YOUTH MIGRATION, ATTRACTION AND CED PARTNERSHIPS:

A CASE STUDY OF

THE ARBORG BIFROST COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

BY

MARTIN D. FRIGO

B. Env.D. (University of Manitoba)

A Practicum submitted to
the Faculty of Graduate Studies
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

MASTER OF CITY PLANNING

Department of City Planning
University of Manitoba
Winnipeg, Manitoba

The Faculty of Graduate Studies
500 University Centre, University of Manitoba
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3T 2N2

THE UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
*****
COPYRIGHT PERMISSION

Youth Migration, Attraction and CED Partnerships: A Case Study of The Arborg Bifrost

Community Development Corporation

BY

Martin D. Frigo

A Thesis/Practicum submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of The University of

Manitoba in partial fulfillment of the requirement of the degree

Of

MASTER OF CITY PLANNING

Martin D. Frigo © 2004

YOUTH MIGRATION, ATTRACTION AND CED PARTNERSHIPS:
A CASE STUDY OF
THE ARBORG BIFROST COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

BY

MARTIN D. FRIGO

ABSTRACT

This practicum explores the connection between community-based youth partnerships, youth migration and youth attraction. The practicum explores the challenges created by rural youth migration for rural Manitoba communities. These challenges include reduced economic activity (and competitiveness) and a decline in the social and cultural life of many communities. The practicum particularly explores the role that Community Development Corporations (CDCs) play in addressing youth migration. CDCs undertake a local approach to addressing community challenges and opportunities. This practicum also explores how CDCs use Community Economic Development (CED) principles to help address the issues raised by youth migration—and to develop effective youth attraction strategies. The Arborg Bifrost Community Development Corporation (ABCDC) is the main case study for this exploration. The ABCDC is studied for the ways in which it engages young people in community initiatives. The partnerships formed between the ABCDC and their youth are also examined. The practicum assumes that the best way to develop effective youth attraction strategies is by forming stronger partnerships with young people–both those in their communities, and former residents. The practicum concludes by providing recommendations on how the ABCDC can improve communication, community engagement and youth participation in community decision making. Recommendations focus on how the ABCDC and other CDCs can strengthen existing youth partnerships and engage young people in developing innovative youth attraction strategies and programs. Stronger youth partnerships will enable the ABCDC to empower young people while also allowing them to design effective strategies to deal with youth migration.

DEDICATION

This practicum is dedicated to my parents,

Irena and Giovanni Frigo

Thank you for believing in me.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1 Introduction

Rural communities in Manitoba today are facing important economic, social and cultural challenges. These challenges include rural depopulation and aging rural communities, the shift from an industrial-based economy to a service economy and the need to remain economically viable in a globalizing economy. One challenge that affects the social, economic and cultural aspects of rural community life is rural youth migration. A recent study prepared by R.A. Malatest and Associates, Rural youth migration: Exploring the reality behind the myths addresses this point: "the gradual, and in some cases marked decline of youth populations in rural (Canadian) areas presents considerable challenges to rural communities" (R.A. Malatest & Associates, 2002: 3). Furthermore, the authors express that "in addition to the short term impact associated with reduced consumer spending, declining youth populations ...also negatively affect the supply of entry-level workers and the long term health and vitality of rural communities" (Malatest et al., 2002: 3).

1.1 Problem Statement

Youth depopulation is commonly (and mistakenly) seen as being an issue only in small communities in Atlantic Canada and the western or central prairies. Youth migration, however, is felt by many Manitobans as being one of the province's key concerns. A recent study, Looking West 2003: A Survey of Western Canadians by the Canada West Foundation found that retaining the provinces' young people was the most important of five priorities for Manitobans. This point is especially important since youth retention was found to be a more pressing issue than improving provincial health care in Manitoba[1] (Berdahl, L., 2003: 16; Landry, F. June 14, 2003). Youth retention in Manitoba was also a key area of debate in the provincial election held in June of 2003. While rural youth retention actually played a small role in the policy debates about

---

[1] The top five priorities for Manitobans as outlined in Looking West 2003: A Survey of Western Canadians include (1) retaining the province's young people, (2) improving provincial health care, (3) protecting the environment, (4) supporting rural industries, and (5) improving provincial education standards (Berdahl 2003: 16).

Manitoba's "brain drain" and youth retention in general, the issue was (and continues to be) of concern to many Manitoba residents (CBC Radio, May 2003). The migration of rural youth has posed a challenge for many of Manitoba's provincial governments. Policy reports entitled Guidelines for the Seventies prepared for the NDP government of Premier Ed Schreyer (1969 to 1977) discussed the challenges of reducing migration in Manitoba. The report authors found that (by the early seventies) "...the age structure in rural Manitoba was changing as more and more young people (moved) to urban centres to obtain employment or further their education" (Guidelines for the Seventies: Regional perspectives 1973: 38). Furthermore, the report authors discovered that:

> smaller centres of rural Manitoba have been adversely affected by migration of people from farm to city, (and that) ...large scale migration from farm to city (brings) the future viability of Manitoba's small towns into question (1973: 38-39).

Youth migration affects both urban and rural communities. Manitoba " loses almost 8% of all graduates from its provincial postsecondary institutions within two years" of graduation (Azmier, J., & Stone, L., 2002: 13). Furthermore, "among university graduates, the rate is even higher (with) one in ten university graduates (leaving) the province within two years" (Azmier, et al., 2002: 13). [2] Youth migration affects "...the long term sustainability of rural communities" (R.A. Malatest & Associates as quoted in Azmier, J & Stone, L., 2003: 6).

Why do youth leave their home communities? The answer is different for each young person. Most common reasons for leaving revolve around the need to gain employment, education and "life experiences" (Azmier, J., & Stone, L., 2003: 5-6). Larger urban centers afford a greater range of employment and educational opportunities (Azmier et al., 2003: 5). Larger urban centres also offer young people a greater range of social, recreational and cultural activities (Azmier et al., 2003: 6). Rural communities, however, cannot passively accept this reality and hope that their young people return.

------

[2] Based on data from the Statistics Canada National Graduates Survey, June 1997.

Community development organizations and rural leaders must take aggressive measures to attract (and maintain) a strong youth population in their regions. Rural communities and their community development organizations must develop successful youth attraction strategies. Youth attraction strategies must address a number of issues. These issues include greater communication with young people, greater (and more innovative) youth employment opportunities, greater educational opportunities and greater youth involvement in decision-making processes and leadership positions. The Malatest report reinforces this idea by stating that a comprehensive approach to addressing rural youth migration and retention must increase employment and training opportunities, youth civic engagement in local businesses and politics, and the social and recreational opportunities for young people (Malatest et al., 2003: 21).

Successful youth attraction strategies must be designed with input and feedback from youth that currently live in the community and those youth that live abroad. Young people in rural communities provide community development organizations with first hand knowledge of the current economic, social, and recreational needs facing rural youth. Former youth living abroad (due to school or employment) provide community development organizations with an understanding of the programs and services needed to attract them back (or attract new youth) to rural communities.

How have rural communities in Manitoba begun to address rural youth migration and attraction? One of the ways communities have addressed these issues is through programs and initiatives developed by Community Development Corporations (CDCs). CDCs that have formed partnerships between youth, local businesses and governments and schools have begun to tackle these issues using a very local, comprehensive and strategic approach. Many of these approaches use community economic development (CED) principles. CED principles suggest a local approach to addressing youth economic and social challenges. These principles also suggest the formation of strong local and regional partnerships between governments, businesses, development organizations and rural youth.

CDCs have the potential to be an effective tool to address youth migration and youth attraction. CDCs are locally formed community groups that attempt to resolve their social and economic challenges through the skills, talents and resources inherent in each community. As MacLeod states "...the community development corporation is a cooperative attempt by local people to take control of the socio-economic destiny of their community" (MacLeod, G., 1982: 14). He further states that "...the CDC is an exercise in local citizens taking responsibility for their own community" (MacLeod, 1982: 16).

Some CDCs are attempting to address these challenges facing their communities and their youth through CED. The first step to address youth migration and youth attraction, however, is to form strong partnerships between youth, young entrepreneurs and CDCs. It is the partnerships formed between local CDCs and rural youth that is the key area of interest for this practicum.

1.2 Statement of purpose

The main purpose of this practicum is to explore how rural Community Development Corporations (CDCs) use community economic development partnerships to address youth migration and attract youth. This practicum will also explore what partnerships must be formed between CDCs and youth, why these partnerships are important, and how these partnerships must be formed when developed within the context of a local community economic development program. This practicum will also examine the importance of youth participation (in local decision-making) and community engagement in developing strong youth partnerships.

The research explores the current economic and employment situation facing rural youth in Canada and Manitoba. The research will also encompass the economic challenges facing rural communities when planning for the new information economy. The theoretical underpinnings and principles of Community Economic Development (CED) and how rural Community Development Corporations (CDCs) use these principles will then be discussed. Realising that youth attraction strategies may be

different for different communities, CED principles that have relevance to all rural CDCs will be discussed. The role played by existing partnerships in rural communities in addressing youth migration (and aiding youth attraction) will also be articulated through the research.

This research defines "youth" as those Canadians between the ages of 15-29 years of age. This definition of youth is similar to several of the definitions in documents that are referenced throughout this study. These documents include the reports prepared for The Canadian Rural Partnership and several studies conducted by Statistics Canada. Three particular categories of youth are discussed throughout this practicum. The research focuses on the first category (those 15-19 year of age). However, both other categories are mentioned throughout this practicum. The three categories of youth are:

- Youth 15-19 years of age
- Youth 20-24 years of age
- Youth 25-29 years of age [3]

The objective of this practicum is to understand how partnerships formed between Community Development Corporations and local stakeholder groups (such as schools, business entrepreneurs, and youth themselves) can combat youth migration and attract former and new youth to rural communities. This practicum has the added objective of outlining where new partnerships may need to be formed or how existing partnerships must be strengthened to deal effectively with youth migration.

Recommendations will focus on a number of areas. Firstly, they will focus on how CDCs can better engage current and former youth in community decision-making and planning. They will then address how CDCs can strengthen partnerships with both current and former youth, and discuss the need for CDCs to foster an innovative community atmosphere attractive for young people. Most importantly, recommendations

---

[3] As defined in studies prepared for The Canadian Rural Partnership in 2000 and 2002.

made in this practicum will provide a "starting point" for CDCs to develop effective youth attraction strategies—and to begin to address the issues caused by youth migration. The recommendations posed in this practicum are directed towards rural-based CDCs that are experiencing socio-economic challenges that have been caused by youth migration—and (more specifically) to the case study described below. [4]

1.3 Introduction to the case study

An exploration of the projects, initiatives and partnerships formed by the Arborg Bifrost Community Development Corporation (ABCDC) forms the major case study for this practicum. There are four main areas of interest:

What current (or proposed) ABCDC projects involve youth?

What current (or proposed) ABCDC partnerships exist with local youth?

How can existing youth partnerships be strengthened?

What future ABCDC partnerships need to be forged to address youth migration—and to form effective youth attraction strategies?

The case study also explores several local programs or initiatives undertaken by different communities, community development organizations and government agencies within Manitoba. Understanding these programs and initiatives provides further insight on how to develop practical recommendations for how the ABCDC can begin to address youth migration.

---

[4] These include rural CDCs in the "Prairie Provinces" (Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta). While the recommendations are specifically directed towards the ABCDC (see section 1.3) recommendations can be tailored to other rural-based CDCs that have a prominent youth population (i.e. a high school) and that are interested in forming stronger youth partnerships and more effective youth attraction strategies.

1.4 Research questions and methods

Five research questions will be explored in this practicum. The first question (as outlined partly above) is how do Community Development Corporations (CDCs) use community economic development partnerships to address youth migration and attract youth in rural Manitoba communities.

The associated questions relate to the current situation of rural youth, why CDCs and CED are important, and how partnerships are important in rural youth attraction. These questions are:

- What are the current economic and employment challenges facing youth in rural Manitoba communities?
- How can CDCs use CED principles to develop stronger youth partnerships and attract youth?
- How can youth be involved in the CDC decision making process?
- How does greater youth engagement relate to youth attraction?

Two main data collection methods were used in this practicum: individual key informant interviews and focus group interviews. Three key informant interviews were conducted while two focus group interviews were also conducted. The key informant interviews and both focus groups provided important insights into the idea of youth partnerships. Interviewees and focus groups also provided the researcher with knowledge of how CDCs can better address the economic and social issues facing young people today, and how CDCs can get young people more engaged and involved in their local community. [5]

---

[5] Key informant interviews and both focus groups conducted in this practicum required human ethics approval from the Joint –Faculty Research Ethics Board at the University of Manitoba before they could be conducted. Copies of the approval certificates are located in Appendix 8.

Data gained from research sessions were analyzed and synthesized into eleven different themes. These themes helped the researcher answer the research questions posed above—and to create practical recommendations for how the ABCDC can address youth migration and develop attraction strategies. Recommendations focus on three specific areas:

- Improving communication between the ABCDC and the region's young people
- Promoting an innovative community and opportunities for youth development
- Strengthening youth partnerships though youth community involvement in decision-making structures and economic and community life

1.5 Organization of the major degree project

This practicum consists of six chapters. Chapter one serves as an introduction to the practicum. The problem statement and purpose of this practicum are explained, and the research questions are introduced. The case study, research strategy and data collection methods are also introduced. The chapter concludes by outlining the organization of the major degree project and by exploring the limitations and biases associated with this practicum.

Chapter two consists of a literature review structured around five sections. The first section outlines the economic and social challenges facing rural youth today. The second section discusses what Community Development Corporations are and how they are related to community economic development (CED). The third section outlines the characteristics of CED. The fourth section discusses why rural communities need young people. The final section discusses important factors that CDCs (and other community development organizations) must consider when developing youth attraction strategies.

Chapter three introduces the case study and provides a brief overview of the geography, history, culture and economy of the Town of Arborg and Rural Municipality of Bifrost. The chapter then provides an outline of how and why the Arborg Bifrost

14

Community Development Corporation (ABCDC) was formed. It provides a description of several existing government programs that aim at helping rural youth address their economic and social challenges. The chapter then provides a description of local (municipal) projects and initiatives that support rural youth's entrepreneurial and educational pursuits. It concludes by looking at local "success stories" of Interlake residents who have returned to their home communities to become prominent business and community leaders.

Chapter four describes the research methods used in this practicum. The chapter describes why the researcher felt key informant interviews and focus groups were appropriate research methodologies. The chapter details how respondents were chosen for each interview and focus group session. The chapter then details how each key informant interview and focus group session was conducted. Ethical concerns associated with the research are then discussed. The chapter also outlines the limitations experienced during the research. The chapter concludes by describing how data collected from key informant interviews and both focus groups were analyzed. The purpose of this section is to outline how raw data was transcribed, interpreted and synthesized into key themes. These themes were used to help form the recommendations described in Chapter six.

Chapter five consists of an analysis and discussion of the findings from the research sessions conducted with key informant interviewees and focus group members. Eleven themes were discovered when analyzing the research findings from these sessions. Highlighting these themes helped the researcher answer the research questions and also develop recommendations for how Community Development Corporations can better address youth migration and develop youth attraction strategies.

