brandon, The City of Brandon Poverty Committee and The Marquis Project among others.



*International Women's Market at the Brandon  
Global Market, 2014*

### Considerations for implementation

- Should a new organization be created or do other organizations in Brandon or the Province of Manitoba have a similar mandate, and the ability to take this on?
- Collaboration with organizations such as Westman Immigrant Services would increase the reach of such a network through translation services.
- Information should be held in one central and online location that is available to the public.

## Appendix A

### Brandon Community Food Assessment Stakeholders Committee

Assiniboine Community College, Adult Collegiate, Keith Williams, *Director of Adult Learning*

Brandon Community Garden Network, Blake Hamilton

Brandon Friendship Centre, Barb Desjardins, *CPNP Coordinator, In a Good Way,*

Brandon Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation- Naomi Leadbeater, *Community Development Coordinator*

Brandon Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation- Ryan Graves, *Former Community Development Coordinator*

Brandon Poverty Committee- Jan Chaboyer, *City Councillor, Green Acres*

Brandon University- Ms. Nancy McPherson, *Assistant Professor, Faculty of Health Studies*

Community Futures Westman, Roger Guy, *Executive Director*

Food Matters Manitoba, Stefan Epp-Koop, *Program Director*

Healthy Brandon, Shauna Woodmass, *Health Promotion Coordinator, Prairie Mountain Health*

Helping Hands Centre of Brandon, Inc, Vandana Jamadagni, *Coordinator*

Manitoba Métis Federation, Kris Desjarlais, *Knowledge Network Coordinator*

Prairie Mountain Health, Karen LaRoque, *Community Nutritionist*

Samaritan House Ministries, Marla Somersall, Marcia Hamm Weibe, *Former Executive Director and Program Coordinator respectively*

Westman Immigrant Services, Joy Escalara, Jaime Chinchila, *Family Program Facilitator and Cultural Facilitator respectively*

### Good Food Box Sub-Committee

Assiniboine Community College, Jill Proulx, *Nursing Instructor*

Brandon Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation, Erin May & Naomi Leadbeater, *Food Assessment Coordinator and Community Development Coordinator respectively*

Brandon University, Dr. Serena Petrella, *Chair, Department of Sociology*

Manitoba Métis Federation, Kris Desjarlais, *Knowledge Network Coordinator*

Prairie Mountain Health, Karen LaRoque, *Community Nutritionist*

### Meeting Dates and Presentations

Date	Type	Place
November 14, 2014	Initial Stakeholders' meeting	Brandon Police Services Meeting Room
February 25, 2015	Stakeholders meeting	Helping Hands Soup Kitchen
April 11, 2014	Initial Good Food Box Sub-Committee Meeting	CF Westman
May 9, 2014	Good Food Box	BNRC
May 27, 2014	Stakeholders meeting	RM Councillors Meeting Room
May 30, 2014	Good Food Box	CF Westman
September 10, 2014	Good Food Box	BNRC
October 17, 2014	Good Food Box	CF Westman
November 5, 2014	Final Stakeholders Committee Meeting	CF Westman
November 7, 2014	Good Food Box	BNRC
December 5, 2014	Good Food Box	CF Westman
January 27, 2015	Strategic Planning, Good Food Box	CF Westman

