



Portage la Prairie
Community
Revitalization
Corporation

PCRC Annual Report

April 2010 – March 2011

Strengthening the well-being of Portage la Prairie by empowering citizens, enhancing neighbourhoods, fostering community spirit and building the capacity of community organizations.



Report from the Chair

This has been a busy and rewarding year for Portage Community Revitalization Corporation. It has been a pleasure to work with such a dedicated group of staff and board members and with the funders and volunteers that have supported our work.

Detail about PCRC programs and projects will be provided in the report from our Executive Director, Elicia Funk. To compliment that information, I want to share some of the work the board has been doing during the past year toward strengthening our organization to accommodate our growth.

Over the course of the year, the Board continued the development of a committee structure to support the PCRC's expanded scope of activity and to ensure the availability of information to report to funders and the community. We now have functional Personnel and Policy, Fundraising, Networking, Home Beautification and Community Engagement Committees. Thanks to Board and Community members who have given extra time to participate in this work.

PCRC is currently in the third year of its initial Funding Agreement with the Province and we are beginning the work required to support our upcoming request toward a new multi-year Agreement. This year we were successful in obtaining funding from the Province to renew our Community Facilitator position and are happy that Mary Lynn Moffat is continuing in that role. In addition, we received provincial support for a part-time Safety Coordinator and are pleased to introduce Colleen Flynn in that position. We have also been able to hire an administrative assistant. Heather Patterson has taken on that role and we welcome her too.

PCRC has been fortunate to receive renewal of funding from the City of Portage la Prairie and we are grateful for an additional \$10,000 specifically dedicated to the Home Beautification and Neighbourhood Safety programs.

In the fall, the Board entered into a partnership with the Portage and District Chamber of Commerce to work together on areas of common interest and activity. This work includes portions of the Chamber's Positively Portage Initiative and the PCRC's community safety and neighbourhood renewal objectives. We believe that partnerships such as this one can only enrich the work that we are all doing.

In January, the Board held its now annual Strategic Planning session toward an updated Five Year Plan and the preparation of our 2011 – 2012 One Year Plan. Both of these

Plans are requirements for our provincial funding and just as importantly keep us anchored to our Mission and to our commitments to Portage la Prairie.

There have been so many highlights over the past year and I want to specifically note a few that particularly stand out including:

- An All Candidates Forum in October which included all candidates for Mayor and City Councillor at North Memorial school. The Forum was well attended – so much so that we were putting up more chairs throughout the evening!
- Community Sports evenings held at North Memorial and LaVerendrye school grounds in July and August, which were well attended by kids and adults alike;
- February's Murder Mystery fundraiser which was a lot of fun for all who attended;
- May's Sharing Our World event with hundreds of Portagers meeting new friends, learning about other cultures, experiencing a huge range of delicious dishes and enjoying a variety of multicultural entertainment. I should note that Sharing Our World this year was part of the many activities of Portage's Multicultural Week and we were delighted to be a partner in that broader initiative.

Five members of our board have decided to move on to other challenges this year. A heartfelt thank you to John Friesen, Janet Shindle, Hazen Barrett, Linda McCulley, and Don Boddy. We have benefited greatly from your wisdom, your experience and your dedication to Portage la Prairie – as well as your hands-on labour in support of PCRC activities. We are going to miss you all.

Thank you and welcome to the new Board members that have agreed to join us on the very exciting PCRC journey. We look forward to your advice and your assistance. Thanks also to all of the volunteers who contribute so much to all PCRC events and activities. We could not pull it off without you.

I want to close by thanking our staff who have worked tirelessly on behalf of PCRC. Elicia and Mary Lynn, you have accomplished miracles- far more than would reasonably be expected of any two human beings. Colleen and Heather - you have quickly become members of the team and we look forward to working with you for a long time.

Dale Brownlee, Chair

Executive Director's Report

This past year the PCRC tackled Year 2 of our Five Year Community Plan. It is hard to believe the amount of change that has happened in only two and a half short years! Already we have outgrown the office in the basement of North Memorial School where I started out as a part-time staff of one, and the two small offices in the Portage Sport and Cultural Association Bingo Hall. We moved this year into a new and larger space in the lower level of the Central Plains Inc. building, which provides us with room to continue to grow and pursue new programs.