Chapter six outlines the key recommendations for the ABCDC (and other rural CDCs in Manitoba) to consider when developing rural youth attraction strategies. Recommendations specifically focus on answering the research questions by identifying practical methods as to how the ABCDC can improve youth community engagement and youth partnerships on ABCDC projects and initiatives. Recommendations on how the

ABCDC can strengthen other youth-related partnerships (i.e. such as relationships between local businesses and the high school) are also proposed. Overall, the researcher proposes twenty-five recommendations in these areas. The final section of this chapter offers a conclusion outlining how greater (and stronger) youth partnerships can help the ABCDC (and other Community Development Corporations) develop more effective and successful youth attraction strategies.

1.6 Limitations and biases

The researcher acknowledges one major bias and two limitations to the research that was undertaken. These limitations and bias affected the data collection, research findings, and the recommendations formed. The major bias and both limitations focused around the applicability of the recommendations to all types of youth.

Attracting young professional people

The researcher took seriously the challenge of recommending how the ABCDC can better involve and partner with youth. These recommendations are meant to form the basis for attracting young, skilled and educated people to the Arborg and Bifrost region. Research pointed to the fact the rural communities want to attract young (university and college educated) professionals. Recommendations in this research are therefore biased towards forming partnerships with educated, skilled and professional young people.

Not all young people decide to pursue (or can afford) a post-secondary education. The ABCDC (and other community groups) who read this practicum should understand that all types of youth (regardless of their educational background or experience) can benefit their communities socially and economically. The challenge is to understand how all types of youth can contribute significantly to their communities.

Addressing the needs of Aboriginal youth and other youth cohorts

This research does not go into specifics about discussing the current challenges facing young Aboriginals in Canada and rural Manitoba. Aboriginal youth are a quickly growing segment of Manitoba's population—and should be seen as important partners in the political, economic and social decision-making that is occurring in our rural communities.

Additionally, the research has not addressed the special challenges that face marginalized youth in rural communities. These may include youth with different racial or ethnic backgrounds, youth with mental and physical disabilities, youth with different sexual orientations and (in some cases) young women. The researcher, however, has mentioned in his research that the ABCDC (and other community groups) must be especially sensitive to addressing the needs of these young people. Several recommendations indicate how the ABCDC (and other community groups) can begin to address the needs of these youth—and get them engaged in their communities.

The researcher hopes that this practicum will act as a catalyst for further study into the challenges caused by youth migration. It is also hoped that future students will study this issue from the perspective of Aboriginal youth and youth that feel marginalized. The research undertaken here provides a broad understanding of the issues being discussed—as well as a basis and rationale for further study.

2 Literature Review

The literature review is structured around six sections. The first and second sections outline the socio-economic challenges facing rural youth today. Youth unemployment, education and youth's reasons for leaving their home communities will be explored. The third section discusses what Community Development Corporations are, and how they depend upon community economic development (CED) for their success. The fourth section details the characteristics of CED. The section also looks at how young people are an important component of rural CED initiatives. The fifth section discusses why young people are important to the economic and social vitality of rural communities today— especially within the context of the new economy. The last section discusses three important aspects of attracting youth to rural communities. These include youth entrepreneurship, youth leadership, and the need to develop and promote a tolerant, inclusive and innovative community atmosphere.

2.1 Economic challenges facing Manitoba's rural youth

Many rural communities in Canada today are faced with the challenge to retain and attract young people. The Malatest report emphasizes this challenge by stating that "...rural out-migration will continue, if not accelerate, in the future" (Malatest et al., 2002: p ii). While out-migration from rural communities is a fact of life in most rural communities, this report points out that return rates for young people to their rural communities is much lower than for other age groups (Malatest et al., 2002: 3). The report authors estimate that "...within the next ten years only one out of four rural Canadian youth (15-29 year olds) will return to their home communities" (Malatest et al., 2002: 3).

2.2 Why do youth leave rural communities?

Youth leave rural communities for multiple and diverse reasons. The most obvious likely revolve around educational and employment concerns. R.A. Malatest and

Associates have found from their surveys that rural youth typically have less employment opportunities in their communities. They found that (in Canada as a whole) "...just over thirty percent of (rural) workers aged 20-29 years were employed full time in 1996 as compared to fifty percent of youth in urban areas" (Malatest et al., 2002: 22). Also, rural youth are less likely to find professional or managerial positions in rural communities than in urban communities (Malatest et al., 2002: 22). Statistics Canada has found that rural communities distant from major metropolitan centres see less growth than communities adjacent to large centres (Statistics Canada 2001:1). Youth leaving their communities for educational purposes also may find better job opportunities related to their fields in larger urban centres versus their own communities.

The reasons why youth leave their communities are also affected by the perceptions of rural living, and those perceptions held by their parents, teachers and friends. In its work surveying rural youth, R.A. Malatest and Associates found that "...while rural communities were seen as straightforward and basic, they were also viewed as somewhat stifling and boring" (Malatest et al., 2002: 12). Many rural youth attribute personal and career success with moving away from their home communities to larger urban centres (Malatest et al., 2002: 12).

The economic challenges facing rural youth in Manitoba are comparable to the statistics highlighted above. Table 1 outlines youth unemployment rates for the year 2002. The table also outlines the average youth unemployment rate compared to the averages for three other age categories.

Table 1 Unemployment rates: Manitoba youth in 2002*	
15-19 years	12.7%
20-24 years	8.2%
25-29 years	5.4%
15-29 years (average)	8.8%
30-44 years (average)	4.0%
45-59 years (average)	3.8%

* Adapted from Statistics Canada: Labour Force Historical Review 2002

Overall, youth aged 15-29 had the highest rate of unemployment when compared to other age categories of workers in Manitoba in 2002 (Statistics Canada: Labour Force Review: 2002).

High youth unemployment rates continue when comparing by gender. Table 2 outlines youth unemployment for both females and males aged 15-29 years when compared to other age cohorts by gender.

Table 2 Unemployment rates by gender: Manitoba youth in 2002*	
15-29 years – female	7.7%
15-29 years – male	9.6%
30-44 years – female	3.9 %
30-44 years – male	4.2%
45-59 years – female	3.5%
45-59 years – male	4.2%

* Adapted from Statistics Canada: Labour Force Historical Review 2002

Table 2 clearly shows how both female and male youth have higher unemployment rates than their counterparts in other age categories (Statistics Canada: Labour Force Historical Review: 2002). Unemployment rates of youth in Manitoba's urban, small town and rural areas are similar to the patterns above (see Table 3).

Table 3 Unemployment rates in urban, small town and rural areas: Manitoba youth in 2002* **	
Urban youth – 15-24 years	10.7%
Small town youth – 15-24 years	10.4%
Rural youth – 15-24 years	9.3%

* Adapted from Statistics Canada: Labour Force Historical Review 2002

** Statistics Canada defines small towns as "communities …between 1,000- 9,999 people and that lie outside of CMA's or CA's". Rural is defined as "sparsely populated land lying outside of CMA's or CA's with less than 1,000 population" (Statistics Canada: Labour Force Historical Review: 2002). Urban (CMA's or CA's) are communities with populations over 10,000 people (Statistics Canada 2002).

The attitudes of rural municipal leaders also factor into understanding why rural youth might decide to leave. A survey of municipal officials by R.A. Malatest and Associates found that some officials felt that rural retention and attraction was not important to the overall economic and social health of their communities (Malatest et al., 2002: 18). Youth surveyed by the authors felt disconnected or unwanted by their home communities (Malatest et al., 2002: 19). The survey found this to be particularly true in communities with a higher percentage of seniors and older adults (Malatest et al., 2002: 18). Conversely, a few municipal leaders did see youth migration as a serious long-term problem for their communities. The effect of young people leaving and not returning to their home communities was seen as part of a vicious circle in which rural small communities are left with "less energy which then drives more young people to leave (these communities)" (Malatest et al., 2002: 19).

2.2.1 Factors affecting youth's decision to leave

The document prepared for The Canada Rural Partnership by Dupuy, Mayer, and Morissette entitled Rural youth: Stayers, leavers and return migrants examines several key areas related to the decision made by rural youth to leave their communities. The report provides a good outline of the employment and labour situation facing rural youth in Canada, as well as providing a thorough examination of the migration into and out of rural communities ("inflow and outflow") by Canadian rural youth. The report defines youth as the population of urban and rural Canadians between the ages of 15 and 29 years (Dupuy, Mayer & Morissette, 2000: 3). For the purposes of analysis however, the report utilizes three categories of youth. These include youth between the ages of 15-19, 20-24, and 25-29 (Dupuy et al., 2000: 3). These three categories are similar to age categories utilized by Statistics Canada, and those used for the purposes of this practicum. [6]

---

[6] See Statistics Canada Labour Force Historic Review (2002)

2.2.2 Education and employment characteristics

Young individuals living in rural communities in Canada overall have a lower level of education than youth in urban areas (Dupuy et al., 2000: 3). When comparing youth between 25-29, nationally, only 31% of youth in rural communities had some post secondary education versus 46 % for those in urban areas (i.e. communities greater than 100,000 people). The same pattern exists when considering individuals with university degrees (Dupuy et al., 2000: 3). The report outlines at least three factors that may contribute to this finding. These factors include access to educational institutions, cost of post-secondary education and the nature of rural occupations.

Opportunities for pursuing post-secondary opportunities in rural communities are typically less than those found in large urban centers. Rural communities may house a community college or satellite branch for a university; however, the breadth of courses and programs offered is typically less than that found in larger urban centres.

Secondly, costs to attend a college or university outside of one's home community are more expensive for youth living in rural communities. Tuition costs, living costs, food and transportation costs all increase educational costs significantly. The report authors concluded that if only marginal educational benefits are gained by youth moving to urban areas, most rural youth wouldn't move (Dupuy et al., 2000: 4).

The final reason why rural youth may have lower educational levels than their urban counterparts is because of the nature of rural occupations. The economies of many rural communities still revolve around primary industries such as agriculture, mining, forestry and fishing (Dupuy et al., 2000: 4). These industries typically have a larger number of blue-collar occupations, in comparison to management or professional occupations. For example, approximately 48% of rural youth in Canada are employed in blue collar jobs, in comparison to white collar jobs (22% for rural youth) (Dupuy et al., 2000: 4). Assuming (as this report does) that blue collar occupations require less schooling than most management or professional occupations, and that primary industries might prefer

young and healthy individuals, it becomes understandable why rural youth may have lower educational levels than urban youth.

2.2.3 Rural labour markets

The labour market and the job situation for rural youth are less favourable than for youth in urban centres (Dupuy et al., 2000: 4). The report prepared for the Canadian Rural Partnership in 2000 explored rural labour market conditions in three ways; two are important for the purposes of this practicum. These include employment rate by full year and full time employment, and the occupational wage discrepancies between youth living in rural and urban areas.

The report authors discovered that "...among non-students, aged 15-19 years, the employment rate is, at the national level, the same in rural and urban areas (at 51%)" (Dupuy et al., 2000: 4). However, the authors also discovered that the employment rate, (full year and full time employment) for rural youth aged 20-29 years is lower than their counterparts in urban areas (Dupuy et al., 2000: 4).

Wage discrepancies also exist between rural and urban youth. These discrepancies, however, are different from what might be expected. While women (especially 20-24) working full year, full time earned less than their urban counterparts, rural male youth actually earned more than their urban counterparts. However, a wage gap does still exist between rural and urban employees (Dupuy et al., 2000: 5-6).

2.2.4 Changing trends in rural Manitoba

Two current agricultural trends in Manitoba are also potential contributors to rural depopulation and youth migration in particular. These two trends include the growing size of prairie farms, and the "greying" of Manitoba's farm population.

David Hay, in Rural Sociology in Canada, states that farm sizes in rural Canada have grown drastically since the early forties. Manitoba farms, for instance, grew from an average acreage size of 291 acres in 1941 to approximately 700 acres by 1986 (Hay D., 1992: 27). Overall Manitoba has, among all provinces, seen the third highest increase in farm sizes since 1941 (Hay, 1992: 27).

Statistics Canada reports that the trend towards an aging farm population in Canada has occurred since the early nineties. For instance, the median age of farm operators in Manitoba has increased from 46 in 1996 to 48 by 2001 (Statistics Canada: 2002). Also, the percentage of farmers under 35 years of age has decreased from 20.7% in 1991 to 13.4% in 2001 (Statistics Canada: 2002).

The reason why older farmers are farming longer and why farms are getting bigger can be attributed to new farm technologies (i.e. larger harvesting machines). The effects of these technologies on farm and rural small town populations are significant. Larger farm sizes means that less farm operators and farm helpers are needed. This results in smaller populations in rural towns and villages. Smaller populations also mean that there are less financial resources available to support local economies and social and cultural institutions such as schools, churches and recreation centres. There are also less financial resources available to support the development and repair of physical infrastructure such as roads and sewers.

Smaller and aging farm populations coincide with the loss of skilled youth to other provinces. Azmier and Stone (2002) in Manitoba in Profile report that Manitoba has "...historically been a net loser" in inter-provincial migration (Azmier, J., & Stone, L., 2002: 12). The authors point out that the " 'brain drain' of young graduates is a costly concern. (Moreover) (i)t is the least ideal situation for a province to pay for the education and employment training of its young people and then have them leave ... to another jurisdiction" (Azmier et al., 2002:12).

Growing farm sizes, aging farm populations and the challenges posed by the youth "brain drain" create a difficult climate for young people in rural communities. Seeing decline in their communities, many rural youth may consider a move to urban areas as a greater step up economically, culturally and socially (Malatest et al., 2002: 13-14).

2.2.5 Rise of the information economy

The shift from an industrial-based economy to an information economy has a wide range of effects on local and global markets, labour, and workplaces. At a micro level, the new information economy affects the day to day work environment. At the macro level, cities, countries and communities are forced to adapt their social, cultural and economic structures to meet the needs of a post-industrial world. Rural and urban areas around the world experience this industrial to informational shift with different consequences. In his books The Rise of the Network Society (2001), and The Internet Galaxy (2001), Manual Castells explores the characteristics of the new information economy, its transformation of the workplace, its effects on global and local labour forces, and its positive and negative consequences.

A major characteristic of the emerging information economy is the shift from the production of manufactured goods to the provision of services (i.e. a shift from the primary sector and manufacturing sector industries to the service industry) as the primary means of economic development (Castells, M., 2001: 219). Castells further divides the service industry into four distinct sub categories. These include producer services, social services, distributive services and personal services (Castells, 2001: 221-230).

Service providing sectors range from health and education services (a form of personal services), to services that support the primary and manufacturing sectors. Such services would include trucking companies, project management teams and consulting firms. Overall, some form of information sharing or information transfer (between individuals, businesses or organizations) characterizes the service industry (Castells, 2001: 221).