Date	Venue	Presentation Type
November 27, 2013	BNRC AGM	Assessment information table
February 28, 2014	Food Matters Manitoba, Growing Local	Assessment Research Presentation
April 5, 2014	Seedy Saturday	Assessment information table
April 8, 2014	Brandon Poverty Committee	Assessment Information Presentation
May 17, 2014	WIS, Family Cooking Time	Survey collection, community resources information
June 20, 2014	CJ 106.5 FM "Broadcasts from Under the Big Sky"	Radio Interview
June 28, 2014	Brandon Global Market	GFB, assessment information, and survey collection
July 3, 2014	Brandon Global Market	GFB, assessment information, and survey collection
July 5, 2014	Brandon Global Market	GFB, assessment information, and survey collection
August 7, 2014	Brandon Global Market	GFB, assessment information, and survey collection
August 9, 2014	Kin Village	Assessment Information and survey collection
August 11, 2014	WIS, Family Cooking Time	Survey collection and community resources information
August 19, 2014	Rotary Club	Assessment information session and survey collection
August 20, 2014	Lawson Lodge	Assessment information session and survey collection
August 26, 2014	Prairie Mountain Health, Healthy Beginnings	Assessment information, survey collection, & community resources information
September 23, 2014	Helping Hands	Survey collection
September 25, 2014	Helping Hands	Survey collection
October 7, 2014	Maple Leaf Foods	Survey collection
October 10, 2014	Maple Leaf Foods	Survey collection
September 10, 2014	United Way	Good Food Box Presentation
October 17, 2014	BU, Native Health Studies	Food Assessment and Food Security Presentation
November 27, 2014	Healthy Together Now, Share and Learn	Assessment Research Methods and Findings Presentation
November 26, 2014	BNRC AGM	Assessment findings and Good Food Box information table
December 2, 2014	WCGTV	Tv Interview
February 15, 2015	Brandon Seedy Sunday	Good Food Box information table
March 10, 2015	Brandon Poverty Committee	Assessment Recommendation Presentation
March 12, 2015	Brandon Seniors Summit	Good Food Box Information Presentation

## **Appendix B – Research Reports**

The following research papers were a result of the food assessment's Community Based Research Approach.

**Ms. Nancy MacLennan, Ms. Erin May & Ms. Naomi Leadbeater; *Assessing Equity within Brandon's Foodscape: A Survey of Brandon Citizens***

**Ms. Nancy McPherson; *Assessing Equity Within Brandon's Foodscape: Qualitative Analysis***

## Appendix C: Key Informant Interviews



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### Key Informant Letter of Invitation

Dear

Food security refers to all people at all times having access to safe healthy food and having the ability to use the food. Community food security takes it one step further – examining whether the community as a whole is food secure. Community food security includes social concerns, the quantity and quality of food available and whether residents in the community have the financial resources to be able to acquire food. Brandon University and the Brandon Neighborhood Renewal Corporation have teamed up to learn about Brandon’s Foodscape which involves an assessment of:

1. What is in place within the City of Brandon that promotes food security?
2. What ought to be in place within the City of Brandon to promote food security?

Your agency serves a specific group of people that may have issues with food security. We are asking you to share your knowledge about food security as it relates to the people you serve.

This study, titled *Assessing Equity within Brandon’s Foodscape* is being conducted by faculty from Brandon University and is supported by the Brandon Neighborhood Renewal Corporation (BNRC) Community Food Assessment Stakeholders Committee. The study is being conducted to find out more about our community food security. The information will be combined with a community wide survey, an environmental scan and GIS mapping of existing services. The findings from this comprehensive assessment will be used to make recommendations regarding future food-related programming and policies.

Participation in the study will involve an interview with one or two key people in your organization who would be able to describe what is working well and what is not working so well to support food security within our community. The interview will take approximately one hour. You will not receive any direct benefits from participating in the study. Other than your time, there are no costs or inconveniences in participation. There are no known risks to participation.

You will receive a phone call within the next week or two to answer any questions you might have about the study, and to ask for your participation. Please consider participating to ensure that the perspective and needs of your clients are well represented.

Sincerely,

Ms. Nancy McPherson,  
Assistant Professor, Department of Nursing  
Brandon University  
phone (204) 571 8578  
email [McPhersonN@brandonu.ca](mailto:McPhersonN@brandonu.ca)



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## Key Informant Interview Guide

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this survey. The information you provide about the clients' experiences with food will help us to better understand the issues related to food security and insecurity in Brandon. Based on your knowledge of the people your agency serves:

5. What do you think is working well in our city regarding food availability, affordability, and accessibility? (Probe: What are some programs or services that help your clients with their food needs?)
6. What do you see as the issues and challenges in our city or your organization regarding food availability, affordability, and accessibility?
7. What do you see as the policy implications that we should consider? (Probe: hours of operation, by-laws around building, nutrition policy within the school system)
8. Are there other individuals or agencies that you think we should speak with?

