



MANITOBA NON-PROFIT
HOUSING ASSOCIATION

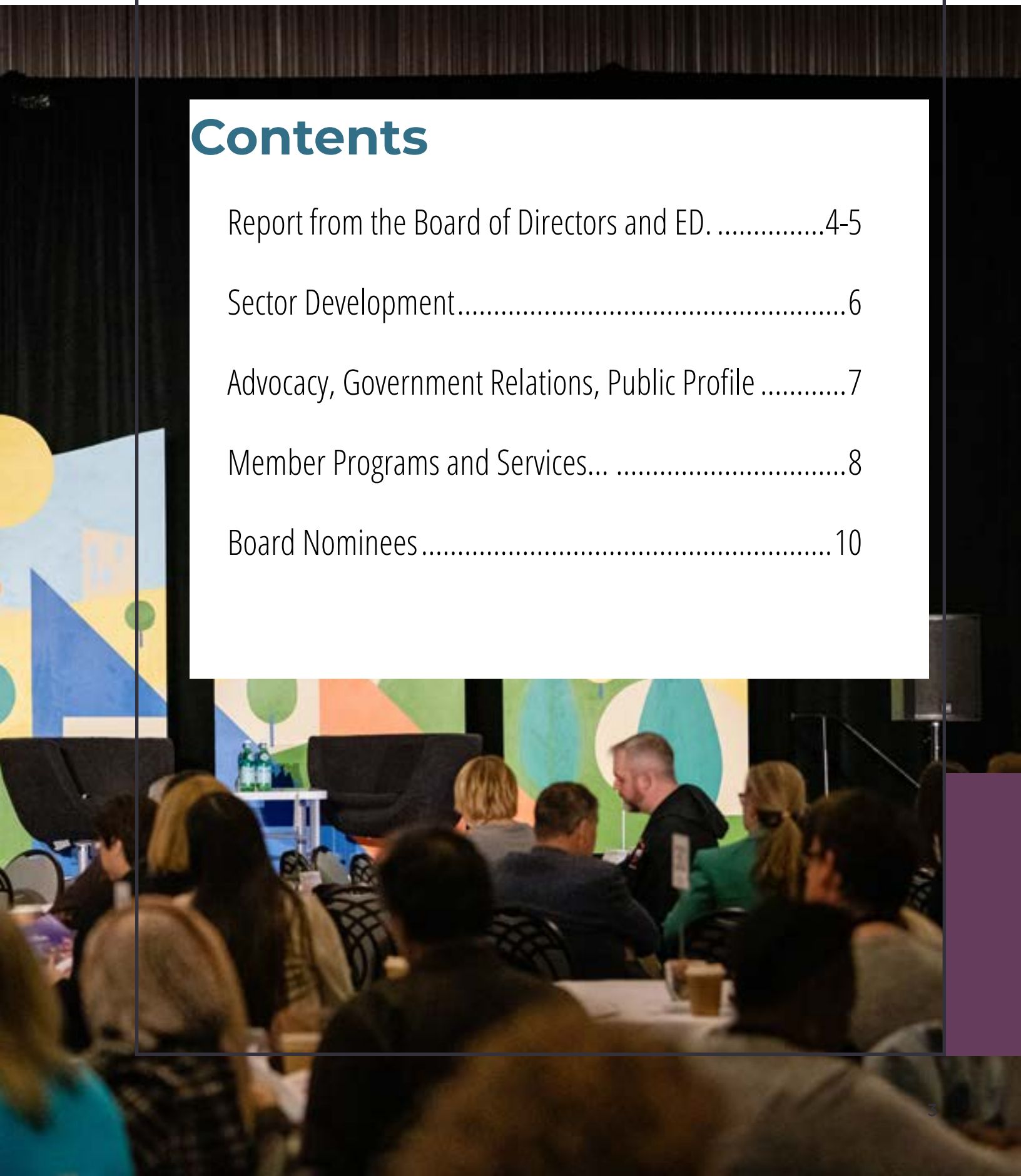
Annual Report 2023-24

MNPHA
Manitoba Non-Profit Housing Association



Contents

Report from the Board of Directors and ED.	4-5
Sector Development.....	6
Advocacy, Government Relations, Public Profile	7
Member Programs and Services... ..	8
Board Nominees.....	10



Report from the Board of Directors and Executive Director

Throughout the 2023/24 year, we saw the efforts of our sector to be the voice for affordable housing pay dividends in influencing public and political conversation on housing. MNPHA's second annual Housing Day in May was a great success, with engagement from Mayors, the Minister of Families and enthusiastic participation at the networking event from provincial candidates who are now in leadership roles in government, including Premier Wab Kinew.