While manufacturing and primary sector industries (such as farming, forestry, mining and fishing) are still major economic generators in rural Canada, the rise in service industries is becoming increasingly evident in rural Canada today. Azmier and Stone (2003) state that "(e)mployment patterns in the rural West reflect the international shift ... from industrial-based manufacturing activity to more knowledge-based and service activity" (Azmier, J., & Stone, L., 2003: 11). Furthermore, these same authors found that "service producing jobs are currently the greatest source of employment growth" in Manitoba (Azmier, J., & Stone, L., 2002:13).

On the larger scale, a recent survey by Statistics Canada concluded that at least "...sixty five percent of all jobs in rural small town areas are found in the service providing sectors" (Beshiri, 2001: 7). In this study, Statistics Canada's definition of service providing sectors is similar to those categories used by Castells.

One of the largest dilemmas facing rural communities during the shift from an industrial-based economy to the new information economy is access to information technologies such as computers and the Internet. In the "Rural and Small Town Canada Analysis Bulletin" (vol 3, no. 5) Statistics Canada reports that while access to these technologies in rural areas is improving, rural areas still lag behind Canada's urban areas in computer ownership and Internet connectivity (McLaren, L., 2002:22) [7]. Azmier and Stone (2002) in Manitoba in Profile discuss this situation in Manitoba. The authors found that in Manitoba there is an '...increased urgency to develop skills among Manitoba youth and to attract the talent needed to fill some of these gaps" (Azmier, J., & Stone, L., 2002: 5). Furthermore, the authors report that the " ...current demand (for employee skills are) for a whole host of skills, particularly in information technologies and communication (Azmier, et al., 2002:5). Lack of access to information technologies (such as the Internet) can therefore hurt rural communities economically. Rural youth, seeking employment in areas reflective of the new information economy may move to areas where these services are more accessible, better and cheaper.

---

[7] Based on the General Social Survey (2002) Statistics Canada.

2.3 Community Development Corporation (CDCs) and Community Economic Development (CED)

One of the ways that rural communities can begin to address the critical issue of rural youth migration is through the initiatives of local economic development organizations such as Community Development Corporations (CDCs).

The Community Development Corporation program, initiated by the Government of Manitoba, is a means for urban and rural communities to better coordinate local community economic development initiatives and programs. Community Development Corporations (CDCs) are incorporated companies situated in Manitoba's rural and urban communities. CDCs have the specific mandate to promote the long term community and economic objectives of its member municipalities and residents (Manitoba Rural Development, 1998).

Dorsey and Ticoll (1982) provide a good definition of the focus of CDCs:

> The practical focus of a community development corporation is the revitalization of the community through community-based economic development. This type of development may meet community needs in any number of ways—by providing economic strength which increases the power of disadvantaged groups, by creating community jobs and supporting community businesses, and by providing needed services or facilities (Dorsey and Ticoll 1982: 3).

Watkins-Murphy and Cunningham's definition of the range of CDCs' activities goes into greater specifics. They state that CDC activities include "...increasing its neighbourhood's (or community's) quantity and quality of affordable housing; helping existing local commercial/ industrial firms to thrive, export and create jobs; assisting in the survival of ...businesses, and mid-wifing small enterprises (Watkins-Murphy P., and Cunningham, J., 2003: 38).

As Watkins-Murphy and Cunningham note, the special characteristics of CDCs are that they are local. CDCs have elected Board members and hire office staffs that are also community residents (Watkins-Murphy et al., 2003: 39).[8] This local nature of CDCs is further reinforced by the Government of Manitoba which anticipates that CDC Boards "…consist of local volunteers…(that) should represent a cross-section of community leaders, stakeholders and expertise" (Manitoba Rural Development 1998:25). In addition, CDCs in Manitoba may encompass and serve several municipalities. Successful CDCs therefore depend upon a good working relationship between various municipal councils, business organizations and community residents.

Watkins-Murphy and Cunningham also touch upon the importance of relationships and connections between CDCs and community groups. Since CDCs are involved in the social, political and economic aspects of community life, they must "…seek interconnectedness by promoting wide ranging interrelationships and friendships …(build) a sense of community and organize networks of mutual support" (Watkins-Murphy et al., 2003: 44). Connecting with rural youth is an integral relationship that must be fostered by CDCs facing rural migration challenges in their communities.

2.3.1 Characteristics of CDCs in rural Manitoba

The activities undertaken by Manitoba's rural CDCs are similar to the activities undertaken by CDCs in larger urban centres. A recent report prepared for the Manitoba Community Development Corporations Association (MCDCA) by the Rural Development Institute (Brandon University) outlines the key functions, activities and priorities of a broad cross section of Manitoba's rural CDCs (Annis, B, and Bessant, K., 2004: ii). [9] The report authors found through their analysis that rural CDCs in Manitoba

---

[8] Volunteers can become CDC board members without being elected, however, volunteers that want to undertake executive positions on CDCs must be elected in by other board members (i.e. by each CDC Board of Directors).

[9] The report authors undertook a questionnaire survey of 55 incorporated CDCs in Manitoba. The purpose of the report was to develop a greater understanding of the characteristics, day-to day operation and activities of incorporated CDCs in Manitoba. Questions revolved around the current activities (being undertaken by CDCs), CDC board and committee structures, and the challenges

are primarily involved in eight activities (or functions). These include:

- Business development;
- Identifying (community and business) opportunities;
- Attracting new capital / retaining existing capital;
- The development of capital projects;
- Community profiling;
- Community promotion and marketing;
- Human resource development and;
- Other sector activities;[10]

All rural CDCs address issues unique to their own region—however (as these authors point out) the "eight core areas" identified above were found to be common elements in the mandate of most CDCs in rural Manitoba (Annis and Bessant: 2004:12). These areas of activity among Manitoba's rural CDC also relate to the range of CDC functions and activities expressed by Dorsey and Ticoll and Watkins-Murphy and Cunningham (see section 2.3).

Annis and Bessant also allude to a potential difference between urban and rural based CDCs in Manitoba. Both authors (through the responses of their interviewees) noted that a sense of mutual cooperation and partnership was an especially important element in rural CDCs. They found that:

> ...the need to work together as partners (e.g. sharing information and resources) was viewed by some (CDCs) as particularly relevant when dealing with smaller, more isolated communities and larger projects (Annis and Bessant: 2004:3).

---

facing CDCs in Manitoba. See the full report (referenced in the bibliography) for more information on CDCs in Manitoba.

[10] This section includes improving / developing housing in the community, improving/ developing community facilities, the development of social / recreational projects, addressing youth issues and the development and undertaking of environmentally-oriented projects (Annis and Bessant 2004: 16).

Rural based CDCs—which in some cases may have less access to critical resources, such as volunteers and funding, may find themselves depending more heavily on the partnerships formed within their communities—and with adjacent communities, CDCs and other regional development organizations. This point stresses the importance that partnerships play in the ongoing and future success of many rural-based CDCs.

2.3.2 CDCs and CED: a common approach to community development

Many CDCs are taking a comprehensive approach to community development (Watkins-Murphy et al., 2003: 44). The comprehensive approach shares the same characteristics with the community economic development (CED) approach to community renewal. The Canadian CED network's definition of CED (while primarily a local economic development strategy), is a strategy that "...considers the overall development of a community, as a way of simultaneously achieving social and economic objectives and addressing socio-economic inequalities " (Canadian CED network 2001). Basically, CED is a "...comprehensive approach (that links) economic, social, cultural, environmental and other sectors of the community" (Canadian CED network 2001).

CED initiatives (in the Canadian CED network definition of CED) aim at assisting individuals or groups who may be disadvantaged, disempowered or removed from the economic or social resources available in a community. [11] Given this situation, CED initiatives attempt to rectify socio-economic inequalities by initiating partnerships between the community itself and the disempowered within these communities (Canadian CED network: 2001). Given the situation facing rural youth today (as explained above) it is evident that CED initiatives in rural CDCs must consider the socio-economic needs

---

[11] See the Canadian CED network web site at: http://www.canadiancednetwork.org for a comprehensive definition of CED.

and challenges facing these youth. [12]

2.4 Community economic development (CED): principles and approaches

What characterizes a community economic development approach to addressing rural youth migration, and how are these approaches different from traditional economic development initiatives? This section examines what community economic development is, and what are the main steps in a CED approach to economic development. The section will begin by explaining how CED is different from traditional (local) economic development initiatives. The key principles of CED will then be explored. This section will then conclude by discussing why rural youth must be included in local CED initiatives, and why such partnerships with youth must be addressed when developing local youth attraction strategies.

2.4.1 CED versus traditional economic development: three differences

There are three main differences between a Community Economic Development (CED) approach to economic development and traditional economic development. These differences are (1) promoting the local "third sector" or alternative economy (2) an increased collective and individual sense of empowerment, and (3) a process versus product approach to community-based local economic development. Eric Schragge, in his book <u>Community Economic Development (CED): In Search of Empowerment</u> (1997) reviews these three characteristics.

---

[12] The report by Annis and Bessant (2004) further draws the connection between a common approach towards community development that is shared by CED and CDCs. Both authors state that CDCs are "strategically positioned to contribute significantly to community-based development"—especially through the partnerships that they form with other regional development organizations (Annis and Besant, 2004: iv). Furthermore, CED and CDC share an interconnected approach to community development since CDCs "recognize the importance of strategic planning processes for community-based development" (Annis and Bessant, 2004: iv) (See section 2.4.5 for a discussion about the importance of strategic planning to CED).

2.4.2 Promoting the local third sector (alternative) economy

Traditional economic development in rural communities is dependent upon private sector investment (such as the development of factories), and public sector support for these investments. A CED approach to rural revitalization offers rural communities an "economic alternative" to traditional forms of economic development (Schragge, E., 1997: x). As Shragge explains, " CED offers examples of the creation of new forms of production and ownership...one that is neither owned by the public or the state" (Schragge, 1997: x). This new form of production is known as "third sector economics".

Third sector economics, or the "alternative economy", characterizes economic activities that are local in nature and not primarily driven by profit. Such economics is the base of what Shragge refers to as the "social economy" (Schragge, 1997: 19). Third sector economics aims at meeting economic development objectives through local ownership and greater community control over socio-economic resources (such as workers and company revenues) (Schragge, 1997: x). Developments through third sector economics "...link the social with the economic (and allows communities) ...to have greater control over wider economic and social processes" (Schragge, 1997: x). Examples of third sector economic structures include cooperative enterprises, mutualist associations and consumer cooperatives (Schragge, 1997: x). Choy and Rounds state that the alternative approach to economics is based on:

> Active community intervention to ensure that benefits produced by economic development activities flow to disadvantaged low income residents (Robinson. C. 1989). Emphasis on human resource development, job training and other labour supply and distributional considerations is designed to ensure benefit to local citizens. In short, the specific needs of the disadvantaged are addressed through job creation, income redistribution and district development (Choy and Rounds: 1992: 21).

Top-down decision-making, characteristic of traditional economic development, does not prevail in an alternative approach to economics. Both authors state that:

A significant component of the alternative model is emphasis on an open planning process. Decision-making is less restricted to business and policy-making leaders than was the case in the corporate-centre model (of development). In contrast, a broader range of interests from low income and minority residents is included (Choy et al., 1992: 21).

CED approaches to rural revitalization promote locally owned and controlled businesses, socially conscious and beneficial development, and increased citizen participation in local economies. By doing this, CED promotes increased collective and individual empowerment of individual residents and the community as a whole.

2.4.3 Increased collective and individual empowerment

By promoting more local citizen control and participation in the development of rural economies, CED initiatives foster an increased sense of collective community empowerment. Schragge defines empowerment as "...a process that occurs both at the personal and at the political level...and a process that involves changing power relations between individuals, groups and social institutions" (Schragge, 1997: *xiii*). CED however, does not just foster increased collective empowerment; it also fosters individual empowerment. This idea of an interconnectedness between increased community and individual (resident) empowerment is shared by Bill Ninacs who believes that individual empowerment is possible in communities which have greater control over their (financial, social and cultural) resources. Also, greater community empowerment results in greater individual empowerment (Ninacs, B., Sept. 2002).

2.4.4 A process approach to economic development

CED approaches to community development are different from traditional approaches to economic development in that CED approaches are more process-oriented than product focused. Traditional economic development movements known as boosterism and later as smokestack chasing, focused primarily on attracting capital (such as factories and industries) "at all costs" into a community. Like CED, these approaches to local economic development did seek to address local unemployment and attract major employers to a community. Traditional approaches, however, failed to consider the net

social, environmental and cultural costs associated with such development—and how
these developments (often international corporations associated with low-paying jobs)
affected the lives of community residents (Boothroyd and Davis. 1993: 231). Community
leaders and business "elites" primarily promoted such development with very little input
by local residents (Boothroyd et al., 1993: 231).

Since CED is based on local participation of residents in decision-making and
planning, CED is characterised by being process oriented. This process approach
guarantees that a collective community vision will be addressed in long term economic
planning for the community (when compared to traditional economic development)
(Douglas, 1994: 120-121). This approach allows all members of a community (or, in
many situations, community development officials as representatives of the community)
to voice their concerns, recommendations and potential solutions (Douglas, 1994: 121).

2.4.5 The CED process: strategic planning

As outlined above, the CED approach to economic development is process- oriented.
Douglas provides a brief outline of the CED process in his book Community Economic
Development in Canada. While he outlines eight steps common to most CED based
projects, the most important step associated with CED is strategic planning.

Strategic planning is a key tool needed to help communities realise their community
economic development initiatives (Douglas, 1994: 248). Douglas points out the
importance of strategic planning to CED in that strategic planning "...can significantly
enhance the community's decision-making ability which is related to (its) choice, control
and self-reliance" (Douglas, 1994: 263). Undertaking a strategic planning approach to
CED allows local residents and stakeholders to better visualize what they see as long-
term goals for their communities.

2.4.6 Characteristics of strategic planning

There are several characteristics of strategic planning that are important to this study. These characteristics include: the ability to envision community; the ability to define goals and objectives; and the ability to specify existing community resources needed to meet these goals. Involving young people in visioning, goal setting and the defining of project resources allows community leaders to better understand the issues facing their young people. Involving youth in strategic planning therefore is an important step to providing a clear image of the issues contributing to youth migration.

The following section discusses these three characteristics of strategic planning. This section also discusses how young people can be involved in each step of the process. Understanding youth involvement in strategic planning provides a framework to understand how partnerships with young people can be formed and even strengthened.

Visioning

Strategic planning is characterised by community stakeholders collaboratively discussing what they want their communities to be in the future - economically, socially, culturally and environmentally (Douglas, 1994: 242). Integral to this process is community residents and stakeholders determining the particular strengths, opportunities, weaknesses and threats in their communities. Such a process involves the community brainstorming their current and past economic and social climate and how these can be improved upon in the future (Douglas, 1994: 243). Undertaking the brainstorming process results in the community being able to better visualize community goals for their future (Manitoba Rural Development, 1998: 51).

35

Information sharing and dialogue

Visioning is the first step in getting young people involved in the strategic planning process. Visioning is where young people need to express what they want and need in their communities. The visioning process however, depends on a free flow of information between young people, community leaders, business leaders and other residents. This information sharing is based on dialogue.