Thank you so much for taking the time to share your knowledge with us.

***List of Community Organizations invited to Participate***

## Appendix D: Environmental Scan

### Food Retailer Summary Table

#### Food Retailers

#### Community Resources

#### Alternative Meal Programing and Resources

#### Community Gardens

### Food Retailer Summary Table

Grocery Stores	11
Specialty Stores	5
Health Food Stores	3
Meat Markets	6
Bakeries/Baked Goods	6
Wholesalers	1
Convenience Stores	15

### Food Retailers

Grocery Stores	Address	Postal code	Phone Number
Real Canadian Superstore	920 Victoria Ave	R7A 1A7	204-729-4600
Sobeys West End	3409 Victoria Ave	R7B 2L8	204-727-3443
Sobeys Brandon South	1645 18 St	R7A 5C6	204-726-5255
Safeway	921 18 St N	R7A 7S1	204-726-8014
Heritage Co-Op 1997 Ltd	1035 Richmond Ave	R7A 1M5	204-727-5660
Walmart	903 18th St N	R7A 7S1	204-726-5821
Giant Tiger	2626 Victoria Ave	R7B 0M8	204-728-6443
Shoppers Drug Mart	139 Victoria Ave E	R7A 1Z1	204-727-4248
Shoppers Drug Mart	3-1350 18th St	R7A 5C4	204-729-8100
Hurl's Food Marts	1608 Princess Ave	R7A 0R9	204-727-7135
Clemmensen's Movies & More	2340 Rosser Ave	R7B 0E3	204-725-2000
Target	1570 18th St	R7A 5C5	204-578-3900
Specialty	Address	Postal Code	Phone Number
North Supermarket	1136 Rosser Ave	R7A 0L7	204-720-6118
Living Delight	601 9th St	R7A 4B3	204-725-3944
Karla's International	937 Rosser Ave	R7A 0L3	204-726-8805
Tim Tom Asian Grocery	2-559 8th St	R7A 3X8	204-717-1703
T & T Authentic Foods	306 10th St	R7A 4G1	204-727-1913

Health Food Stores	Address	Postal Code	Phone Number
Bulk Barn	130-1300 18th St	R7A 6X7	204-726-0026
Two Farm Kids Natural Foods	565 34th St	R7B 3P8	204-728-2855
Hedley's Health Hut	J-1570 18th St	R7A 5C5	204-725-3131
Meat Markets	Address	Postal Code	Phone Number
Tendercuts	730 18th St	R7A 5B5	204-726-4639
Obermaier's Sausage & Meats Ltd	222 Rosser Ave	R7A 0J9	204-728-0707
Clancy's Meat Co.	1-839 18th St	R7A 5B8	204-728-8865
M & M Meat Shops	1300 18th St	R7A 6X7	204-729-9042
Fish Hut	622 10th St	R7A 4G5	204-725-4723
East 40 Packers Ltd	700 Grandview St	R7A 7L2	204-727-7267
Bakeries/Baked Goods	Address	Postal Code	Phone Number
Sweet Temptations Bakery	459 23rd St	R7B 1V7	204-727-1601
McGavin's Bread Basket	1-547 8th St,	R7A 3X8	204-726-0440
Blue Hills Bakery & Deli	1229 Richmond Ave	R7A 1M5	204-571-6762
Victor's Bakery	222 Rosser Ave	R7A 0J9	204-717-8500
Kuipers Family Bakery	1411 1st St	R7A 2Y7	204-728-3023
Brandon Hispano Bakery	260 10th St	R7A 4E8	204-730-0829
Wholesale(rs)	Address	Postal Code	Phone Number
Sobey's Cash & Carry	205 16th Street N	R7A 6X6	204-725-1422
Convenience Stores	Address	Postal Code	Phone Number
Hurl's Food Marts	1061 10th St	R7A 4H3	204-725-0013
Hurl's Food Marts	738 Victoria Ave E	R7A 1Z9	204-725-0025
7 Eleven	3360 Victoria Ave W	R7B 2R5	204-729-0223
7 Eleven	5 Willowdale Cres	R7B 2X3	204-729-0220
7 Eleven	701 10th St	R7A 4G7	204-729-0221
Jiffy Food & Video	1250 Richmond Ave	R7A 6X4	204-726-1494
Shell	1790 Highland Ave	R7C 1A7	204-571-3158
Shell	510 1st St	R7A 2X1	204-729-0702
Mac's Convenience Stores	855 1st St	R7A 2X6	204-727-0162
Towne Centre General Store	800 Rosser Ave	R7A 6N5	204-727-6882
Mohawk & Convenience Store	2-223 18th St N	R7A 2V8	204-725-2999
Mohawk Brandon Stop N' Shop	102 Rosser Ave	R7A 0J7	204-727-3960
Heritage Co-Op 1997 Ltd	300 18th St N	R7A 7P3	204-727-5473
Heritage Co-Op 1997 Ltd	646 6th St	R7A 3P1	204-728-5794
Tempo, Little Chief's Place	2025 Lyndale Dr	R7A 7K9	204-727-0777