This year Community Engagement was one of our main focuses and we had great successes trying new things. Our Sharing Our World Multicultural event raised awareness of Portage's cultural diversity. This first time event was so successful that by popular demand it became an annual event. Since the period covered in this report we have hosted the 2nd annual Sharing Our World event which was part of a Portage Multicultural Week. It grew so much that we once again have outgrown our space!

The Neighbourhood Safety Audits program also grew this year. We have 30 volunteers who have received a two day training and provide their time to identify safety issues. The City's Public Safety Task Force has become a partner this year in taking the recommendations from the audits and making sure the identified safety issues are addressed. We are very excited to have received funding to launch a Neighbourhood Safety program this upcoming year that will expand on our safety audits and allow us to provide public education and involve residents in addressing safety issues in their neighbourhoods through activities such as community clean-ups and graffiti removal.

We also had a lot of fun in the past year. Block parties and community sports events provided fun ways for neighbours to meet each other and build the relationships that make a strong community.

We had another successful year of Home Beautification Grants, and one of my favourite things to do each summer is drive past these homes and see the amazing changes happening in our neighbourhoods. We were also able to provide needed funds to community projects through our Revitalize Portage! Grants. These grants help support the groups who are working so hard to meet community needs.

Some of our work is behind the scenes, assisting community groups with project planning and proposal writing and providing opportunities for the community to come together to find ways to meet the social needs of Portage la Prairie. One of the exciting

projects over the past year has been assisting the Canadian Mental Health Association in securing funds for an affordable housing complex that will meet some of the emergency and transitional housing needs in Portage. This project began over three years ago with the hosting of a public meeting that identified the need for this type of housing. While it has not been a quick or easy process it shows what the community can do when it works together.

The amazing partnerships formed or strengthened this year have been the reason the PCRC has been so successful. Thank you so much to all of the individuals, groups, organizations and funders who have worked with us on all of our projects.

It is these partnerships that are going to be key to our successes in upcoming years. Poverty reduction, specifically in the areas of food security, transportation and employment are priorities in our Community Plan that we and our partners will be working hard to develop strategies for in the next year.

We are also excited about one of our newest partnerships with the Chamber of Commerce Positively Portage Initiative. We will be working jointly in the next year on projects to build Pride In Portage, Pride in Our People.

In addition to our many partners, I have been blessed to be able to work with a fabulous Board of Directors. Their support and expertise has helped guide the PCRC in "uncharted waters." To those members who are leaving the Board this year, I wish you well. I would like to say a special thank you to Don Boddy, Hazen Barrett and Janet Shindle who were three of the founding members of the PCRC. The amount of hard work they put into getting this organization up and running was inspiring and I shall miss working with each one of them.

Elicia Funk, Executive Director

Affordable Housing

Goal: To improve the quality of existing housing stock while encouraging the creation of additional safe, affordable and appropriate housing.

Home Beautification Grants

For the third year, PCRC offered Home Beautification Grants for exterior home improvements in the summer of 2010. By offering grants of up to \$2,500 to eligible home owners, and matching grants of up to \$1000 towards exterior improvements of lower cost rental units, this program is visibly enhancing Portage la Prairie neighbourhoods. Funding for this program was provided by the Province of Manitoba - Community Housing Improvement Initiative and the City of Portage la Prairie.

Highlights:

- 16 owned homes and 7 rental properties received \$36,607 of grants in 2010, contributing to \$49,419 in renovations including homeowner contributions.
- This year 4 local businesses, Rona, McMunn and Yates, McDiarmid Lumber and Gallons Galore and More, offered discounts to grant recipients, allowing additional renovations to be completed.
- The grants have improved the condition of existing housing stock, both owned and rental.
- Through beautifying individual homes, entire neighbourhoods have seen positive improvements.
- A total of 43 owned homes and 16 rental units have been enhanced through Home Beautification grants to date.
- \$172,833 in exterior housing improvements have resulted from the Home Beautification program. This does not include the many hours of labour contributed by our property owners who have done much of the work themselves.