Hart, in his book Children's Participation (1997), summarises the importance of dialogue in planning with young children. Hart found that the "most appropriate methods for promoting democratic participation in children are based on dialogue" (Hart, 1997: 34). Hart's stress on the importance of dialogue goes even deeper to state that "...a milieu of open communication (between youth and adults) can also create expectations for the type of honest interchange conducive to establishing values and working with others" (Hart, 1997: 35). [13]

The authors of Youth Engagement: Empowering Youth to Identify and Address Youth Needs (2003) summarise the connection between dialogue and youth engagement. The authors state that "...getting to know more about the young people (you're) working with—what they think, what they hope to achieve and what their goals are" is the first step towards youth engagement in your community (Social Planning Council 2003:2).

Most importantly, dialogue is the first step in building trust with young people. Fielding, Dominguez and Perreault, in their work with ethnic, Aboriginal and street youth in Winnipeg discovered that "(y)outh want trust and respect. They also want to be able to trust and respect adults, politicians, workers and key decision-makers" (Fielding, V., Dominguez, M., Perreault, M., 2001: 7). Trust with youth is based on "ongoing

---

[13] Hart's research focuses on planning with children under fourteen years of age. His comments, however, are applicable to planning with adolescents and youth. See Hart (1997).

communication that is honest, free of stereotyping, prejudice and "appearance judgements"(Fielding et al., 2001:7).

Dialogue and building trust with youth at the visioning stage sets the groundwork for greater youth involvement that occurs during the next step of strategic planning.

Defining goals and objectives

Strategic planning provides local CDCs and residents the ability to define specific and practical economic development goals for their community (Douglas, 1994: 252-255). While goals (in a CED process) tend to be long-term and focus on economic development, goal-setting can also be short term (i.e. one and five year plans) and more comprehensive in nature (i.e. increasing municipal support for local youth training programs) (Douglas, 1994: 130-149).[14]

Strategic planning is more practical than other plan approaches to economic development since strategic planning allows goals to be set and objectives and timelines to be formed (Douglas, 1994: 252-254). While objectives form the "...actions for which goals (are) achieved", plan timelines provide practical indicators of when and by whom (in the community) these objectives will be met (Manitoba Rural Development, 1998: 53, Douglas, 1994: 254).

Youth engagement in defining objectives and goals

Young people must be actively involved in defining the objectives and goals in programs and projects that affect them.

Fielding, Dominguez and Perreault found that many youth feel frustrated with youth-oriented programs since adults typically have "...taken over projects, or not allowed

---

[14] For a good example of such CED plans see examples in chapter three of
Community Economic Development in Canada (1994).

37

youth to have control (over these projects)" (Fielding, V., Dominguez, M., and Perreault, M., 2001: 10). Youth therefore "...are tired of not seeing results or feeling that their involvement is superficial" (Fielding et al., 2001: 11).

Greater youth involvement in defining goals and objectives in programs can result in greater empowerment and sense of youth community ownership. Adults must "enable youth to drive the discussions...set the pace, establish the process and control the content" of projects and programs (Fielding et al., 2001:11). This includes the ability to work collaboratively with adults to develop the goals and objectives that best reflect the needs of young people. Greater youth input can help communities address youth needs more effectively. Hart states that "if...organizations (and communities) are going to attract and serve young people in a way that encourages them to participate in and serve their communities, adults need to allow the organization culture to be deeply informed by youth"(Hart, 1997:29).

Defying traditional decision-making power structures is difficult politically and ideologically. However, the importance of giving young people power in setting their own program goals and objectives, is an important step towards building a sense of ownership, pride and value. As Fielding, Dominguez and Perreault state " (t)hrough ownership of activities, projects and programs, youth feel valued and respected" (Fielding et al., 2001: 11).

Empowering Youth: Arnstein's Ladder of Empowerment

Community leaders and CDCs must be aware of the different levels of youth participation. Sherry Arnstein (1969) developed a "ladder of citizen participation" that outlines eight distinct steps of how citizens are involved and engaged in local decision-making in their communities (Rocha, E., 1997: 32). The ladder (adapted to the context of youth by Hart) can be used to assess the level of involvement youth currently have in community programs and projects. The ladder can also help determine what steps must be taken to improve the engagement of local youth in the future ("Neighbourhoods

Make a Toolbox" 2001:3).

The bottom four rungs of
Arnstein's adapted ladder outlines
situations where youth are manipulated
by project coordinators or given token
positions on committees or boards
without any decision making powers or
influence over project goals and
objectives. ("Neigbourhoods Make a
Toolbox" 2001: 3).
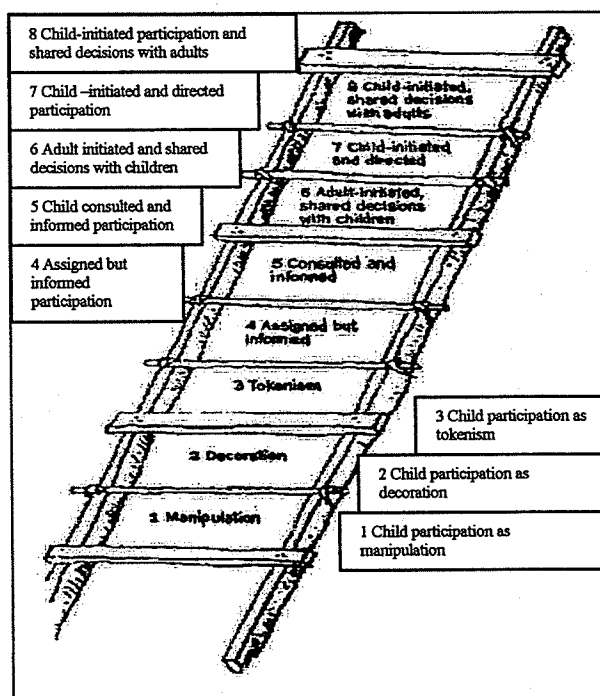
Figure 3. Arnstein's ladder of citizen participation (as
adapted in "Neighbourhoods Make a Toolbox", pg. 3.
True partnerships with youth would be associated with
the top rung in the ladder.

The next two rungs of Arnstein's
ladder refer to these steps as
"delegated power" and "citizen
control" (Arnstein, S., 1969: 217). It is at these steps where citizens (such as youth)
"...hold the significant cards (such as project control) to assure accountability of the
program (or project) to them (Arnstein, 1969: 222). At this stage, young people
themselves have a majority say over what the goals and objectives of youth projects are,
how these projects are managed and operated, and how project outcomes are can be
monitored.

Arnstein points out that "(p)artnership is the first step towards citizen power"
(Arnstein, 1969: 217, 221). Effective youth partnerships are characterized by shared
decision-making responsibilities that allow youth themselves to initiate projects they feel
would benefit them ("Neigbouhoods Make a Toolbox" 2001: 3). Most importantly,
community leaders must respect youth's ability to lead, coordinate and manage projects
that reflect their needs during the strategic planning process ("Neigbouhoods Make a
Toolbox" 2001: 3).

39

Outline key resources that exist in the community

Strategic planning provides a framework for local CDCs to conduct an effective assessment of existing community resources and the new resources needed to meet their development goals. Resources may include financial capital, good physical infrastructure, and services to support businesses. Resources may also include such elements as well-established partnerships with local stakeholders (such as youth groups) or a large pool of community volunteers (Douglas, 1994: 252-256).

Youth Resources: Involving youth networks

Rural communities and CDCs must encourage youth to strengthen their connections and networks to friends, family and community. This should especially be done when involving youth in strategic (project) planning. Youth resources (in many cases) include the social networks of family, friends, mentors and teachers that they have close contact with. Fielding, Dominguez and Perreault state that "…youth are socially oriented people. They consider the relationships in their lives to be extremely important. Forms of engagement, projects…must promote relationship building and must also be fun" (Fielding et al., 2001:10).

CDCs can aid youth networking by highlighting possible role models in the community or surrounding region. CDCs and other community leaders can also bring to youth's attention other networks of youth, youth organizations or community leaders in adjacent towns or communities. By doing this CDCs and community leaders can help youth develop a wider view of the people and resources that exist to help them develop programs and initiatives.

2.4.7 Linking strategic planning and youth

Strategic planning is key to any CED initiative. Since the strategic planning process outlines important community resources and challenges, it is the critical step in which the issues and challenges facing rural youth must be addressed. The role of youth-oriented partnerships (such as partnerships with local high schools and youth groups) in community development must also be explored and examined in this process. Consulting and integrating youth in the CED strategic planning process can provide rural youth with a greater sense of individual empowerment in the decision-making processes that occur in the community, improve the sense of youth's inclusion in the community, and also foster a greater sense of community pride.

2.5 Partnerships and youth: Why are youth important?

Why are partnerships with rural youth important? Thus far, the issues and challenges facing rural youth have been discussed, as have some suggestions on how rural communities may begin to address these issues. This section outlines why youth are important to the social and economic life of Manitoba's rural communities today. While multiple reasons exist, only three specific reasons will be discussed. These reasons include: the knowledge of applicable skills for the new economy; the ability to be flexible; and the role of youth as the business and community leaders of tomorrow.

Our definition of youth (Canadian residents between 18-29 years of age) coincides with what is known as the "Nexus Generation"(Barnard, Cosgrave and Welsh 1998: 17). As these authors point out, the Nexus generation overall has several skills and abilities that differ from any other generation of Canadians (Barnard, Cosgrave and Welsh 1998:1-2). These skills make the Nexus Generation especially important for our rural (and urban) communities today.

2.5.1 Knowledge of new information technologies

Members of the Nexus Generation have an intimate knowledge of the skills and technologies necessary for today's information economy. As the authors of Chips and Pop: Decoding the Nexus Generation point out, the Nexus Generation members are the "early adopters" of the Internet, meaning effectively that Nexus has spent its early years learning, mastering and shaping the use of new technologies such as computers and the Internet (Barnard et al., 1998:101). The Nexus Generation has also been the first generation of Canadians to effectively use the Internet for work and school (Barnard et al., 1998: 101).

Since (as seen above) rural communities are moving towards service based industries dependent upon information transfers and flows, the ability to have residents who easily work with new information technologies is imperative for the economic and social health of these communities. The ease with which the Nexus Generation uses information technologies makes it more relevant for rural communities today and in the near future.

2.5.2 The ability to be flexible in a changing world

The formative years of Nexus youth have been characterized by political, social and cultural changes. As Barnard, Cosgrave and Welsh point out, Nexus is a generation that has known "nothing but change" (Barnard et al., 1998: 158). Government downsizing of programs and services (such as in housing and social welfare programs) and the changing roles of religion, family and education have left many members in the Nexus Generation adapting to these new realities (Barnard et al., 1998: 103). Overall, however, Nexus has found these traditional institutions too slow to adapt to their needs and as such have taken on a "do-it yourself" approach to their careers and lives (Barnard et al., 1998: 83, 103). These youth have shaped their educational experiences, government expectations and family and community experiences in ways that will benefit them in the long run financially and socially.

As residents of rural communities, Nexus youth can relate and adapt to changing political, economic and social realities quicker than other generations. Nexus youth can better help their communities transform innovative ideas on how to transform existing economic structures into effective community economic development goals. Also, these youth can help provide input to community leaders on how to keep traditional institutions such as community schools, recreational centres and municipal governments relevant to today's youth (See Barnard, Cosgrave and Welsh: chapter three).

2.5.3 Leadership: The ability to lead communities in a post-industrial world

Nexus youth are the business and community leaders of the future. Successful leadership may be characterized by the ability to make sound decisions, the ability to be flexible and adaptable, and by the ability to provide a vision for the future. One of the most important characteristics that leaders must have is the ability to understand the multiple perspectives and opinions of their residents. Nexus youth provide this ability better than any other generation in Canada. By nature of their age, nexus youth are found situated between the Baby Boom Generation and the Net Generation. Effectively, Nexus "...sits right in the middle of society's shift from the assembly line Industrial age to the data driven Information age " (Barnard et al., 1998: 2). This unique positioning allows Nexus youth the ability to better understand the multiple perspectives and ideas of community residents older and younger than them.

As a generation that "bridges the past and the future", Nexus youth can provide and support greater intergenerational co-operation between all community residents. Greater intergenerational co-operation is needed to solve pressing community problems such as rural depopulation, economic decline and the shift to the information economy (Barnard et al., 1998: 2). As community leaders, the ability of Nexus youth to work with multiple perspectives and ideas will be critical to tackle the changing economic, political and cultural realities in rural Manitoba.

2.6 Leadership, entrepreneurship and an innovative community atmosphere

The above sections outline why young people are important to the social and economic life of communities. These sections also describe how young people can be involved in CED strategic planning. How can CDCs and community leaders further strengthen partnerships with young people? The following section explores three areas to be considered when strengthening youth partnerships. These include fostering the development of young leaders, supporting community youth entrepreneurship and the development of an innovative community atmosphere. Acting upon these three areas can help communities develop more effective attraction strategies.

2.6.1 Developing young leaders

CDCs and community leaders must develop and strengthen their partnerships with potential young leaders. Lorraine Garkovich in Community Development in Perspective (1989) discusses the importance of fostering leadership in communities. Garkovich states that communities "contain many potential leaders, and (that) efforts must be made to both activate and nurture this leadership" (Garkovich, L., 1989:203). Garkovich expands on this by stating that leadership, along with "active local organizations", are the "essential building blocks" to local community capacity building (Garkovich, L., 1989: 203).

Especially important in the new millenium, future community leaders must be able to:

> ...anticipate change, contribute to informed decisions, identify action programs, stimulate support, attract resources, and manage group behavior. (This) leadership involves then...the ability to organize and sustain task performance and the ability to arouse or stimulate others to join in the task (Garkovich, L., 1989: 203).

The economic and social realities facing many communities today require " a pool of leaders that are flexible, comfortable with change and able to address the evolving fabric of their communities" (Garkovich, L., 1989: 209). Young people can best provide the ability to fill these needed positions.

CDCs must support the training and development of new young leaders. Developing young leaders may help CDCs also strengthen relationships between youth themselves. Since (in most cases) young people relate more easily (and feel more comfortable) with people their age—young leaders may be able to positively affect their own peers. CDCs must provide the opportunity (through youth leadership) for young people to have "...the chance and confidence to positively affect their (own) peers (Fielding et al., 2001: 12).

Youth and adult partnerships: mentorship and apprenticeship opportunities

Related to the idea of youth leadership is the importance of youth mentorship and apprenticeship. To become effective partners in communities—and to support a healthy, sustainable community, young people have to partner with adults in their communities. Forming effective partnerships with community adults is important to make young people feel part of the community. Mokwena (in Foster and Naidoo 2001) states that "...the full participation of youth in public life should take as its starting point the need to develop and build appropriate generational linkages" (Mokwena, 2001: 116). This can mostly happen through apprenticeship and mentorship situations. Perry states that a mentor is:

> Someone with years of experience and knowledge and the desire to offer guidance to someone learning the mentor's profession or going through a similar life experience. Most often, a mentor is a more experienced or older person who acts as a role model, compatriot, challenger, guide or cheerleader (Perry, S., 2000: 64).