**Community Resources**

Food Banks	Address	Phone Number		
Samaritan House Ministries	1610 Pacific Ave	204-726-0758		
Salvation Army	9 Princess Ave E	204-727-4334		
St. Augustine's	327 4th St	204-727-4278		
The Father's Pantry	1228 Rosser Ave	204-726-3312		
BUSU Food Bank	270 18th St, KDC Building	204-727-9660		
Loaves and Fishes	Contact- Lisa Halter			
ACC- ACCSA	1430 Victoria Ave E	204-725-8710		
Soup Kitchen	Address	Phone Number		
Helping Hands Soup Kitchen	111 7th St	204-727-4635		
The Vineyard Café	1327 Rosser Ave			
Meal Delivery Services	Organization	Phone Number		
Meals on Wheels	Prairie Oasis Seniors Centre	204-727-6641		
Brandon School Division	Address		Breakfast Program	Snack Program
Betty Gibson School	701 12th St		Y	
King George School	535 Park St		Y	
Meadows School	1220 22nd St		Y	
Earl Oxford School	540 18th St			Y
George Fitton School	1129 3rd St			Y
Green Acres School	335 Queens Ave E			Y
École Harrison	415 Queens Ave			
J. R. Reid School	813 26th St			Y
Kirkaldy Heights School	10 Knowlton Dr			Y
Linden Lanes School	49 Silver Birch Dr			Y
Riverheights School	32 E. Fotheringham Dr			Y
Riverview School	1105 Louise Ave E			Y
St. Augustine's School	330 3rd St			Y
Valleyview Centennial School	65 Whillier Dr			Y
Waverly Park School	3800 Park Ave			Y
Senior High Schools	Address			
Crocus Plains Regional Secondary School	1930 - 1st St			Y
École Secondaire Neelin High School	1020 Brandon Ave			Y
Vincent Massey High School	715 McDiarmid Dr			Y
Community School Parntership Initiative	Address			
École New Era School	527 Louise Ave		Y * & Lunch	Y