	Home Beautification Grants	Owners Contribution	Total
2008	\$28,850	\$6,949	\$35,799
2009	\$37,555	\$50,060	\$87,615
2010	\$36,607	\$12,812	\$49,419
Total	\$103,012	\$69,821	\$172,833



Before and After Home Beautification 2010



Goal: To ensure the establishment of a community infrastructure to facilitate the development and management of emergency, transitional and affordable housing.

Portage Housing Coalition

The PCRC provided leadership and administrative support to the Portage Housing Coalition, a joint committee of the PCRC and Canadian Mental Health Association. This committee of interested community stakeholders provided support in the preliminary design of a housing complex to address the need for emergency, transitional and affordable housing.

Highlights

- The Portage Housing Coalition provided guidance in the design stage of the housing complex project to ensure it will meet local needs.
- The Portage Housing Coalition provided support and lobbying required to secure support by the key federal and provincial government funders.
- PCRC played a key role in the completion of a needs assessment, feasibility study and business plan that could be used to approach funding sources.
- PCRC provided a high level of support in the development of detailed proposals for the federal and provincial funding sources.
- Resulting from the above activities, the Canadian Mental Health Association was able to securing funding to undertake a housing project that will meet important community housing needs.

Community Engagement

Goal: To engage citizens and organizations within Portage la Prairie in community initiatives to foster participation and a strong sense of community pride.

Revitalize Portage! Block Party Grant

For the 2nd year, PCRC offered block party grants of up to \$200 for residents to organize neighbourhood activities. These activities increase connections within a neighbourhood, which can lead to greater feelings of safety and well-being, and a greater sense of community and pride. Each block party had a presentation from the RCMP on Neighbourhood Watch and Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design.

Highlights

- As of March 2011, over 1000 residents took part in 10 block parties.
- Block parties have provided an important connection between residents and the RCMP.
- A Block Party Planning Guide was created with useful information including contacts for permits, ideas for invitations and posters, and party activities.



Community Sports Evenings

In July and August 2010, our PCRC summer student, funded through Canada Summer Jobs, helped organize two community sports events. The free events included a barbecue supper and a chance for neighbours and families to participate in a fun summer activity.

Highlights

- Informal soccer games drew a crowd of 150 at the North Memorial School for the first sports evening.
- Members of the Fire Department, EMS and RCMP brought their equipment and vehicles and offered tours in between participating in the games themselves!
- Fifty residents came out to play baseball at LaVerendrye School with emergency services personnel and local government officials.
- Participants were able to meet their neighbours and enjoy a physical activity that allowed all ages to participate together.



Positively Portage Initiative

PCRC has partnered with the Chamber of Commerce in the Positively Portage Initiative. The goal of the Initiative is an improved perception of Portage as a community where citizens, businesses, and local governments work together to create alliances and share ideas to make our community a better place in which to live, work and shop.



Positively Portage

Pride in Portage, Pride in our People

Highlights

- PCRC will work with a Positively Portage Initiative subcommittee to coordinate and facilitate projects which engage the overall community in taking personal ownership and responsibility in community pride.
- The partnership provides an opportunity to engage more residents in community development, and an important link with the business community.

Goal: To promote initiatives that enhance feelings of safety and wellbeing.

Safety Audits

A trained volunteer Safety Audit Team conducted audits of Portage neighbourhoods to identify potential safety issues and suggest solutions. To provide action on the findings, the PCRC works closely with the City of Portage's Public Safety Task Force who are responsible for responding to identified issues. A key goal of the safety audits is to build a feeling of ownership in community safety.

Highlights

- 30 community volunteers have been trained in the principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design through two training sessions.
- Our safety audit pilot project in a downtown area was excellent training in how to conduct a safety audit as it included residential, business and public spaces.
- Pilot project results were presented to the Public Safety Task Force including RCMP, Fire Department, City of Portage, By-law officer and Health Inspector who each respond to the issues identified in the pilot audit that fall within their jurisdiction.
- The Army Cadets took on the job of doing graffiti removal and general clean up in the pilot audit area as their Community Services Day project.
- PCRC has secured funding for a Neighbourhood Safety Coordinator position that will allow us to move forward with the neighbourhood safety initiative, expanding it to include public education, community clean-ups and graffiti removal as well as additional safety audits and volunteer training.



Safety issues such as graffiti, potential hiding spaces, and bushes overgrown over sidewalks were some of the issues identified by the safety audits.