Mentorships are an important step to develop effective partnerships with community adults. Effective participation of young people (in a community) is not possible without adult-youth partnerships. Mokwena states that forming partnerships with adults will help young people feel part of the community (Mokwena, in Foster and Naidoo 2001: 116).

Mentorships however, have to move beyond the scope of business development. Community leaders (such as politicians, respected seniors and other community leaders) must also be encouraged to become youth mentors. Mokwena states that "...the capacity to provide apprenticeships for young people in areas such as political participation and

45

governance is critical for the survival of democracy" (Mokwena, 2001: 28).

2.6.2 Supporting youth entrepreneurship

Promoting youth entrepreneurship is one way in which communities can help young people become effective community partners. As Perry points out "...entrepreneurship ...offers young people another hope, another alternative—experience in creating their own jobs and a record that (future) employers can value (Perry, 2001: 122). Shaffer and Summers in their chapter entitled "Community Economic Development" explain the importance of local entrepreneurs to the vitality of a community. Local entrepreneurship:

> is a key institutional ingredient in community vitality. Entrepreneurs bring together the resources, take the necessary risks, have the ideas, provide the energy and the ingenuity to create new products and services" (Shapiro 1981 as quoted in Shaffer, and Summers 1989: 185). Entrepreneurs (also) respond "to change and (try) to capture the opportunities embodied by change" (Shaffer et al., 1989: 185).

Young entrepreneurs bring new and innovative ideas on how to rejuvenate local economies. Successful young entrepreneurs can also stimulate other young individuals to develop their business ideas. Garkovich feels that CDCs, and community leaders, must especially foster the development of young entrepreneurs among community residents traditionally excluded from local economic development initiatives (Garkovich, 1989: 211). These individuals include women, persons with physical and mental disabilities, and ethnic and visible minorities. Young entrepreneurs with a wide range of backgrounds and abilities help to " broaden the pool of economic actors in a community... (and provide) new avenues of participation" for all community residents (Garkovich, 1989: 211). Developing young leaders with different backgrounds is important since " (t)he larger the pool of leaders in a community, the greater the opportunities for things to happen in that community" (Garkovich, 1989: 209).

Young people have a multitude of ideas and opinions. Economic development that is local in nature and that involves young people should be supported by the entire

community. CDCs should promote and support a multitude of ways that young people can be involved in the local economy. Some ideas include:

Women entrepreneurship

Getting women involved in entrepreneurship—especially young women, is an area that community groups should focus on. Perry states that:

> Historically, women have experienced special problems as entrepreneurs, or aspiring entrepreneurs. (Often) in some locales…women cannot get business loans without a husband's or father's co-signature…specially focussed programs for women can be important for a community to obtain the full benefit of this important sector for business development (Perry, 2000:116).

Community leaders and organizations must also support networking between women entrepreneurs in the region. Perry states that "…an emphasis, for example on networking among solely women entrepreneurs provides a significant support for sharing experiences with gender-related obstacles and techniques for dealing with them " (Perry, 2000:116).

Support, networking and training should be especially stressed for young people who have been typically disenfranchised. These include women, racial and ethic minorities, people of different sexual orientation and youth themselves. Rural communities with a diverse business community become interesting, unique (and most importantly) egalitarian. An interesting business environment also helps a community become competitive with other communities.

Succession planning

Community (and community development organizations) must maintain a thriving and stable business community. A thriving business community is needed to meet the basic needs of existing and future residents. The number of businesses that leave or close down have to be minimized. Community organizations should encourage young people to be involved in business succession planning. Perry explains that:

Succession planning seeks to shape the transfer of ownership of local businesses or facilities to assure the most fruitful outcome for the community" (Perry, 2000: 83).

Young entrepreneurs should be encouraged to take over the family business if their families are involved in the local business community. Succession planning can also occur with young employees interested in taking over the operations of an existing community business. A major goal of succession planning (as Perry states) is to "transfer ownership and management (of existing businesses) so that there is the least damage to the local economy and perhaps even a major positive effect " (Perry, 2000: 83).

Community groups must offer assistance for young entrepreneurs in business succession planning. Perry states that assistance might take the form of "…introductions to lawyers, accountants (and) business brokers, outlining transfer scenarios, locating …potential buyers (and) helping (in)…designing the specific transfer plan" (Perry, 2000: 85). Assistance must also take the form of skill transfers from older (and outgoing) business owners to new owners. Any business and industry has its own unique characteristics and attributes. Mentorships between outgoing business owners and new owners should be encouraged.

Co-operative businesses

Co-operative businesses can be an effective tool for local young entrepreneurs to develop new business ideas. Michael Gertler, in Rural Co-operatives and Sustainable Development (2001) provides a good definition of co-operatives. He states that a co-operative is:

> an association of persons united…to meet their common economic, social and cultural needs and aspirations through a joint-owned and democratically controlled process (Gertler, M., 2001: 18).

Co-operatives can benefit community—especially smaller rural communities. Gertler further states that:

Co-operatives promote greater economic democracy through shared ownership and shared control. More people gain direct roles in the allocation and management of resources, and their skills and creativity are more fully engaged" (Gertler, 2001: 11).

Co-operative businesses should be promoted to young entrepreneurs. The co-operative business structure can allow each (co-owner) to place equal amounts of financial resources into the start up of the business—versus taking financial responsibility for the entire business itself. Co-operative businesses can also help young entrepreneurs by teaching them how to work in a group environment with other business partners. Simultaneously (as Gertler pointed out) co-operatives can help youth develop better business and life skills (Gertler, 2001: 11).

The co-operative structure (like succession planning and women enterpreneurship opportunities) should also be developed to ensure that money and jobs created by these businesses stay within the community.

Community-run business incubators

Community-run business incubators are another method that community development organizations can use to help support youth entrepreneurship. Perry gives a good definition of how a business incubator functions, stating that a business incubator "...fosters the start-up, evolution, growth and ultimate sustainability of new (or very early-stage businesses)" (Perry, 2000: 90).

Most importantly, community groups must understand that business incubators function as a program—not simply as a building (Perry, 2000: 90). Business incubator programs can help their clients (and potential entrepreneurs) by offering them assistance in researching their businesses, marketing and business set up (i.e. developing a business plan and buying equipment).

Business incubators can (and should) be developed to fill local gaps in the community's economy (Perry, 2000: 90). Incubators will require strong partnerships between community development organizations and the local business community. As Perry states, "...the incubation program is tailored to what the community needs for business development, and those needs are specifically assessed, not just assumed" (Perry, 2000: 90).

Business incubators can be helpful for young entrepreneurs through the services and incentives that they provide. Incubators can support youth entrepreneurship by providing lower rental rates and greater business assistance (i.e. how to find customers) and assistance in purchasing business space within the community.

Community groups must better promote the multitude of possibilities for youth entrepreneurship. Community groups must map the major resources available in their communities. These may include primary sector resources (like grain, forest products or fish) or human resources (a strong service industry or a large youth population). This should be done with young people (and potential young entrepreneurs themselves) and the local business community.

2.6.3 Promoting an innovative community

The final section of the literature review discusses the need to foster a tolerant and innovative community atmosphere. Communities must promote (and foster) an innovative atmosphere. By doing this, community development groups can better develop effective youth attraction strategies. The work of Richard Florida in The Rise of the Creative Class (2002) and Canada25's report "Building Up: Making Canada's cities magnets for talent and engines of development" will provide insight into the first part of this section. Marcia Nozick's chapter " An integrated development model for building sustainable communities in Canada" in Community Economic Development: perspectives on research and policy will provide insight into a specific type of innovation that rural community groups must foster. This innovation is in the value-added industry.

50

Fostering a tolerant and innovative community

What is needed to attract young, talented people to our communities? The authors of "Building Up" state that there are multiple reasons why some communities are more attractive than others. The report states that:

> ...the basis for these decisions is overall quality of life. Without question, this includes economic and educational opportunities, but it equally encompasses deeper things, elements that are harder to measure. These embrace, amongst many other factors, an environment of social inclusion, vibrant cultural opportunities and inspiring public spaces (Canada25, 2002: 12)

Florida proposes three ingredients that make up an exciting, interesting and competitive community, thus making communities more attractive for young people. In The Rise of the Creative Class (2002) Florida states that the ability to be tolerant, to embrace and attract talent, and to foster technology and technological innovations, characterize successful communities in today's new economy (Florida, 2002: 249). Most importantly, communities must address all three issues at once. As Florida points out, "to attract creative people, generate innovation and stimulate economic growth, a place must have all three (ingredients to be successful)" (Florida, 2002: 249).

Embracing tolerance

Communities must be open to the ideas, opinions and values of young people from different backgrounds and beliefs. These communities will thrive in the new millennium (Florida, 2002: x). More importantly, (as Florida points out) "(m)embers of the Creative Class come in all shapes, sizes, colours and lifestyles; and to be truly successful, cities and regions have to offer something for them all" (Florida, 2002: 234). Young people may not accept the values and beliefs held by older generations. Older generations, however, should not view this as a threat. The authors of "Building Up" take this a step further and state that a wide range of people of different ethnicities and race

51

"encourages us to engage in new experiences and creates a healthy tension that challenges us, forces us to re-examine ourselves and helps foster innovation" (Canada25, 2002: 15). Every young person regardless of race, beliefs or ethnicity should be given the same opportunities to participate in the life of their communities.

Fostering innovation in technology, education and culture

Florida feels that the ability to attract young and talented people is closely related to the ability to foster new and innovative technologies (Florida, 2002: 251). More specifically, the authors of "Building Up" feel that a successful city is one that has the ability to discover and foster an innovative attitude—especially when related to education and industry (Canada25, 2002: 16). As the authors point out, a city that discovers innovation "both in education and in industry...fuels economic development and ensures a flow of young talent (into that) city" (Canada25, 2002: 16).

Community development organizations must also promote innovation in the "human spirit". Community development organizations (in conjunction with local schools and cultural and recreational groups) need to foster greater youth events and activities. These include youth festivals, events and groups (like art and recreational clubs). A greater exposure to cultural and recreational events and activities can help young people (and all people in general) improve the image of their community and level of community engagement (Canada25, 2002: 15).

Value added industries

To be innovative, community development organizations must make better use of the resources they have—and develop new and unique products from these resources. Nozick expresses this strategy of development as investing in value added industries (Nozick, M., 1994: 77).

A value-added industry is an industry that develops around producing goods (or services) from a community's primary resources. These resources can be agricultural products, forestry products and fish. Investing in value added industries could help communities "...combat the outflow of local dollars...and begin to manufacture products for local consumption" (Nozick, 1994: 77). More value-added industries (in rural communities) can decrease the leakage of wealth (and dollars) to larger urban manufacturing centres (Nozick, 1994: 77).

Nozick gives an example of value-added industries that can be developed in smaller communities. She also explains the benefit of value-added industries for these communities. She states:

> A community gains added value from turning potatoes into French fries, wheat into bread, canning local fish, and making furniture out of lumber. The process of finishing off a product triggers new industries which in turn feed off each other and supply each other with needed parts and accessories, thus creating spin off wealth for a community (Nozick, 1994: 77).

Value-added industries can be an interesting area for youth entrepreneurship. Simultaneously, many new businesses that produce value-added products require skilled and talented young professionals. For instance, a bread or fish canning company may need nutritionists on staff, while a furniture designer may require a professional draftsperson and designer.

Community Development Corporations (and communities themselves) have to "adopt positive thinking to overcome frustration and defeatism" when tackling rural development issues and the issue of youth migration (Hay and Basran, 1992: 271). Part of this positive thinking requires these groups to promote and foster an innovative (community) atmosphere. Young people need to hear of existing and interesting developments that happen in their rural communities. Young people also need to feel that their values and beliefs (which may be different from adults) are valued and accepted. Promoting an innovative community can help community development organizations develop more successful youth attraction strategies.

3 Case Study: the Arborg Bifrost CDC

This chapter provides an introduction to the case study. The chapter begins with a brief description of Manitoba's Interlake Region, the Town of Arborg and the Rural Municipality of Bifrost. This description includes a look at the geographic, economic and cultural characteristics of the region and of both communities. The next part of this chapter discusses the origins and structure of the Arborg and Bifrost Community Development Corporation (ABCDC). This section outlines why the ABCDC was formed and how it was formed. This section also explores how local people were involved in the setting up of the ABCDC. The chapter then looks at community and government programs and services that aim at assisting young people –including current programs operating in the Interlake. The chapter concludes by exploring local examples of youth entrepreneurship from the region.

3.1 Manitoba's Interlake Region—the communities of Arborg and Bifrost

Geography

The Interlake Region is a geographic region of the province that spans roughly 26,000 square kilometers (Manitoba Community Profiles, 2000). The region's approximate boundaries are the City of Winnipeg to the South, Provincial Road 325 to the North, Lake Winnipeg to the East, and Lake Manitoba to the West. The region is comprised

Figure 1. Location of Northern Interlake communities showing the location of Arborg and the RM of Bifrost. (Manitoba Intergovernmental Affairs 2000).
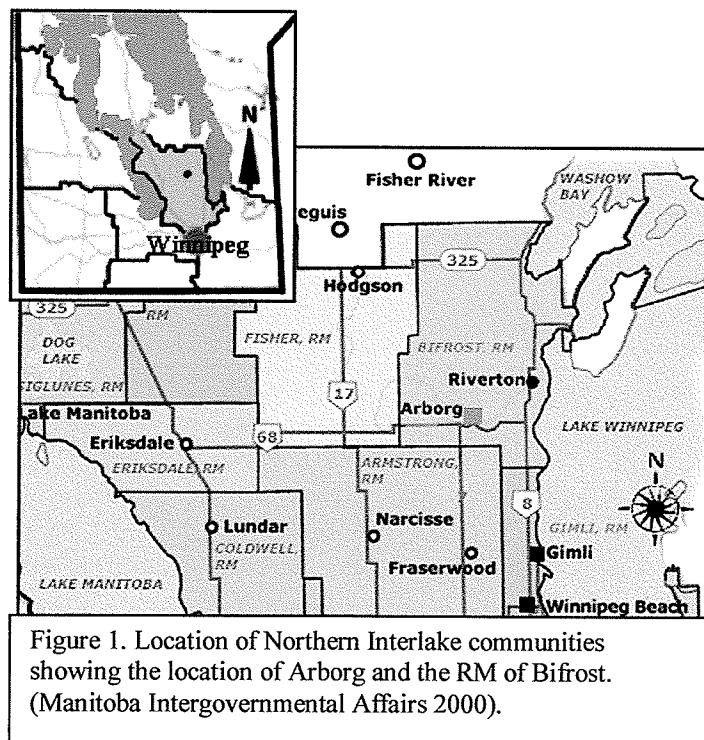
of "...14 rural municipalities, one city (Selkirk), five towns and two villages" (Manitoba Community Profiles, 2000).

The Town of Arborg and the Rural Municipality of Bifrost are located in the North-East portion of the Interlake (see Figure 1 above). The Town of Arborg and the Rural Municipality of Bifrost are located approximately one hundred kilometers North of the City of Winnipeg.

The land surrounding Arborg and Bifrost is relatively flat and adequate for farming. This includes grain and crop farming and various livestock operations (NEICOM Developments, 2003: 4, 18).