There is more to do. MNPHA undertook research on lessons learned from Manitoba Housing's devolution from 2016-2021, which will be released in 2024.

Impacts of MNPHA's advocacy efforts seen throughout this year include:

- 1. A new funding model for expired and expiring operating agreements that provides for increases over time, greater flexibility, a portfolio-approach to funding, and incentives for strong business practices**
- 2. A provincial government that has pledged to end chronic homelessness in two terms, with recognition that housing needs to be a central part of the solution**
- 3. Common messaging and more ambitious targets from those advocating for community housing on the number of units needed to address core housing need**



MNPHA Board and Executive Director, from left: Pete Sanderson, Crystal Wels, Norman Blackie, Tara Brousseau Snider, James Heinrichs, Christina Maes Nino, Bill Dinsdale, David Gawthrop

While devolution of Manitoba Housing assets has stopped, reducing the fear of further privatization of social housing, there are potential benefits of a larger, more self-reliant non-profit housing sector that have yet to be realized. Non-profit housing organizations continue to be challenged with increasing costs, increasing complexity in building and tenant support needs, and limited funding combined with persistent poverty amongst the people they serve. Indications of public and political support have not yet led to transformative changes needed for a sustainable housing sector.

While policy makers question the capacity of the sector, the resources available to the sector remain significantly limited compared to public resources going towards housing for middle and high-income households. MNPHA will continue to convene leaders in non-profit housing to share their solutions with decision-makers and advocate with one voice.

Throughout 2023-24, MNPHA built partnerships within and across the sector to build our members' and sectors' capacity. We launched the New Housing Professionals Program to foster the network, knowledge, and long-term commitment to housing amongst those newer to the non-profit housing sector. We also started negotiating agreements with funders of energy efficiency programs to provide proactive outreach, resources, and hands-on support for organizations looking to reduce their energy use in buildings. These efficiency programs launched in summer of 2024.

The significant program development of MNPHA from 2021-2023, with the creation of the Housing Supports Initiative and the Rent Relief Fund, has now stabilized. We have received positive indications from funders at the Department of Housing, Addictions, and Homelessness that these programs will

be sustained for the foreseeable future. This allowed MNPHA to develop a plan to shift the Housing Supports Initiative to the Tenant Supports Initiative. We created a long-term strategy for the Rent Relief Fund Program, which solidified the staffing compliment with an aim to serve participants quickly and responsively. One of the priorities for the Rent Relief Program to better serve participants was a move to a centrally located, accessible office. After years of mostly remote work, we are using the opportunity to identify other ways the move to an accessible 'home base' can provide benefits to our members and the participants we serve.

There is a continued recognition amongst leaders in the sector that we can only solve our own challenges by working together, which requires those in housing to know each other and learn together. The new quarterly Breakfast Club brought people together over breakfast to speed network and problem solve. MNPHA's annual conference was held in partnership with the Canadian Housing and Renewal Association's annual Congress on Housing and Homelessness this year. The committed support of our sponsors allowed MNPHA members to attend at a significantly discounted rate. This allowed those with limited professional development budgets to learn from national leaders in housing and hear about trends in the sector across Canada. We also held an education day for members to engage with local issues and meet together in a smaller setting in the Fall.

For the year ahead, MNPHA will build on these accomplishments and strive to ensure the shared priorities of the sector are heard and acted upon. We will continue to provide resources and create forums to gather and share ideas and solutions together. Our members' resilience and determination is an inspiration and integral part of the community housing sector's strengths.

Sector Development

The best part of Education Day?

“Learning from and being with people who ‘get it’”

MNPHA believes in the strengths and knowledge of the sector, and therefore focuses on capacity building activities that bring people together to build networks, share information and resources, and problem solve collectively. These include the new quarterly Breakfast Club, held in Winnipeg and Brandon, where attendees participated in speed networking to share their challenges and successes. This year, Winnipeg hosted the Canadian Housing and Renewal Association’s (CHRA) annual congress on housing and homelessness. It was an opportunity to display the innovation and trends in our sector, including hosting discussions on Manitoba Housing Transformation, on MNPHA’s election strategy, and the Wehwehneh Bahgahkinahgoohn conversion of Winnipeg’s Hudson Bay building. MNPHA’s partnership with the CHRA allowed MNPHA members to register for the event at a significant discount so they could meet housers across Canada and be inspired by national initiatives and examples of great housing from across the country. MNPHA also held workshops on the topics identified by our members as priorities. This included Homelessness 101 by Dr. Nick Falvo, and Conflict Resolution from Mediation Services. An Education Day was held in the Fall, with topics including risk management, funding and financing initiatives and programs, and burnout and staff retention.