Goal: To build awareness of social and cultural diversity within the community to reduce discrimination and racism.

Sharing Our World

On May 8, 2010, PCRC hosted a first time event to highlight Portage's cultural diversity. Local cultural groups and citizens participated in the planning and implementation of this event. The goal of the event was to raise the awareness of cultural diversity in Portage la Prairie and pride in the community.

Highlights

- 300 – 350 participants enjoyed the Sharing Our World event throughout the day and evening to experience the cultural diversity of Portage.
- 100 volunteers were involved in making the event happen, building a feeling of belonging and cultural pride.
- Volunteers included approximately 30 students who created flags of each country for display and posters showing key facts about different countries.
- 17 cultures were represented during the event: 14 cultures had a cultural display, 8 cultures provided dishes for a free food sampling, and 6 groups provided cultural entertainment.
- The daytime activities were offered free of charge to encourage community participation.
- An evening event featured a traditional fish fry, cultural desserts and cultural entertainment.
- One of the main sponsors of the event was Manitoba Lotteries, along with a number of local partners and sponsors.
- Feedback after the event was so positive that the 2nd Annual Sharing Our World event is being planned for May 7, 2011! The event is expected to grow due to the amount of interest received from cultural groups and the public.



Capacity Building

Goal: To provide resources to build the capacity of neighbourhood groups and social service organizations to together develop sustainable solutions to community issues.

Revitalize Portage! Grants

This year saw the completion of the 1st year of the Revitalize Portage! Grant program and the granting of funds for the 2nd year of the program. Revitalize Portage! Grants provide up to \$2500 to neighbourhood groups and organizations to support projects that address the priority areas of the Community Plan. This program allows community groups and organizations to address community needs, engage community members, build local capacity and increase community pride.

Highlights

- In the first two years of the program, 30 projects were provided with grants.
- The funded projects ranged in purpose and addressed all applicable priority areas of the Community Plan: Neighbourhood Building, Safe Neighbourhoods, Social & Cultural Diversity, Poverty Reduction, Affordable Recreation & Leisure and Capacity Building.
- Results of the 2009/10 and 2010/11 programs show over 10,000 people participated in the 30 projects which received a Revitalize Portage Grant.
- Over 600 volunteers enabled the projects to be successfully completed.
- \$49,243 in the two years of grants was more than matched by \$89,000 worth of funds from other sources.
- Applicants indicated a high degree of satisfaction with the program and many indicated their project would not have taken place without the grant.

2009 Revitalize Portage! Grant Receipts

Portage Potato Festival 2009 – Children’s Activities
PCRC- Block Party Program
PCRC - CPTED Community Training
Canadian Mental Health Association - Mental Illness Awareness Week
Time 4 Kids - Halloween Bash 2009
Tupper Street Family Resource Centre - Connecting Parents
SAM (Service and Mobility) Inc. - Supported Employment Workshop
Portage Learning and Literacy - Community Clothes Cupboard
PCRC - Sharing Our World 2010
Big Brothers and Big Sisters of Portage - Mentor Activity Boxes
Tupper Street Family Resource Centre - Fire Extinguisher Training
Keep the Change! Planning Committee – Financial Workshops
PCRC - Community BBQ



2010 Revitalize Portage! Grant Recipients

Portage Potato Festival 2010 – Children’s Activities
PCRC - Revitalize Portage! Block Party Program
The William Glesby Centre - Royal Winnipeg Ballet School Performance
Time 4 Kids - Kids Halloween Bash 2010
PCRC - Community Sports Evenings
Centennial Community Club Inc. - Community Sound System
PCRC – Safety Audit Pilot Project
Centennial Community Club Inc. -Ice Edger
Cadets Community Service Day
Tupper Street Family Resource Centre - Book Buddies Breakfast
PCRC - Sharing Our World 2011
Youth Suicide Prevention Committee - Youth Forum
Portage Collegiate Institute – PCI Mentoring Program
Portage School Division and Central RHA - Kids Cooking Club
CMHA & St. Mary's Anglican - The Forgiveness Project
Portage Friendship Centre – National Aboriginal Day 2011



Proposal Development Assistance / Neighbourhood Renewal Fund

PCRC staff provide proposal development assistance to groups planning community development projects. In particular, PCRC assists groups in understanding funding criteria and applying to the Neighbourhoods Alive! Neighbourhood Renewal Fund. The PCRC Board plays a role in providing a local perspective to Neighbourhood Renewal Fund decision makers by reviewing Portage la Prairie proposals and supplying feedback on the fit of the project in meeting community needs.