The CDC region has a population of approximately 3,930 people. Approximately 965 residents live in the Town of Arborg and 2,965 residents live in the RM of Bifrost as of 2001 (NEICOM Developments, 2003: 3, 8).[15] The Town of Arborg has a youth population of approximately 185 (95 males and 90 females) (ibid: 3). The RM of Bifrost has a youth population of approximately 565 (305 males and 260 females) [16] (NEICOM Developments, 2003: 8). The Interlake Region is home to approximately 75, 000 residents (Manitoba Community Profiles, 2000). [17]

History of the Northern Interlake Region

The Northern Interlake Region has a strong history of Icelandic settlement. Settlement of Icelandic residents traces back to approximately 1875 when the "...Canadian government set aside a large portion of land on the west shore of Lake Winnipeg" for Icelandic settlers (ABCDC web site, 2003). The Rural Municipality of Bifrost was incorporated in 1908; the name Bifrost means (in Norse mythology) "rainbow bridge connecting heaven and earth" (ABCDC web site, 2003).

---

[15] Information gained from the Town of Arborg and RM's of Bifrost Community Profiles developed by NEICOM Developments in 2003. Statistics are based on Statistics Canada 2001 numbers.
[16] Population is based on the 15 to 29 age cohort, courtesy of Statistics Canada.
[17] Based on 1996 Statistics Canada numbers.

By 1916, the villages of Arborg and Riverton had become important trade and service centres for the Northern Interlake (ABCDC web site, 2003). The Rural Municipality of Bifrost moved its offices to Arborg in 1916, with Arborg being incorporated as a town in 1964 (ABCDC web site, 2003, Manitoba Intergovernmental Affairs, 2000).

Economic characteristics of Arborg and Bifrost

The Town of Arborg is one of the main service and manufacturing centres in the Northern Interlake Region (Town of Arborg, 2003). The Town serves a market area of approximately 13,000 Manitobans. The Town is also home to a variety of businesses, industries and services. The Town provides basic services to its residents. These include fire and police protection and a hospital (NEICOM Developments, 2003: 23-27). The Town also offers a variety of other services to residents. These include a variety of grocery and clothing stores, a library, curling club and several restaurants (NEICOM Developments, 2003: 23-27).

The economy of the Rural Municipality of Bifrost and Arborg revolves around agriculture. The region surrounding Arborg is characterized by diverse agricultural operations such as grain and oilseed operations and livestock operations (Manitoba Intergovernmental Affairs, 2000). The Rural Municipality of Bifrost and Arborg also support commercial fishing businesses and operations. Several businesses in Arborg specifically produce goods that support the fishing industry (Town of Arborg, 2000). The Town of Arborg is also home to several industries that specialize in producing goods for international markets. Such products include dry alfalfa and fuel pellet burning stoves (Manitoba Intergovernmental Affairs, 2000).

3.2 The ABCDC: origins and history

The Arborg-Bifrost CDC (ABCDC) is a Community Development Corporation in Manitoba's Interlake Region. The Town of Arborg and the Rural Municipality of Bifrost are member municipalities of the ABCDC.

The Arborg Development Committee was formed in 1992. This committee was created to study local business initiatives in Arborg. One such initiative that interested the committee included a processing feed mill plant (ABCDC Chair: 2003). After initial work on developing these early business initiatives, the development committee then invited individuals from the RM of Bifrost to join in discussions on how to improve economic development within the region (ABCDC Chair: 2003).

Residents in the Town of Arborg and the RM of Bifrost took part in the Community Round Table program on January 6, 1992. [18] The round table consisted of approximately forty members. These members represented community organizations, businesses, service groups, recreational clubs and the two municipal councils. The Community Round Table included representatives from the Village of Arborg (now a Town), the RM of Bifrost, and the communities of Geysir, Framnes, Okno and Vidir, (Arborg-Bifrost Community Round Table: A Vision for the Future 1992: 3). A document released from this round table was developed in 1994. The report suggested that a Community Development Corporation (CDC) should be initiated within the region. In 1998 the ABCDC was officially incorporated as a CDC.

---

[18] The Community Round Table program is a provincially funded program that helps rural and small urban communities create a community vision statement for their communities. This process is the first step that communities must undertake in order to establish a Community Development Corporation in Manitoba.

3.3 ABCDC projects and initiatives: involving local people

ABCDC projects and initiatives are dependent upon the ongoing participation of local residents, community leaders and public and private agencies (ABCDC Chair: 2003). The original development committee consisted of a diversity of people. Board members included local farmers, business people and local political leaders (ABCDC Chair: 2003). Local people were also actively involved in the community round table process. Local people also continue to be involved in the ABCDC. There are three main ways residents can volunteer with the ABCDC. These include volunteering:

- As an ABCDC board member

- On an ABCDC committee

- As a volunteer at various ABCDC activities and events

Residents bring their own interests, ideas and expertise when working on ABCDC projects. Most local participation occurs on a project by project basis. This approach to participation helps get "people...involved in projects that interest themselves" (ABCDC Chair 2003). This method takes into account people's time commitments and their ability to volunteer.

Ongoing support for the ABCDC has also come from local public and private agencies (ABCDC Chair: 2003). Agencies such as Manitoba Intergovernmental Affairs, the Interlake Regional Development Corporation (IRDC), and NEICOM Developments Inc., have been involved in various ABCDC initiatives and projects (ABCDC Chair: 2003).

3.4 Benefits of the ABCDC: addressing community issues

The ABCDC acts as an "arms length" corporation that is mostly supported through the Government of Manitoba (ABCDC Chair: 2003). This relationship allows the

ABCDC to operate "for profit", to own and sell property, to invest in local business ventures and to provide loans to local companies and individuals. The ABCDC, however, can also rely on provincial (economic development) assistance. Provincial assistance comes in the form of local economic development programs (such as the Community Works Loan Program) and the assistance of the regional Economic Development Advisor for the Interlake Region.

The ABCDC benefits the area by allowing local people to address social and business development issues locally.

3.5 Development issues facing the ABCDC

The ABCDC faces three challenges common to many rural communities in Manitoba today. These include BSE (mad cow disease), creating opportunities for young people, and community size and availability of resources (ABCDC Chair: 2003).

BSE, drought and agricultural issues

This current crisis is affecting many agricultural communities in Manitoba (and Canada). Other agricultural issues constantly facing the Interlake Region (and Arborg and Bifrost) include drought, low commodity prices and low crop yields.

Creating opportunities for youth

The question being asked by the ABCDC is "how do we keep our young people when we do not have enough to offer them?" (ABCDC Chair: 2003). Like many other rural communities, Arborg and Bifrost do not have enough educational facilities, programming and business resources to increase youth involvement. Such resources may include new and existing commercial business opportunities, employment skills upgrading, and training needed for the local (and regional) economy.

Community size and availability of resources

Related to the concern above are the limited resources of people, funding and services available in the ABCDC region. In many cases, the ABCDC (and local residents) may have excellent business and community development ideas. A shortage of financial resources, volunteers and other resources (like facilities) however, makes it difficult to support these projects (ABCDC Chair: 2003).

3.6 Youth programs and services

A number of programs exist through the province to assist young people. These programs are operated by the provincial government, regional and community development corporations, community future development corporations and municipalities themselves. While programs may have different foci, goals and objectives, most programs focus around four common areas. These areas include:

- Supporting youth entrepreneurial efforts (providing start-up loans or business development assistance)
- Supporting post-secondary recruitment
- Supporting youth investment in rural communities
- Supporting youth volunteer efforts

A thorough description of youth programs and services operated by the Government of Manitoba and the Government of Canada is provided in Appendix 2. These programs and services aim to help youth by assisting them in the points raised above.

Several local community and regional organizations throughout the province operate programs and initiatives that address youth migration, attraction and community participation. An examination of these initiatives and programs is provided in Appendix 3. These initiatives and programs are local in nature and (in many cases)

involve young people directly in project participation, project management and monitoring.

3.6.1 Interlake initiatives and youth "success stories"

Examples of youth programs and initiatives, as well as local "success stories" of Interlake residents that have returned to their home region merit examination. This examination has furnished a better understanding of where new programs and services can be developed within the region. This examination also helps to highlight how local individuals have been able to return to their home region and contribute to the economic and community health of their communities.

The first part of this section discusses the programs and services operated by NEICOM Developments. NEICOM (North-East Interlake Community Futures Development Corporation) is the CFDC for the North-East Interlake Region. The second part of this section will discuss the structure and operation of a new committee that has been developed in the Community of Fisher Branch, the Fisher Youth Entrepreneur Committee. The section concludes by looking at examples of people who have returned to the Interlake after living abroad. These examples are significant to this practicum because they involve Interlake residents who have reinvested in their communities by becoming local business and community leaders.

<u>NEICOM Developments</u>

NEICOM Developments is "a volunteer driven non-profit community economic development corporation" that assists local businesses, municipalities and entrepreneurs plan and develop their economic potential ("NEICOM: What can we do for you or your community?"). The NEICOM Board of Directors comprises of representatives from several Northeastern Interlake communities ("NEICOM: What can we do for you or your community?"). Significant communities in the NEICOM Region include the Towns of Arborg, Teulon, Gimli and Stonewall, the Village of Riverton and the Rural

61

Municipalities of Bifrost, Fisher, Gimli, Rockwood and Armstrong (NEICOM Developments web site: 2004).

NEICOM Developments provides business financing and planning assistance to Northern Interlake municipal governments, community development organizations, businesses and new entrepreneurs. The CFDC focuses on three specific areas of assistance:

- Business Development
- Financial Assistance
- Community Economic Development [19]

Business development and financial assistance

NEICOM staff help provide business development and financial assistance to local communities and individuals within the North-East Interlake region. Business development assistance includes "…business plan development, market research assistance, business training, financial assistance and other…small to medium size business start-up or expansion assistance" (NEICOM 2004). Financial assistance for youth and other entrepreneurs primarily comes through means of financial loans offered or operated by NEICOM. NEICOM (and all CFDC's) offer financial loans to potential entrepreneurs who have been unable to secure funding through traditional banks and credit unions ("NEICOM Developments: What can we do for your community?"). Financial loans can help entrepreneurs who are both developing new businesses or expanding existing ones ("NEICOM Developments: What can we do for your community?").

NEICOM staff also administers the Western Youth Entrepreneur Program. The program is directed towards regional youth interested in setting up a new business within

---

[19] Data compiled from NEICOM Developments: What can we do for you and your community? (undated publication).

the NEICOM region. Potential entrepreneurs must be willing to develop their business within the NEICOM region, and also hire local employees (NEICOM Developments "Financial assistance criteria").[20]

NEICOM can also assist young entrepreneurs by providing them with access to regional and provincial market data and statistics. NEICOM staff can also assist young entrepreneurs by helping them interpret this data and develop their business plans (NEICOM 2004) (Community Futures Partners of Manitoba 2004).

Community economic development

NEICOM works with local municipal governments, community development organizations and individuals to pursue and promote community economic development in North-East Interlake communities (NEICOM Developments "What can we do for you or your community?"). NEICOM staff can assist North East Interlake communities pursuing community economic initiatives through:

- Providing project management assistance
- Helping identify community resources and facilitate strategic planning / management processes
- Providing assistance in preparing funding proposals and help provide project funding [21]

Fisher Youth Entrepreneur Committee

The Fisher Branch CDC launched the Fisher Youth Entrepreneur Committee in 2001. The Entrepreneur Committee is a sub-committee of the Fisher CDC.

---

[20] See Appendix 3 for more information on the Western Youth Entrepreneur Program.
[21] Data compiled from NEICOM Developments: "What can we do for you and your community?" (undated publication).

The Committee was set up to keep young people from Fisher Branch interested in staying in Fisher Branch. The Committee was also set up to better promote the resources and attractions, that exist in Fisher Branch, to the community's youth. The overall goal of the Fisher Youth Entrepreneur Committee is to maintain Fisher Branch as a prospering community with a young population base.

The Committee consists of a dozen members. The average age of members is approximately thirty years old. The Committee sets its own goals and objectives. The Committee also determines which projects and programs are funded. Funding comes from the Fisher CDC.

The challenge facing the Committee is to better promote local youth economic and employment opportunities. Fisher Branch has many natural resources and unique industries that may prove interesting to young people. These include opportunities in the fishing industry, outfitting and other recreational industries and service industries (restaurants etc). The challenge is also to promote the social and recreational attractions of the community to its young people.

The Committee is unique in that it solely functions to study youth issues in Fisher Branch. The feedback and opinions of young people therefore, are needed to make the Committee successful in meeting its long-term goal.

Local examples: returning community and business leaders

Getting young people involved in community and business life is an important first step to address youth migration. Community organizations and groups have to highlight local examples of people who have returned and have contributed to their communities politically, socially and economically. The section below outlines five individuals who have contributed significantly to Arborg and Bifrost. The first two individuals are officials with the ABCDC. The last three individuals are examples of three business

owners who have re-invested in their communities by opening and operating local businesses in the ABCDC region.

ABCDC Chairperson [22]

The ABCDC Chairperson was a "returning migrant" to the Interlake Region. The Chairperson was raised in Riverton and then moved to Winnipeg for his education. After working for several years in Winnipeg, the Chairperson decided to move to Arborg with his family.

The Chairperson has been involved (and is currently involved) in several important community development organizations and committees in Arborg and the Northern Interlake. The Chairperson has held a past position as town councillor with the Town of Arborg and currently sits as the Chairperson of the ABCDC and as a Board member for NEICOM Developments. The Chairperson feels that it is important to provide a wide range of employment, education and social and cultural opportunities for local youth. A multitude of opportunities may allow young people the ability to come back to their home communities (and regions).

ABCDC Economic Development Officer [23]

The ABCDC EDO was "born and raised" in the Interlake Region. The EDO however did leave to pursue his education in a larger urban centre. The ABCDC EDO plays a very important role in the community by providing economic development advice to local businesses, entrepreneurs, community groups and also young entrepreneurs. The Economic Development Officer also helps promote regional economic development initiatives and projects.

---

[22] Based on a personal conversation with the ABCDC Chairperson in October of 2003.
[23] Based on a personal conversation with the ABCDC Economic Development Officer in September 2003.

The EDO felt that young people are naturally going to "explore the world" outside their communities, either for their education, employment, or for life experience. The ABCDC should develop programs and partnerships that cater to the needs of young people once they return. Small communities can address youth issues by involving young people actively in decision making that affects their social, cultural and economic situations.

Local business entrepreneurs

One example of a local entrerpreneur is an individual (in his early 30's) who has returned to the local community after living abroad. This entrepreneur has developed a new invention to help reduce soil erosion through the use of a "straw blanket" system that is placed over soil. His business has now expanded. The current size has grown to over three million dollars in investments. The company also employs over forty local residents in full time positions.

Another example also highlights another local entrepreneur who has returned to the community after living abroad. This entrepreneur returned to the community to open up the local "Home Hardware" store. His wife also has opened a hairdressing salon. Both employ local residents. This individual employs approximately ten staff while his wife employs one assistant.