140

Conference/Congress attendees

from Manitoba engaging with over 500 housers from across Canada

80

Education Day attendees

learning about risk management, funding and financing initiatives, burnout and retention




Advocacy, Government Relations, and Public Profile

With Manitoba's provincial election in October, 2023, MNPHA developed and implemented an election strategy with the aims of:

1. Every political party to have campaign promises that will benefit the non-profit housing sector
2. Media and the public talking about non-profit housing as a solution to housing issues
3. MNPHA to be seen as a resource and solution for all parties throughout and after the election
4. Partners/competitors/others who influence the election and candidates' ears adopt our housing asks.

We worked with our members to develop fact sheets on our advocacy priorities, to meet with political party representatives and candidates to share those messages, to develop videos and social media on the benefits of social housing, and more. These election priorities were first shared with provincial government representatives at our Second Annual Housing Day in May, 2023. After the election, MNPHA offered to meet with all new and re-elected MLAs, and has since met with a number of them to discuss our sector's priorities for housing.

At the federal level, MNPHA has continued to advocate in partnership with the Canadian Housing and Renewal Association. We collaborated with the CHRA and provincial partners on a study on The Impact of Community Housing on Productivity. At a time when federal politicians and policy-makers are concerned about our national productivity, this study demonstrated that bringing Canada's community housing stock to the OECD average by 2030 would boost economic productivity by a staggering 5.7% to 9.3%. This informed meetings that MNPHA participated in during Housing on the Hill in November, and will continue to be useful well into the future.



"It was fun and empowering to present our case together as a group. It was very educational to catch a glimpse of how the government works from day-to-day and also to understand more in what ways the MLAs are isolated from a lot of the day-to-day impacts of their policy and decisions. The materials prepared by MNPHA for the presentation were fantastic!"

Member Programs and Services

This was the first year of MNPHA's New Housing Professionals program, developed with the financial support of the Assiniboine Credit Union. The program provides complimentary access to all MNPHA events and workshops during the year, as well as a networking event for program participants. Thirteen people participated this year. When describing why they wanted to join the program, one person shared:

“Some days I feel like I could use all the help I can get! I have goals to do the best job possible for my community...being in a small community it's been difficult to navigate the day-to-day challenges. I know I require more experience only time can provide, but I also know education is invaluable.”

New intake for the program will begin in January, and we will continue to build it based on feedback from participants.

MNPHA has also been working throughout this year on creating services that are high-

value to our members, meeting gaps that they cannot fill individually. One of those gaps that is often raised is the challenge of accessing funding and the technical support necessary to build or retrofit housing that is more energy efficient. While energy efficiency is expected for much of the new funding, we know that affordability is the focus of many non-profit housing organizations.

We developed a partnership with the Community Housing Transformation Centre to host a Regional Energy Coach for the Prairies. This expanded resource will provide community housing organizations coaching and technical services to be able to undertake energy efficient capital projects. We have also been working with Efficiency Manitoba, a long-time partner and Associate member of MNPHA. A new role, Non-Profit Energy Efficiency Program Coordinator, will be working with members to navigate and access Efficiency Manitoba's programs and services, and to develop an energy efficiency strategy for the sector. We look forward to sharing more about these services in the year ahead.

Rent Relief Fund

“Very helpful, understanding, accommodating staff, considerate, pleasant, the list goes on. I would have been homeless if it wasn’t for the Rent Relief Fund.”

The third year of the Rent Relief Fund has meant greater stability and longer term planning for the program so it can continue to provide Manitobans with support, mediation, service navigation, and low-barrier loans to preserve their housing stability. MNPHA staff undertook strategic planning for the program to work on a renewed funding agreement with the Government of Manitoba. This planning led to changes in the staffing model to more effectively support the complex situations participants are facing in attempting to maintain their housing, a plan for a central and accessible office location, and the development of a database to better serve participants and track program results.

Throughout 2023-24, 419 loans were approved for rent and/or utility arrears or assistance with a damage deposit/first month’s rent. While this represents a reduced number of loans from the year before, the demand has not decreased. Instead, MNPHA’s staff team has developed a partnership with Manitoba Hydro to better negotiate payment arrangements instead of providing a loan, and more participants are referred to other services that have allowed them to access or maintain housing. The program also supports landlords. In the survey of landlords, 79% said they agree or strongly agree that the loans helped their tenants stabilize their housing, helped avoid eviction and 95% said they will continue to refer tenants to the program.

