



# **Building Capacity and Promoting Sustainability in Manitoba's Non-profit Sector**

Manitoba Government  
Discussion Paper

# The Challenge and Opportunity

## What is Community Development?

Community development is a broad term that describes actions taken by civic leaders, non-profit organizations, private donors, professionals, businesses, community members and volunteers to build thriving, resilient and sustainable local communities.

Non-profit and charitable organizations play an important role in our society and economy. The services they provide improve the quality of life for individuals and communities, particularly the most vulnerable. Across Canada, the economic value of the non-profit and charitable sector is estimated to account for 8.5 per cent of the GDP (Statistics Canada 2018). There is no question that this sector is crucial in building vibrant, thriving and sustainable communities in our nation and our province.

According to research conducted by Imagine Canada, the landscape affecting the non-profit sector is undergoing significant change. Reduced volunteerism, an aging population, shifts in giving patterns, fiscal pressures on governments, income inequality and service duplication all present challenges.

In light of these changes, governments across Canada and the world are looking for innovative models of community development that strengthen capacity, increase sustainability and leverage partnerships across all sectors to improve outcomes.

Our challenge and opportunity is: how can we develop and support sustainable models of community development that make the best use of resources and partnerships in order to deliver positive outcomes for Manitobans?

## A New Strategy to Build Capacity

The Manitoba government is developing a new strategy to build capacity and promote sustainability in the non-profit sector that will guide future provincial investment and inform transformation in community development programs and policies.

The strategy is being developed in order to:

- improve the quality of life in our communities by promoting the capacity of the non-profit sector
- ensure the non-profit sector and individual organizations across Manitoba are sustainable and strong, and are best poised to deliver on their individual mandates
- increase philanthropy and charitable giving and reduce the over-reliance of non-profit organizations on public grants and transfers
- enable Manitoba's non-profit sector to be nimble and responsive in the face of rapid changes in our society
- ensure Manitoba remains the most charitable province in Canada

## Consultation Plan

This new strategy will be informed by significant public and stakeholder consultations, learning from the experiences in other jurisdictions, and the use of innovative tools to explore new ways of achieving goals.

The consultation plan includes:

- three larger community forums to initiate discussion, and provide an opportunity for learning about strong practices in Manitoba and other jurisdictions
- this discussion paper, which seeks stakeholder input on key questions
- an online survey, to solicit further input
- meetings with specific non-profits and collectives
- a task team to lead engagement and explore transformation, and make recommendations to the Minister of Municipal Relations

In order to truly develop successful approaches, input from the community is critical. The Manitoba government looks to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions. We will give serious consideration to all input received in developing the strategy and transformation of our systems. A summary of what we have heard in consultations will be released to the public.

## Principles and Values

The following fundamentals will guide the development of the new strategy and vision:

- openness to innovation and change
- equity
- recognition that some communities have more capacity than others, and communities are diverse and have different needs
- engaging a broad range of perspectives in our province
- encouraging community-driven solutions
- simplicity and low red tape for the community, lean administration in government
- transparency in the process
- promoting appropriate partnerships and regional approaches
- valuing what is working well, building on our strengths
- evidence-informed approaches
- learning from the experience of other jurisdictions
- sustainability, fiscal responsibility and value for taxpayers' dollars

# Commitment to Community

In the November 2018 Speech from the Throne, the Manitoba government affirmed its commitment to the non-profit sector, stating: “A vital non-profit sector is the primary contributor to Manitoba’s reputation as the most generous province in Canada, and my government is determined to sustain and strengthen this sector. Provincial supports will be streamlined to better address community needs, reduce red tape, and leverage matching funds.”

The October 2018 mandate letter to the Minister of Municipal Relations also commits to: “Renewing the delivery of our community development programs to promote community capacity and sustainability, focus on outcomes, and enhanced community partnerships that best serve the needs of neighbourhoods, communities and vulnerable Manitobans.” As part of this commitment, Manitoba Municipal Relations is leading the development of this new strategy for the government that will guide transformation in community development to increase capacity, sustainability and positive outcomes for the non-profit sector.



# The Way Forward

One clear message that comes out of the challenges facing the non-profit sector is that new and innovative models are needed to strengthen the capacity of the sector, increase self-reliance, and leverage partnerships across the public, philanthropic and private pillars of our province.

We need to re-examine our current strategies and find ways to come together to better meet our shared goals. This is a significant and complex challenge that will require substantial engagement with community partners and innovators in order to develop options and recommendations.