The third example showcases the Vidir Machine Company. Vidir Machine started out as a machine shop in the Bifrost region. The machine shop has moved from simple machinery into more of an innovative research and development driven focus. The shop now employs three full time engineers. Recently, Vidir Machine has been involved in developing machinery for bicycle storage and furnaces for international markets. Vidir Machine employs approximately 125-150 local residents.

4 Research Methods

Two research methods were used in this practicum to gather local data. These methods include key informant interviews and focus group interviews. The chapter is structured into seven sections. These sections include:

- Research focus
- Rationale for research methods used
- Research methods
- Key informant interviews and focus group interviews
- Ethical concerns
- Limitations of research methods used
- Analytical methods

These research methods were used to help the researcher answer the main research questions posed in Chapter one. To review—the main question posed is:
how do Community Development Corporations (CDCs) use community economic development partnerships to address youth migration and attract youth in rural Manitoba communities? [24]

4.1 Research focus

The focus of the research was to gain two key perspectives. These perspectives included that of Arborg Bifrost CDC board members and grade 12 students from Arborg Collegiate Institute. The insights gained from these two groups helped answer the research questions posed in Chapter one. These insights also helped the researcher better understand the issue of youth migration and youth community involvement.

---

[24] The additional research questions are outlined in chapter one (page thirteen).

The first perspective examined in the research was that of ABCDC Board members. These individuals provided insight into existing (or proposed) ABCDC projects and initiatives that involve local youth in the community. As board members, these individuals already have a good knowledge of existing partnerships between the ABCDC and other community organizations. Board members also provided useful ideas and suggestions on how to strengthen partnerships between community groups (such as the ABCDC) and young people living in Arborg and Bifrost.

The second perspective sought in the research was that of youth themselves. The youth of interest in this study are those in their final year of high school at Arborg Collegiate Institute. The youth interviewed were between the ages of 15 and 19 years.

High school youth (because they are moving on to a different part of their lives) are acutely aware of the career and educational decisions facing them. These youth provided the researcher with insight into five areas. These areas included:

- The current decisions facing graduating youth in Arborg today
- The educational, economic and social / recreational needs of Arborg youth
- Positive and negative attributes of living in a small rural community
- Characteristics of positive youth community partnerships
- Recommendations on how to improve youth community partnerships

Youth also provided information on the partnerships that they felt must be formed to help involve, retain and attract young people. These youth also provided input into how the community can better address the needs of young people living in small communities.

4.2 Rationale for research methods used

As stated above, two research methods were used to gather local data. These methods included key informant interviews and focus groups. Key informant interviews and two

focus groups were conducted between September 2003 and December 2003. The researcher felt that these two methods were adequate to answer the research questions for two reasons:

- The quality and quantity of data gained
- The extent of available resources

Quantity and quality of data gained

Key informant interviewees and focus group members provided comprehensive answers to the researcher's questions. All interviewees were very willing to talk with the researcher and to offer their ideas and recommendations. The researcher felt that (due to the high quality and quantity of data) additional research was not needed to provide answers to the research questions posed in Chapter one.

Extent of available resources

The researcher had to deal with limited funding resources and a tight timeline. A more extensive study would have required the researcher to contribute more (personal) funding and an increased amount of time to conduct more research. The researcher felt that this was not a necessary step since the current amount of research undertaken was adequate to answer the research questions posed.

4.3 Research methods

Two resources were used when developing the research methodology. Ziesel's Inquiry by Design: Tools for environment-behavior research (1984) and Kruger's chapter "The process of conducting focus groups" in Focus Groups: a practical guide for applied research (1988). These resources were instrumental in aiding the researcher to develop the interview guides and structure for key informant interviews and focus group sessions. Three areas were especially important when developing an understanding of the research

methods. These areas include the development of interview guides, verbal probing methods and choosing respondents for key informant interviews and focus group sessions.

4.3.1 Developing research questions and interview guides

The researcher was responsible for developing an interesting and dynamic environment in which respondents could discuss the research questions. This was especially contingent upon the researcher developing interesting discussion questions for each interview session. As Kruger states:

> ...questions are the heart of the focus group interview. These questions appear to be spontaneous, but have been carefully selected and phrased in advance to elicit the maximum amount of information (Kruger, 1988: 59).

Ziesel discusses the importance of the interview guide in conducting both interviews and focus group discussions. The interview guide is the "road map" that guides what topics will be discussed during the research session (Ziesel, 1984: 138). While the interview guide is typically a series of loosely structured inquiries (to allow the researcher flexibility during the research session), it still provides the basic plan for how the discussion will take place, and in what order the topics will be discussed (Ziesel, 1984: 138).

The researcher exercised care when developing a comprehensive interview guide for each interview and focus group session. The researcher developed interview guides that were relevant to each interviewee. Questions asked reflected upon each interviewee's personal area of expertise. Questions also challenged interviewees to think about their community in the future. The researcher was careful to make each interviewee feel comfortable by allowing them to choose the time and location for their interview session.

4.3.2 Probing responses

The researcher relied heavily on verbal probing to gain important data for his research. This was particularly important during focus group one where some ABCDC board members appeared hesitant to speak and to respond to some of the research questions. Ziesel states that:

> Probes are primarily questions that interviewers impose to get a respondent to clarify a situation, to explain what she meant, to continue talking or to shift the topic (Ziesel, 1984: 140).

The researcher used four types of verbal probing. These types included:

Addition probing – this line of probing encouraged respondents to elaborate in greater detail on comments or ideas that they commented on

Reflecting probing – this line of probing allowed the researcher to gain better clarification on complex ideas or confusing comments

Transition probing – this line of probing allowed the researcher to transition from one line of questioning to another

Personal probing – this line of probing allowed the researcher to gain personal insights and anecdotes on any questions or comments made by interviewees

4.3.3 Choosing respondents

Choosing the appropriate respondents (interviewees) for key informant interviews and for both focus groups was an important component when setting up the research design for this practicum. Interviewees were carefully chosen so that the information they provided would help inform the answering of the research questions. Interviewees also provided insights that helped the researcher formulate the final recommendations.

Choosing key informant interviewees

Respondents were chosen based on their knowledge of local and regional development issues, current and proposed ABCDC projects and initiatives, and knowledge of existing partnerships. Choosing respondents for both focus groups was more challenging. However, the researcher received assistance from the ABCDC Chairperson (focus group one) and a teacher from Arborg Collegiate (focus group two) to assist in choosing respondents for both these sessions.

Choosing focus group one

Members for focus group one were chosen using a selective sampling approach. Focus group one consisted of nine members from the ABCDC Board of Directors. The researcher worked closely with the ABCDC Chairperson to determine members who might be interested in attending this focus group session. These members where chosen (by the Chairperson and researcher) because of their interests in youth and community development issues in Arborg and Bifrost.

Choosing focus group two

Members for focus group two were chosen using a selective sampling approach. The researcher approached a teacher from Arborg Collegiate three weeks in advance of the focus group date. The researcher informed the teacher that he intended to conduct a focus group discussion with youth. The teacher chose eleven students from grade twelve to participate in the focus group session. Care was taken by the teacher and researcher to ensure that an equal amount of female and male students were represented in the focus group study.

4.4 Key informant interviews

This research component of the practicum comprised of three key informant interviews. Two interviews occurred with individuals involved with the ABCDC. The third interview occurred with a Government of Manitoba official. The purpose of these interviews was to gain important background information needed to help answer the research questions and develop recommendations on how to address youth migration. Information was gained in three areas. These areas include:

- The issue of youth migration in Arborg and Bifrost (and the Interlake)
- The history and structure of the ABCDC
- Current ABCDC initiatives and projects that involve community youth

Interview One: ABCDC Chairperson

The researcher interviewed the current Chairperson of the ABCDC for the first part of his research. The Chairperson provided the researcher with information on how the ABCDC was developed. The Chairperson also provided the researcher with an understanding of how the ABCDC currently operates, and how local people are involved in ABCDC projects and initiatives. The Chairperson also gave the researcher an overview of the main issues and concerns facing his community—especially in terms of youth migration.

Interview Two: ABCDC Economic Development Officer (EDO)

The second interview was conducted with the ABCDC Economic Development Officer (EDO). The EDO provided the researcher with a good understanding of current ABCDC projects and initiatives. The EDO also provided insight into how young people are involved (or have been involved) in these projects. Most importantly, the EDO

provided his input on how young people could be better involved in ABCDC projects and initiatives.

Interview Three: Government of Manitoba official

The Government of Manitoba official provided the interviewer with an understanding of the economic and social issues facing small, rural communities in Manitoba. The official also provided information on existing provincial economic and community development programs and ideas on how Interlake communities can address youth issues, youth involvement and youth migration. The official also provided ideas on why partnerships are important and how communities can strengthen partnerships with their young people.

4.4.1 Interview structure

Two key informant interviews were conducted with respondents in person. These interviews occurred in a public location at a time convenient to each respondent. The third interview was conducted over the telephone during work hours. The researcher followed a formal interview guide during each interview. Each interview session was then transcribed into a digital and print (hard copy) format. Copies of each interview guide are found in Appendix 4 at the end of this practicum.

4.5 Focus group interviews- Focus group one: ABCDC Board of Directors

This focus group was conducted with members of the ABCDC Board of Directors. The purpose of this focus group was to gain insights into the projects and partnerships being initiated by the ABCDC to address the issue of rural youth migration. Board members were asked to draw upon their knowledge as ABCDC members and as community leaders to provide the researcher with insight into four areas:

- The issue of youth retention and attraction in Arborg and Bifrost.

- Current (and proposed) ABCDC projects and initiatives that involve youth.
- The importance of partnerships in working with community youth
- How current ABCDC projects, initiatives and partnerships with young people can be improved in the future

The focus group was held in October 2003 and was one hour and twenty minutes in duration. The focus group preceded the monthly ABCDC board meeting. Nine board members participated in the focus group. Eight participants were male, and one was female.

Focus group two: Students from Arborg Collegiate Institute

The second focus group was conducted with youth in grade twelve from Arborg Collegiate Institute. The purpose of this focus group was to provide greater insight into how youth feel community initiatives to retain and attract rural youth could be improved upon. Faced with economic, social and employment challenges, as explained in the literature review, these youth provided first-hand knowledge on how existing projects and initiatives can be improved. Youth also discussed where gaps in service provision or in important youth partnerships existed. Students also provided insights into what they think characterizes successful (youth) partnerships. Lastly, these youth provided an accurate portrait of the decisions facing them as they move from high school to the working world, or as they pursue further educational opportunities.

The focus group discussion revolved around four areas. These areas included:

- Understanding the issues and decisions facing youth in their graduating year
- Youth decisions to stay or move from their communities
- The importance of partnerships in addressing youth needs
- What youth think communities must do to attract more young people

Eleven students participated in this focus group. The focus group was held in December 2003 at Arborg Collegiate Institute. Participating students were all in grade twelve. All participating students resided in Arborg.

4.6 Ethical concerns

A number of ethical concerns had to be dealt with before the research was conducted. Appendix 4 contains a copy of the written consent forms used for key informant interviews and for focus groups one and two. The Joint-Faculty Research Ethics Board (JFREB) at the University of Manitoba approved all key informant interviews and focus group interviews.

Key informant interviews

All interviewees provided written (or verbal) consent before the researcher asked any interview questions. Before each interview, interviewees were informed that they could refuse to answer any question or terminate the interview at any time—without any penalty placed upon them by the researcher. Interviewees were also informed that the purpose of their interview was to gain important background information.

Focus group one

Focus group one members had to sign a copy of the written consent form before they participated in the focus group discussion. Written consent provided the researcher with the ability to use participant's comments as part of the research. Written permission also allowed the researcher to record the focus group session with a tape recorder. Tape recording the session facilitated the researcher's ability to later analyze the data.

The researcher explained to participants that he had no intention of using personal names or information in the documentation and presentation of this practicum. The researcher guaranteed the anonymity of Board members and the confidentiality of their

responses. The researcher also explained that the research being conducted in this session was to aid his research and that no deception or misuse of the information gained from the session was intended.

The researcher also promised each focus group member that he would provide a one-page summary of the results gained from this session. The summary was provided once data analysis was completed.

Focus group two

Participants in focus group two consisted of students under the age of eighteen. This raised a number of ethical concerns that had to be dealt with before the focus group could occur. These concerns included:

- Receiving parental consent to participate in the focus group
- Guaranteeing the anonymity of participants
- Guaranteeing the confidentiality of participants' responses
- Conducting a post focus group session with students

Parental consent

Written parental or guardian consent was required before any student could participate. Parents or guardians as well as students were required to sign the written consent form and to return it to the researcher before the focus group date. The researcher provided students with two copies of the consent form nine days in advance of the focus group date. This provided students with adequate time to get their consent forms signed and returned to their teacher. The teacher then returned signed consent forms to the researcher.

A one-page summary of the research was also provided to students prior to the focus group session. The summary outlined why the research was being conducted and how the

discussion would be structured. The summary also outlined how (the researcher felt) students could help develop future recommendations being developed in the practicum.

Anonymity of respondents

The researcher could not guarantee the anonymity of respondents. This was clearly outlined in the written consent form and explained to students before the focus group began. Since Arborg is a small community, the researcher felt that there would be a slight chance that students may be identified as being part of this discussion. The researcher took specific steps to mitigate any negative issues around student confidentiality. These included:

- Ensuring that students' names and personal information were not used in the practicum document and presentation
- Destroying raw data (notes and tape recordings) once the research had been completed
- Ensuring that all raw data is accessible only to the researcher and practicum advisor

The researcher stated in the consent form that the focus group discussion is <u>strictly confidential.</u> The researcher wanted to ensure that specific comments and ideas raised in the focus group stayed within the focus group. The researcher further stressed that participation in the focus group was dependent upon the agreement to abide by this rule.

Confidentiality of responses

The researcher could only guarantee the <u>limited confidentiality</u> of student responses. The researcher had agreed to provide final copies of the focus group findings to two organizations. These organizations included the ABCDC and the Evergreen School Division. The researcher's intent to share this information with these organizations was

clearly stated in the written consent form. Also, the researcher explained to students before the focus group that he intended to share these findings with these two groups.

Final copies of the focus group findings were provided to the ABCDC and Evergreen School division after students had an opportunity to review and highlight comments they did not want published. The researcher provided students with a rough draft of the findings from this session. Students were then able to delete and make alterations to comments they felt uncomfortable with. Revisions to the data were made according to the changes suggested by the students. The researcher then provided each student with a final copy of the findings from this session.

The decision to allow students to alter their comments after the focus group session did not affect the validity of the research. Seven session notes were returned to the researcher with only two sets of notes providing additional comments. The researcher felt that it was of foremost importance to ensure that each student felt comfortable with their comments being made public to other organizations.

The researcher requested that the ABCDC and Evergreen School Division use the research for "information purposes only". The researcher stressed that the research should not be used in any other public document. A form outlining the above guidelines was signed by both organizations before final copies of the research were released.

Post focus group session with students

A post focus group session with the researcher and students occurred in February 2004. The purpose of the post focus group session was twofold. Firstly, the session provided the researcher with the opportunity to present his final research findings from focus group two to the students. Secondly, the post focus group session provided a sense of closure to the focus group session. The researcher felt it was important to show students that he did take their ideas into consideration when developing his recommendations on how to address youth migration and improve youth partnerships.

