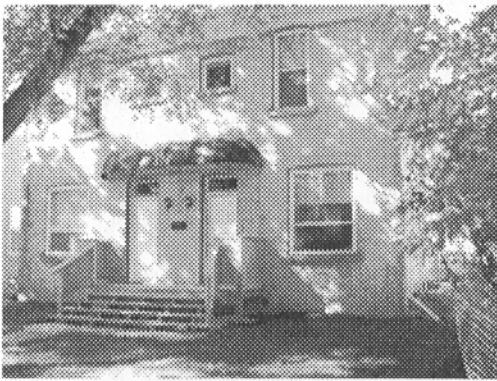


Student Housing—A Community Project



Located in the heart of Winnipeg, the University of Winnipeg is in an ideal position to lead discussions about urban renewal. As part of the downtown neighbourhood, it is the University's responsibility to participate in the continual improvement of the area.

President Constance Rooke has a vision for the University that involves extending its parameters further into the community. Her vision has become a plan to en-

hance the neighbourhood and develop student residences close to campus. "The goal is to help in rejuvenating the neighbourhood. It's part of our mission, as an urban university, to be part of the community," she says.

With its sights set on revitalizing the neighbourhood while expanding the range of affordable housing options for students, the University launched Phase One of a long-term plan. Dr. Rooke assembled a housing team comprised of faculty and student representatives, University administrators, and members of our Institute of Urban Studies (IUS). This group explored student housing needs as well as the social issues.

A leader in urban design, IUS collected information on housing by distributing a survey to more than 1,500 students. The results showed that housing is an important issue, especially among those from outside Winnipeg.

A collaborative community project in every respect, the U of W housing initiative has also involved non-profit, government, and private sector partners. Open meetings with area residents provided an opportunity for neighbours to discuss the project.

After data collection and analysis, the University of Winnipeg Educational Housing Corporation (UWEHC) purchased four houses and a vacant lot on Balmoral Street, just five 'walking' minutes south of campus.

The houses are located in the West Broadway neighbourhood where a richly woven tapestry of people exhibit a strong sense of pride in their community. As a partner in revitalizing the inner city, UWEHC is committed to preserving the integrity of neighbourhoods by rehabilitating existing housing, rather than bulldozing to build new houses. By renovating existing units, UWEHC has been able to contribute to residential regeneration, adding vibrancy and sustainability to the area. The group is also committed to serving the needs of students, in both their classrooms and residences. The intention is to create an environment where students can excel academically while having an opportunity to grow socially and personally.

Putting Students First

"The people here are great. But the diversity is what really makes it cool."

Will Peterson
2nd Year, Major: Art History & Anthropology
Hometown: Brainerd, Minnesota, USA

"The residence idea is great because it has allowed me to meet new people. It also gives us a chance to support each other; something that is essential during first year."

"It has been easy to become a part of the U of W"

Kate MacDonald
1st Year
Hometown: Carmen, Manitoba

"The houses are beautiful and the people here are like family."

Nelly McKees
Senior 4, The Collegiate
Hometown: Ndola, Zambia



One student resident assistant is living in each of the homes to support the other students and to ensure its safe and professional operation. L-R Emilio Schein, Alan Greyeyes, Will Peterson, and Laurel Duff.

Kinkora Developments, engaged as project managers, saw the construction process through to completion. They were assisted by construction and carpentry students from Red River College. During the post-construction phase Kinkora has been involved with recruiting, training, and supervising resident assistants.

With a lot of imagination, extensive planning, and a ton of elbow grease, the first three houses were ready for occupancy in September. The University was gratified to receive \$372,000 in government grants in support of the project.

The Student Experience— A Life Experience

Student residents were excited and impressed as they toured their new digs. Renovated with functionality and comfort in mind, each resident's room is furnished with a bed, desk, chair, and dresser, and equipped with study/computer space and high-speed network connections. The multi-bedroom houses also feature common cooking areas and living space designed to promote social interaction.

The University of Winnipeg believes that not all learning takes place in the traditional classroom setting. Residence life is an opportunity for students to build a sense of community and citizenship within both their homes and their neighbourhood. Having a location close to the University creates an attachment to campus. Some of the strongest connections to a university arise as a result of student housing experiences.

The Big Picture

Phase One is part of a long-term plan to develop student housing in the context of neighbourhood revitalization. Tom Carter, Director of Urban and Regional Research at IUS, has engaged students and community groups in developing a University land-use plan that will include a student housing component.

Some of the possible components of the long-term student housing plan being developed in conjunction with Student Services are:

- the expansion of the existing "Homestay Program," where students are matched with Winnipeg households for the duration of their studies. Currently offered to

international students in the ESL program of Continuing Education and Collegiate Divisions, this program is being expanded to include rural Manitoba.

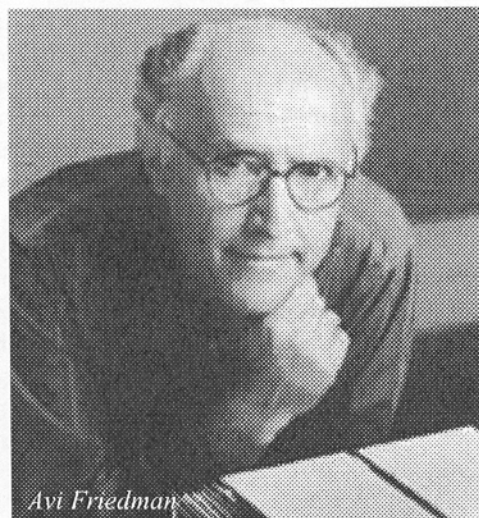
- the development of partnerships and contracted housing agreements for student accommodation, in conjunction with private management firms.
- strategies for specialized student housing needs, such as single parent accommodations.

An Inter-University Project

Avi Friedman, urban design specialist and associate professor of architecture at McGill University, is working in concert with IUS on the long-term project, addressing the challenges of urban revitalization. In addition to his design expertise, Friedman has vast experience working with community groups and has facilitated many community housing developments.

He has earned an international reputation as an expert on inner city revitalization and housing options that are suitable for student accommodation. His knowledge, combined with the wealth of resources here in Manitoba, creates a strong foundation on which to build the University's plans.

This inter-university collaboration is only the first step. Friedman, who has a number of academic associations at the U of W and around the world, sees Winnipeg as an important link to the work going on in Montreal, the U.S., Mexico, China, and elsewhere in the world. As he suggests, Winnipeg can be part of the global solution to inner city decline.



Avi Friedman

All faculty
and staff
are cordially
invited to view
the homes of:

Phase One— The University of Winnipeg Student Housing Project

Friday, November 3, 2000
12 noon to 3:30 p.m.

266 Balmoral St.

270 Balmoral St.

278 Balmoral St.

284 Balmoral St.

Just one block south of the
University!

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