**Alternative Meal Programing and Resources**

Seniors Accomodation + Housing	Address	Meal Program
Crocus Gardens	2 Crocus Gardens	
Grand Valley	218 4th St	
Hobbs Manor	333 15th St	Y
Kin Village Inc.	105 1511 Rosser Ave	
Kiwanis Court Westman	121 4th St	
Lawson Lodge	261 8th St	
Lions Manor Westman	35 Victoria Ave E	
Odd Fellows Corner	939 9th St	
Parkview	1321 13th St	
Princess park	249 9th St	Y
Princess Towers	248 8th St	Y
Riverheights Terrace	4525 Victoria Ave	Y
Sokol Manor Apartments	30 13th St N	
Sokol Manor Supportive	30 13 St N	Y
Victoria Landing	10 Victoria Ave E	Y
Winnipeg House	212 15th St	Y
Western MB Seniors Nonprofit Housing Cooperative	620 McDiarmid Dr	
Farmers' Market	Phone Number	
Brandon Farmers' Market	204-763-4888	
Brandon Global Market	204-573-8046	
Patmore's Farmers' Market	204-763-4888	
Neighbourhood Country Market	204-727-3788	
Farm Stands	Phone Number	
Brown Sugar Produce	H: 204-727-8372 C: 204-761-0529	
Klasse Woods Natural Farm	1-204-526-2861	
The Chicken Run	1-204-526-2373	

## Community Gardens

Community Gardens	Address	#	Type	Total plots	DOB	Yrly Growth	Type of Garden
Park Community Centre	1428 Louise Ave	20	raised beds	20	1998	20	City
Alexandra	12th St & College Ave	33	raised beds	33	2003	33	BSD
Rock Park	15th St & Louise Ave	10	raised beds	20	2003	10	City
Humming Bird	26th St & Maryland Ave	33	raised beds		2008	355	BSD
		380	ground level	413			BSD
New Era Community School Friendship	4th St & Louise Ave	40	raised beds	40	2009	40	BSD
Green Futures East	Park St & Victoria Ave E	44	raised beds	43	2010	43	City
Green Futures North	6th St N & Stickney Ave	82	raised beds	82	2011	82	City
Kin Park	3rd St, 1 block N of Aberdeen	20	raised beds		2012	20	City
		1	ground level	40			
Manitoba Metis Federation Southern Region	646 6th St	30	raised beds	30	2013	60	MMF
Westman Seniors Housing Coop	620 McDiarmid Dr	10	raised beds	20	2013	30	WSHC
Westridge Community Centre	32 Willowdale Cres	10	raised beds	10	2013		City
South End Community Centre	1140 9th St	10	ground level	10	2013		City
Riverview	Laurence Cres & Louise Ave	16	raised beds		2014	36	City
		1	ground level	32			
West End Community Centre	247 23rd St	8	raised beds	8	2014		City
Brandon University Healthy Campus	18th St & Louise Ave	1	ground level	12	2014	20	BU
Argyle Park		1	ground level	20	2014		McDiarmid Church

## **Appendix E: Recommendations**

In an effort to make this document as user friendly as possible, the recommendations appear as a separate section should you wish to make reference to only them, or use recommendations for informing strategic planning.

### **Opportunities and Recommendations for Action**

#### ***Food Access & Food Choices***

1. Explore the creation of a grocery store shuttle to increase access to healthy food.
2. Determine opportunities for a downtown grocery store through a social enterprise or co-operative model.
3. Create an alternative food distribution model such as a Good Food Box program to increase access to lower priced fresh produce available for residents.
4. Develop group buying models to assist agencies in acquiring lower prices food for their programming needs.

#### ***Food Skills***

5. Encourage agencies already hosting food skills workshops and training to develop monitoring methods that will help them determine ongoing needs of their clients
6. Create more community kitchens that are approved for food skills training, food re-sale, and are available with child minding facilities.
7. Advocate for development of school division based nutritional education in all schools, modeled after pilot programs developed at École New Era.
8. Establish community gardens and/or indoor growing stations at all Kindergarten to Grade 8 schools in the Brandon School Division.