Highlights

- The PCRC worked with 13 organizations on proposal development during the year.
- While some groups assisted by the PCRC applied to the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund, PCRC also played a role in identifying additional or alternative funding sources for projects.
- Four projects were submitted to the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund in the March 2011 intake and are currently under review.
- To date, \$294,382 has been invested in Portage la Prairie through the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund

Network of Non-Profits and Social Services

Formerly a role of the Portage Community Network, this year the PCRC took responsibility for providing opportunities for non-profit and social service groups to network and develop partnerships. Through communication and coordination, groups are better able to meet social needs identified by the Social Planning Initiative Report and PCRC Community Plan. Additionally, the Network identified local training as a need and the PCRC assisted in promoting relevant training opportunities.

Highlights

- Three Networking for Non-Profits and Social Services lunches were offered this year, with 19 to 29 participants attending these lunches.
- Information sharing time at the Networking lunches resulted in non-profits and social service organizations being more aware of each other and working together to develop sustainable solutions to community issues.
- A survey of the Network identified the preferred role of the Network to be organizing networking lunches, administering an e-mail distribution list, and providing “lunch and learn” or formal training opportunities specific to the sector.
- The 60 current members of the Network are able to easily share and receive information from other network members through the Network e-mail list administered by the PCRC.
- An “Effective Fundraising Workshop” was co-hosted by the PCRC in partnership with Central Plains Inc., Whitehorse Plains Community Futures and MAFRI. The session drew 30 participants.
- With a committee of stakeholders, PCRC assisted in arranging a Keep the Change workshop on low-income financial management for 40 service providers. Service providers gained skills and tools to help their clients with barriers gain financial management skills.
- PCRC also assisted in promoting training opportunities offered in Portage through the Manitoba Federation of Non-Profit Organizations which has a mandate to offer non-profit capacity building.



Poverty Reduction

Goal: To facilitate opportunities that link lower income residents with activities to improve their well-being and economic situation, and to address barriers to economic security.

Food Security, Transportation and Employment and Training are the three key priority areas related to Poverty Reduction in the PCRC Community Plan. This year, raising awareness of these issues and initiating conversations on how to work together laid the foundation for creating community partnerships to address these issues.

Highlights

- The PCRC Candidates Forum provided awareness of the Social Planning Report results to all candidates. Candidates running for mayor and council were asked to review the Portage Social Planning Initiative Study and identify their platform in relation to social issues. All 21 candidates attended the Candidate Forum held at North Memorial School.
- Transportation was raised as a key social issue during the municipal election via the PCRC Candidate Forum.
- PCRC participated as a member of the Youth Employment Advisory Committee to help guide the completion of a study of youth at-risk employment and the development of a 5 Year Plan on Youth Employment.
- The PCRC Create Action intern compiled a listing of existing food security programs in Portage and created a report of successful projects in other communities.
- Fifteen organizations participated in meetings to discuss food security programs. A subgroup of this food security committee is designing a strategy to gather information from potential users on food security needs and interests. The strategy will be implemented in Year 3.

Affordable Recreation and Leisure

Goal: To encourage the creation of affordable recreational opportunities and the development of physical spaces with a focus on the needs of families and youth

Affordable Recreation and Leisure is a funding priority of the PCRC. We encourage groups with projects that fit this criteria to apply for Revitalize Portage! Grants or to the Neighbourhoods Alive! Neighbourhood Renewal Fund.