Housing Supports Initiative

The Housing Supports Initiative provides funding for 18 unique programs across Manitoba that support individuals and families to transition from homelessness or to promote successful tenancies. It is the first fund administered and developed for and by the non-profit housing sector to address our priorities for supports within housing, which we know are essential for long-term successful tenancies. This year, the funding remained status quo from the first two years that the initiative started. Because there is now increased funding for rapid rehousing and housing first programs through the Government of Manitoba, MNPHA aims to work with Manitoba Housing and grant recipients to transition to a “Tenant Supports Initiative” focused on supporting successful tenancies for those living in community and affordable housing in the year ahead.

The programs continue to make a meaningful impact in housing support and homelessness prevention. In 2023-24, almost 1400 households were supported with services ranging from support accessing benefits or applying for housing, to training as advocates for other tenants.

“My vision is that this can develop tenants’ confidence, tenants’ connections with each other and with their community, and be a building block to help tenants and their community thrive.”

Board Nominees

MNPHA'S BOARD CONSISTS OF REPRESENTATIVES OF OUR MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS, WITH 10 NON-PROFIT AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROVIDER MEMBERS AND 1 ASSOCIATE MEMBER

One of MNPHA's active and outspoken Board Members, Pete Sanderson, has reached his term limit and will be leaving the Board of Directors. Pete has served as Treasurer of the Association, has been active on committees, and is passionate about the non-profit housing sector. He is always willing to share his perspective, challenge us and our partners to think differently and take action, and will be missed at the board table. Additionally, Tara Snider has resigned from MNPHA's Board. Tara's mental health expertise and advocacy for supportive housing in Manitoba built MNPHA's own advocacy agenda and we wish her the best in future endeavours.

MNPHA has 3 Board Members who have been nominated for an additional 3-year term: Bill Dinsdale (serving as an Associate Member), Crystal Wels, and David Gawthrop. Additionally, the Nomination Committee is recommending 3 new members: Nicole Jones, Angel Ramsay, and Melissa Neapew.



BILL DINSDALE

Bill is a Senior Commercial Account Manager, Not for Profit Specialist with the Assiniboine Credit Union. As an Associate Member of MNPHA, Bill works with many of our member organizations on financing for new development and renewal, and therefore understand the fiscal and governance strengths and challenges of the sector. Bill is a strong advocate for the Association, inviting new members at every opportunity. He is active in the community, always learning more about the sector so he can help, and you will see him at many of MNPHA and our members events.



CRYSTAL WELS

Crystal is Senior Property Manager with the University of Winnipeg Community Renewal Corporation, 2.0. In her role, she has overseen major growth in property management for the corporation, including creating systems for its unique blend of premium, market, below market, and subsidized rents and building partnerships to maintain healthy communities and tenancies. She is an Accredited Residential Manager with REIC, and supports and mentors others new to social housing property management.



DAVID GAWTHROP

David is General Manager of Village Canadien, where he has overseen many changes that have improved the Co-Op and its long-term sustainability. This includes an amalgamation with another Cooperative housing organization, a major renovation project, the end of the cooperative's mortgage, and now is working on an expansion to be able to support aging in place at the Village Canadien.

Board Nominees

NICOLE JONES

Nicole is Quality and Operations Manager at Eden Health Care Services. Nicole has a background in policy development, risk, accreditation, strategic planning and Human Resources. She provides representation for housing in rural Southern Manitoba, overseeing services in Winkler, Steinbach, and Winnipeg, with hopes to expand into more communities. Her perspective of supportive housing with mental health supports will provide valuable insights to the Board especially as Manitoba seeks to expand supportive housing options for people experiencing and at risk of homelessness.



ANGEL RAMSAY

Angel is Co-manager of Kinew Housing, Canada's first and Manitoba's largest Indigenous-led non-profit housing organization. She began at Kinew as a summer student and continued on with the organization for decades, gaining knowledge, education, and maintaining her enthusiasm for providing affordable housing for Indigenous families in Winnipeg.

MELISSA NEAPEW



Melissa is Housing Manager at Sagemace Housing, which has sponsor management agreements with Manitoba Housing to manage most of the housing in Camperville, as well as housing in Duck Bay. Melissa has a varied background in building maintenance including roofing, drywall, and an electrical apprentice, as well as property management and administration, which has allowed her to build the diversity of skills needed to manage housing in a small community with a very small team.

Melissa is interested in affordable housing, community safety, and transitioning young adults into their first homes. She has been active in MNPHA since she started at Sagemace two years ago, engaging her board in training opportunities and participating in MNPHA's New Housing Professionals program.



518