#### ***Policy & Research***

9. The Community Garden Network and City of Brandon develop new land use agreements and policy.
10. The City of Brandon Poverty Committee develop a local food procurement policy such as Food Matters Manitoba Local Sustainable Food Procurement Program with partnership at the municipal government level.
11. The Poverty Committee, in partnership with the City of Brandon and Department of Geography at Brandon University, develop GIS maps to gain deeper insight into municipal issues such as where to locate new food retailers in existing food deserts.
12. The Brandon Community Garden Network and other organizations such as Healthy Brandon and the Brandon Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation collaborate with Department of Geography to identify potential future community garden development and other projects that deal with food security.
13. Database creation and website design by post-secondary institutions for non-profits and agencies with limited staff and time capacity can lend meaningful support to organizations and offer valuable learning opportunities for students.

#### ***Public Awareness***

14. Community partners of the original food assessment project explore the creation of a Food Action Network to implement, guide, and monitor supportive food actions and results based programs.

## **Appendix F: Ongoing Community Based Research Projects**

**Ongoing Research Projects include:**

***Dr. Serena Petrella, Suyoko Tsukamoto and Naomi Leadbeater; Phase I: Participatory and Effective Landscapes: Social Justice and Community Gardening***

- This project was assisted by Dr. Christopher Malcolm and students of the Department of Geography

***Dr. Dion Wiseman; Community Store Survey and mapping project with Department of Geography, Brandon University***

***Keith Williams & Naomi Leadbeater; Evaluating Healthy Brandon's Food Action Investments***

- This project was initiated by Healthy Brandon, Healthy together now and completed with in-kind supports from Assiniboine Community College and the Brandon Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation

***Dr. Serena Petrella, Suyoko Tsukamoto and Naomi Leadbeater; Phase II: Participatory and Effective Landscapes: Social Justice and Community Gardening***

Copies of ongoing research may be available by contacting the Community Development Coordinator at Brandon Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation. Please email [n.leadbeater@brandon.ca](mailto:n.leadbeater@brandon.ca) or call 204-729-2494 for more information on these projects.

### **Pending Approval**

***Dr. Dion Wiseman & Naomi Leadbeater; Mapping Brandon's growing community garden network to determine strategies for social inclusion***

## Appendix G: Other Documentation

### *Common Brandon Acronyms*

Acronym	Full Name
ACC	Assiniboine Community College
AFFI	Assiniboine Food Forrest
BCGN	Brandon Community Garden Network
BFC	The Brandon Friendship Centre
BNRC	Brandon Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation
BU	Brandon University
BUREC	Brandon University
CPNP	Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
CURP	Community University Research Partnership
EAL	English as an Additional Language
NA	Neighbourhoods Alive!
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
PMH	Prairie Mountain Health
WHO	World Health Organization
WIS	Westman Immigrant Services

### *Common Definitions used in this document*

**Community Shared (Supported) Agriculture:** Community shared agriculture is a partnership between farmers and their customers. Customers invest a fee in the farmers' crops in the spring and when the crops are harvested, receive a share of the vegetables the farmer grows. By paying for a "share" at the beginning of the season, farmers are guaranteed the sale of their crop and their members enjoy a steady, weekly supply of freshly harvested, locally grown food. Typically CSA programs offer fruits and vegetables. Some CSA programs also offer honey, eggs, jams, poultry, and other meats. (Manitoba Local Producer's Guide)

**Corporate social responsibility:** a company's policy of activities regarding responsibility towards the community and environment in which it operates. (WHO)

**Farm Stand:** A is a roadside or parking lot stand on or near the farm property or at a parking lot of a local business. (Local Producers Guide book)

**Food access:** having sufficient economic and physical resources to obtain appropriate foods for a nutritious diet. (Eg: food cost and transportation.) (WHO)

**Food availability:** sufficient quantities of quality food available on a consistent basis. (WHO)

**Food desert:** a neighbourhood where residents do not have ready access to affordable, nutritious food due to lack of healthy food providers or transportation to healthy food providers. (WHO)

**Food security:** "when all people, at all times, have physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life." (WHO)

**Food use:** appropriate knowledge of basic nutrition, care, food safety, and sanitary conditions to choose, prepare, and distribute food safely for all family members. (WHO)