Highlights

- Five RP! projects addressed affordable recreation and leisure: Big Brothers and Big Sisters Mentor Activity Boxes, The William Glesby Centre Winnipeg Ballet School performance, PCRC Community Sports Events, Centennial Community Club Inc. Community Sound System & Centennial Community Club Inc Ice Edger.
- Big Brothers and Big Sisters of Portage Mentor Activity Boxes provided games and activities for their in-school mentoring program (50-60 children plus mentors). It also allowed the purchase of a Wii for the Wii Fit Health Club which will count towards needed high school activity credits.
- The William Glesby Centre distributed 60 tickets to low income families through partner agencies to allow these families to experience a high quality dance performance.
- The PCRC Community Sports events brought over 200 community members together to participate in informal soccer and baseball games.
- Grants to the Centennial Community Club Inc. for a sound system and ice edger helped support the group to keep a needed facility open in the north end of the community for the benefit of the neighbourhood and a number of user groups.
- Enhancements have also been made to Portage's recreational spaces through funding from the Neighbourhoods Alive! Neighbourhood Renewal Fund including playground development at the Portage Evangelical Church, Rotary Club Inc. Recreational Pathway at the Republic of Manitobah Park, Ecole Crescentview Play Structure, and Sunset Palliative Care Memory Garden in the Park.



Sunset Palliative Care
received \$6,000 towards the
Memory Garden in the Park



Organizational Development

Goal: To operate an effective community revitalization organization that meets the goals in the Community Plan while remaining accountable to the community, funders and government.

Board of Directors / Administration

This year was the second full year of operation of the PCRC. As a still new organization, our Board has worked very hard to form a strong foundation for the organization by setting policies, forming a subcommittee structure, forming partnerships, seeking funding, and communicating with the community.

Highlights

- The PCRC Board of Directors has a variety of skills and is representative of many interests in the community.
- A Committee Structure with a terms of reference for each committee has been developed to guide the operations of the PCRC.
- Our Personnel and Policy Committee is developing policies to allow PCRC to function most effectively, while remaining accountable to the community, funders and government.
- A Fundraising Committee was added to the PCRC Committee Structure. The Fundraising Committee planned a Murder Mystery Dinner Fundraiser which was well received by those in attendance.
- A new Community Engagement Committee will play a vital role in involving all segments of the community in PCRC activities and communications to ensure representation from a wide sector of Portage.
- The Board and staff have participated in training to enhance our knowledge and skills.
- The Board of Directors participated in strategic planning to identify opportunities to strengthen our community impacts and set priorities for Year 3.
- Membership reached 92. The membership helps the PCRC Board to make decisions relevant to the needs and will of the community.
- We formed a number of partnerships this year for PCRC projects such as safety audits, block parties, Sharing Our World, Home Beautification Grants, training events and sports evenings. This year has also seen a significant increase in support from local businesses both in-kind and in sponsorship.
- Increasing support locally and mutually beneficial partnerships are allowing core funding from NA! to go further in the community.
- A new larger office space at 56 Royal Road North provides opportunities for the PCRC to expand by bringing on new staff and seeking new funding sources.
- Newsletters distributed to each household have proven to be an effective communication method to communicate PCRC activities to the general public

PCRC Board of Directors 2010 - 11



Dale Brownlee - Chair

Don Boddy

Guy Moffat

Lori Judson - Vice-Chair

John Friesen

Ryan Muirhead

Hazen Barrett - Treasurer

Lori Grenkow

Jean-Marc Nadeau

Karly Friesen - Secretary

Linda McCulley

Janet Shindle

Thank you to Hazen Barrett, Don Boddy, John Friesen, Linda McCulley and Janet Shindle who are ending their terms on the Board of Directors this year. Your participation has been greatly appreciated and we wish you the best of luck in your future endeavours!

PCRC Staff

Elicia Funk, Executive Director

Mary Lynn Moffat, Community Facilitator

Colleen Flynn, Safety Coordinator

Heather Patterson, Administrative Assistant

Thank you to the staff and students who were part of the PCRC team in this past year. Jean Spiller filled the role of administrative assistant for part of the year and her expertise and knowledge of Portage was an asset to the PCRC. Kaitlin Pankratz was our Canada Summer Jobs summer student and brought her youthful enthusiasm to work with her each day. Mario Gordon joined us for 6 months through the Canadian CED Network Create Action Internship program, allowing us to progress on a number of projects including food security, the Pace Car safety program and social planning. Candice Boschman joined us for a 3 week practicum from the Red River Community College, providing her excellent organizational skills and creativity to our Murder Mystery Fundraiser. We enjoyed working with each of you!