A small, time-limited task team is being assembled that will engage with stakeholders and partners, explore innovative approaches, and advise the minister on potential ways to strengthen capacity and build sustainability in the non-profit sector, including how the Manitoba government can ensure that its investments in community development have the greatest positive impact for Manitobans.

We recognize the importance of bringing all voices to the table as we develop and implement innovative models, and are hosting community consultations as one way to hear those voices. Consultations will be held in Winnipeg, Brandon and Thompson with leaders from the non-profit, philanthropic, public and private sectors. A survey will also be posted online to garner further feedback.

The Manitoba government is interested in the experiences, needs, perspectives and ideas of community stakeholders on innovative solutions for Manitoba. As a starting point, the community consultations and online survey will focus on five main topics: planning and innovating, leveraging funding, partnerships, capacity building, and performance measures and outcomes.

Each topic is summarized below, along with the questions that will be used to guide discussions and feedback at forums, meetings and online over the next several months.



# Discussion

## Community Development in Manitoba

### General Questions for Discussion

1. What is working well in Manitoba? Why?
2. What opportunities do you see for improving outcomes?
3. What are the key challenges faced by the non-profit sector in Manitoba?
4. How can non-profit organizations improve connections to private donors?
5. What promising practices should Manitoba consider in the area of community development?

## Planning and Innovating

### Description

The challenges facing the non-profit sector reflect a world in which the pace of change is accelerating rapidly, partly due to technological leaps and an increasingly globalized culture. To remain effective in the face of this rapid change, organizations that support community development need to create new methods of strategic planning. Innovative approaches leverage diversity, allow fast and flexible reactions to challenges, and embrace continuous change and improvement.

### Questions for Discussion

1. What challenges does your organization face in keeping pace with societal changes?
2. Has your operational model changed in response to demographic and technological changes?
3. Do you feel that your organization is adapting to societal shifts with new and innovative approaches? Why or why not?
4. What additional resources, processes or tools would best support you to plan and innovate?
5. What innovations should Manitoba consider in order to build capacity in the non-profit sector?

## Leveraging Funding

### Description

Multiple funding streams are one way for organizations to ensure greater stability. When the majority of funding comes from a single source, an organization or project is highly vulnerable if that source is no longer available. Groups need supports and tools for identifying and approaching funders. Funders need information and direction in identifying opportunities to provide financial support.

### Questions for Discussion

1. Is the majority of your organization's funding from public sector grants?
2. Do you undertake substantial fundraising activities? What challenges have you faced, and what successes have you had, in raising funds?
3. What would help your organization be more successful in leveraging non-governmental dollars?
4. Are you aware of any innovative approaches to raising private funding for community activities that Manitoba might promote and support?

## Partnerships

### Description

Partnerships can be tremendously beneficial in meeting the needs of communities and maximizing investments. Regional collaborations can also be successful in getting the most benefit for our citizens.

### Questions for Discussion

1. What partnerships does your organization currently have to support your work?
2. Do you feel that your organization competes with others in delivering its services?
3. What are the biggest challenges in identifying and maintaining partnerships?
4. Where do you see potential for new partnership opportunities among non-profit organizations, the private sector and government?

## Capacity Building

### Description

As the non-profit sector faces increased demand for services and decreased volunteerism, the need for capacity-building resources, such as continuity planning, ongoing staff training, and board development, is rising. In order to foster effective local decision-making and self-sufficiency, communities, neighbourhoods and sectors will need resources and mechanisms to ensure groups have the capacity to meet service demand while achieving strong results.

### Questions for Discussion

1. What resources or processes do you currently employ to support staff development and administrative supports?
2. What are your biggest staffing and administrative challenges?
3. What resources could help your organization to strengthen its capacity to deliver on its mandate?

## Performance Measures and Outcomes

### Description

In order to ensure that organizations are providing the best possible assistance to Manitobans, we need to ensure that we are effectively measuring project impacts. This involves deciding which indicators to measure, how to measure them, and what standardized language should be used to describe and define results. It also involves ensuring that organizational and project outcomes align with community and regional plans and indicators. We want to explore ways to do this, together.

### Questions for Discussion

1. Do you have a formal method of determining if your projects have been successful in meeting their goals?
2. What challenges do you face in terms of measuring success and tracking outcomes?
3. What resources or tools could assist with performance measurement?

We look forward to continuing the dialogue and engagement.

Respond to these questions by taking our online survey at [www.gov.mb.ca/mr](http://www.gov.mb.ca/mr).

Thank you.