4.7 Research limitations

There were three particular limitations experienced by the researcher when conducting this study. Two potentially affected the researcher's ability to conduct research, while the third potentially affected the overall quality of the research. Limitations to the study included:

- The size of focus group two
- The building of individual rapport with students
- The scope of student participants

Size of focus group two

Focus group two consisted of eleven participants. According to Kruger, the ideal size for a focus group is between seven and ten participants (1988: 93). The researcher planned for eleven participants, expecting that between six to ten students would actually be present. Students however, were excited to participate in the focus group session. Eleven students therefore participated in the focus group.

The researcher mitigated the negative affects of a large focus group (i.e. the possibility of not everyone getting a chance to speak) by handing each participant a question sheet where they could write down their comments and ideas. The researcher also included an envelope (with postage attached) so that students could mail their additional comments. The researcher stressed to students, before the focus group, that the question sheets were also a good way to record their ideas and comments.

Building of individual rapport with students

The researcher did not get the opportunity to have a pre-focus group session with students to introduce the project and build individual rapport. The researcher had every

intention of conducting a pre-session. However, scheduling of the focus group session did not allow for this. The researcher mitigated this limitation by:

- Having a pre-session meeting with the coordinating teacher
- Developing a researcher biography for provision to students prior to the focus group discussion
- Providing personal contact information to students

Pre-session meeting with the coordinating teacher

The researcher was able to have a pre-focus group meeting with the teacher who was coordinating the focus group session. The meeting occurred approximately one week before the focus group session. The meeting allowed the researcher to introduce himself to the teacher, and to provide a summary of the research and the structure of the focus group. The pre-focus group meeting also allowed the researcher to distribute individual focus group packages (project summary, written consent forms and researcher biography) to the teacher. The teacher passed on these packages to students.

Researcher biography

The researcher developed a biography sheet that was handed out to students a week before the focus group. The researcher biography provided a quick summary of the researcher's education, work background, personal interests and values.

Personal contact information

The researcher provided his personal contact information to all focus group participants before the focus group date. This included his mailing address, personal phone number and e-mail address.

<u>Scope of student participants</u>

The researcher and coordinating teacher from Arborg Collegiate attempted to select a representative selection of students attending Grade 12 at Arborg Collegiate Institute. This included selecting students who resided in both the Town of Arborg and the Rural Municipality of Bifrost. It was discovered during the focus group however, that all participants resided in the Town of Arborg—and none resided in the Rural Municipality of Bifrost. This might have resulted in an "urban bias" in the responses given in the focus group session conducted with students. [25]

It was also indicated that the focus group session might have been biased toward students interested in leaving their home communities (i.e. students interested in pursuing an education or work experience outside of Arborg and Bifrost). Students interested in staying in Arborg once they complete high school were not represented within this group. The researcher mitigated this negative effect through the questions he asked in the session. Questions focused around encouraging students to give the reasons why they would stay (as well as leave) Arborg once they finish high school.

4.8 Analytical methods

This final section of this chapter discusses how data collected through key informant interviews and focus groups were analysed. This component of the research was needed to ensure that collected data was used in a practical and effective way, to help answer the research questions posed in Chapter one.

Using the two interview methods - key informant interviews and focus groups - produced a large quantity of collected data. A systematic approach was undertaken to synthesize all collected data into information that could be analyzed when developing the

---

[25] The researcher felt that this outcome was not preventable. Students living in rural areas depend on bus transportation that requires them to leave classes earlier. This made it very difficult for rural students to attend the focus group without possibly missing their bus ride home.

recommendations proposed in Chapter six. The approach followed involved four steps:

- Transcription of raw data into digital records
- Identification of main ideas—the analysis of individual interview sessions
- Synthesis of ideas into main themes
- Discussion of main themes

Transcription of raw data

The first step the researcher undertook in preparing the raw material for analysis was to transcribe each interview/ focus group session from their raw format (paper or audio tape) into a digital record. [26] The first step in this process involved transcribing key informant interviews and focus group sessions "word for word". Respondents' answers were recorded (in digital format) underneath the questions that were asked by the interviewer. Care was taken in transcribing all research sessions immediately after they had occurred. This allowed the researcher to retain much of the original thoughts, ideas and feelings of the interviewees.

Identification of main ideas—analysis of individual interview sessions

The researcher then reviewed the digital notes from each research session. This allowed the researcher to identify the key ideas or opinions that were expressed in each individual session. This analysis also allowed the researcher to understand the key findings, ideas and opinions that were expressed by individual interviewees, and by focus group respondents.

---

[26] Key informant interviews were all recorded by short-hand note-taking by the researcher. Both focus group sessions were recorded with the assistance of an audio recorder.

Synthesis of ideas into main themes

Once the analysis of the interview sessions was complete, the researcher then began to compare the notes from each. The purpose of this approach was to find common ideas, opinions, and comments. The researcher especially noted areas where ideas or comments were repeated several times (by different respondents), or, where certain ideas or comments were verbally stressed by the interviewee as being important. Common ideas (or comments) were then synthesized into 11 basic themes.

Discussion of the main themes

The researcher then formed a discussion around the main themes developed, based on the comments made by individual interviewees and focus group members. Simultaneously, the researcher used findings from the literature review (see chapter two) to help expand on ideas raised under each theme. This approach further helped the researcher to understand individual interviewees' comments and to understand the significance of each theme when forming the recommendations posed in chapter six.

5 Analysis and Discussion

Chapter four outlined the research methods utilized in this study and why these research methods were chosen. This chapter outlines the themes that have been discovered through an analysis of the data collected from all key informant interviews and focus group sessions. Eleven themes have been synthesized. Each theme is followed by a brief discussion.[27]

5.1 Youth migration as an opportunity

All three interviewees felt that youth migration was a positive (and natural process) for a community to experience. One focus group felt that youth migration can result in positive or negative affects on a community. Youth who return with new perspectives, skills and ideas can contribute to their communities. Youth who leave their communities (and do not return) do not contribute.

One major concern raised was that youth might become "stagnant" if they do not leave Arborg. Youth who do not leave will not develop skills and perspectives gained by new educational, travel or work experiences. These experiences help young people become better business and community leaders in the new economy. The challenge is to attract youth back—once they want to settle down. The challenge is also to attract "new youth" to these communities.

5.2 Better communication with youth

The ABCDC must have a presence in the local high school. This must be done to properly understand what young people need in their communities—and what needs to be done to attract them back if they do leave. Two interviewees and the members from one

---

[27] Key informant respondents are defined as interviewees. Respondents in both focus groups are defined as focus group members. These definitions will help when exploring the strength (and significance) of each theme.

focus group felt strongly that communication and partnerships with students from the high school (especially with grade twelve students) must be forged.

The ABCDC must also have greater connection with former graduates (i.e. those students who graduated 2-5 years prior). Two interviewees felt that this was specifically important for their communities. One interviewee stressed (in his comments) that the ABCDC must keep in touch with recent graduates "to see what they are doing and to see what they need (in terms of services) to help them move back—if they want to move back".

The major challenge for the ABCDC is to overcome the feeling of "disconnect" that exists between community groups, community leaders and young people. The ABCDC must build "rapport" with students—and maintain that rapport once students graduate and leave their communities. This point reinforces the work examined in the literature review (see section 2.4.6). The literature review pointed out that communication (through dialogue) and trust building are necessary for effective CED and successful strategic planning. Dialogue is also important to help establish the needs of the community and community groups (such as youth). The literature review also pointed to the fact that the free flow of information and ideas can help overcome the disconnect that exists between adults and youth, and also help set the groundwork for future youth partnerships.[28]

Another challenge is to promote the programs and services that exist to help youth. The Government of Manitoba, NEICOM and the ABCDC all offer programs to assist youth between the ages of 18-29. These programs include bursary and scholarship programs, youth entrepreneurship (assistance) programs and various other programs. Young people (especially those in high school) have to be made aware of these programs and how they can help them. The ABCDC must "better communicate" these opportunities to their youth.

---

[28] See Hart (1997) for additional discussion on this topic.

5.3 Addressing the needs of students and other youth

This was a key theme highlighted by members of both focus groups. The ABCDC must address various needs of their community's young people. The areas mentioned by both groups include:

- social and recreational needs
- employment and educational needs
- volunteering opportunities

Members from one focus group strongly felt that there are limited social and recreational opportunities for young people in Arborg. These members stressed that local community groups must better address this issue. While recreational opportunities do exist (i.e. the indoor hockey rink)—access is often limited to times that are not good for young people.

Social and recreational improvements must also benefit youth of all ages. Members from one focus group were very concerned that many younger youth (elementary and junior high kids) often do not have "anything to do" after school. One interviewee also raised this concern. He felt that the ABCDC must better partner with younger youth organizations such as Junior Achievement. This interviewee also raised an important question. The question was "…how can we get our younger youth involved in the community?"

Members from one focus group stressed that the number of youth-oriented events held throughout the year must be increased. Existing festivals (such as Arborg's Summerfest) only occur in the summer. These members pointed to Riverton's annual carnival as an interesting example.

Employment and educational needs

Members from one focus group commented that youth oftentimes have to look for job opportunities themselves. Local employers often do not post youth job opportunities in the local paper. This especially creates a challenge for youth without strong community networks. These students may find it more difficult to find employment. Some students may also feel scared or overwhelmed trying to find work. These focus group members liked the idea of a "one stop job / volunteer shop" for young people. This "shop" would be set up in a central location (high school) and would allow students to review new job and volunteer opportunities in the town and region.

Volunteering opportunities

Members from the same focus group talked extensively on this subject. These members stated that many students in their community volunteer. They also stated that volunteering benefits youth in several ways:

- volunteering is fun—it keeps you active
- volunteering looks good on a resume / post secondary application
- volunteering allows you to explore your likes / dislikes
- volunteering helps you make future career decisions

The same members stated that volunteer positions are not posted locally. In some cases, students may not know how to go about finding an organization to volunteer with—or even how to approach these organizations. Community organizations like the ABCDC should encourage local businesses and community groups to create more youth volunteer positions and to post them locally.

Members in both focus groups did not mention if the community recognizes the volunteering efforts of their youth. Members from one focus group especially felt that volunteering can be challenging for young people. Students sometimes have to volunteer

with supervisors that are untrusting of their skills and abilities. Community awards that recognize all youth volunteers may make young people feel more appreciated by the entire community. These awards can be given to youth at community events or festivals.

These comments further elaborate on an important point mentioned in the literature review (see section 2.4.6).

Young people value the relationships and the networks of family and friends that they have formed in their community.[29] Youth networks are also important in helping young people pursue their economic (employment) and educational goals. Members from one focus group felt that strong relationships with local employers and community leaders are important for young people, to pursue jobs or volunteer opportunities related to future career choices. Strategic planning with youth must focus on strengthening youth networks to friends, family, community employers and educators. Strategic planning processes must also allow for the greater networking between youth from the ABCDC region with youth, employers and educators from different parts of the province.

A greater emphasis on youth networking and relationship-building at the community and regional level can help open up new employment and educational opportunities for young people. Stronger and more extensive youth networks (for individual youth and also for youth organizations) can also make young people feel more valued and important in their local communities.[30]

5.4 Promoting internships and forging linkages with post-secondary institutions

Two interviewees and members from one focus group felt this theme was very important. One interviewee stated that "a key challenge is to attract more (young)

---

[29] See "Youth Resources: Involving Youth Networks" (chapter 2, section 2.4.6).
[30] Youth strategic planning processes must especially focus on building stronger relationships with marginalized community youth. Members from one focus group were especially concerned about helping youth with little (or weak) ties to the community to gain access to local job and volunteering opportunities.

professionals into the region". He further stated that the type of youth needed in the community include those with a mixture of skills, work experiences and educational training.

One focus group member stated that the Town of Arborg once had a doctor intern working in the community. She felt that the experience was very good for both the community and for the individual. She also felt that internships and mentorship programs can benefit communities like Arborg. Students provide employers with innovative ideas, new industry knowledge and advise (albeit short term) on how to improve their companies or community.

The ABCDC should increase internship / mentorship experiences in the ABCDC region. Short-term internships can lead to full time positions for young people in the community.

Another focus group member felt that the ABCDC (and the community) should form stronger relationships with post-secondary institutions. The point made by this member elaborates on a point made in the literature review. Mentorships and apprenticeships are important to help develop young and competent community leaders. However, these opportunities mostly involve young people from the community (see section 2.6.1). The ABCDC must also attract new young professionals to their region. Strong partnerships with specific university/ college departments will help the ABCDC receive a more regular stream of talented and skilled students working in the region. [31]

5.5 Developing relationships with former graduates

This theme is related to the above theme. One interviewee and the members from one focus group commented on this in their research sessions with the interviewer. Many

---

[31] The ABCDC should focus on developing strong partnerships with university / college departments that can provide the greatest benefit to their region. Potential partnerships include those departments / faculties within the fields of medicine, law, rural development, information technology, economic development and community planning.

students in Arborg and Bifrost would be (at some time or another) pursuing a post-secondary education. The ABCDC must work harder at keeping in contact with these former graduates—regardless of where they live.

5.6 Fostering positive community experiences

Members from one focus group felt that youth's experiences growing up in Arborg have been very positive. Those positive experiences are based on several factors mentioned in both focus group sessions. These factors are:

- close connections to family and friends
- affordable cost of living
- a safe and relatively clean community
- an intimate community feeling [32]

Members from one focus group felt that larger communities cannot duplicate the same positive experiences young people have growing up in a small community. These members also felt that the ABCDC and other community organizations must work at maintaining the positive attributes explained above for all youth growing up. Another interviewee felt that community groups should aim to develop "lasting experiences for young people".

---

[32] This can be both a positive or negative experience. Focus group members directed their comments to the quality of relationships that are developed in small towns. These members felt that small communities foster more positive and closer connections to family, friends and community, versus larger cities like Winnipeg.

5.7 Promoting community ambassadorship and an innovative atmosphere

Youth who have positive community experiences become good community ambassadors. One focus group member alluded to the fact that young people who leave still promote their community to new friends, fellow employees and businesses.

Youth however, must know their communities better to be effective ambassadors. Another focus group member felt that the ABCDC should "promote more (youth) success stories". Young people need to see how others like them have succeeded once they have returned to Arborg and Bifrost. Youth must also see more stories of how young community and business leaders are involved in the local community. Young people who are community leaders (and who are involved in the community) can also become positive role models and community mentors.

Current youth must also view their communities as innovative and exciting. One interviewee felt that youth need to know that opportunities (for work and new businesses) exist for them in Arborg and Bifrost. Another interviewee stated that the ABCDC region has made key investments in new technologies. He further stated that the ABCDC region also has several very innovative local businesses. The challenge is to better promote opportunities in innovative industries (especially those in high demand and in the value-added sector) to local youth. Research and development in value-added industries should be stressed since developments in this sector can lead to greater job opportunities for young professionals.

The last two themes reinforce comments made in the literature review (see section 2.6.3). Florida and Canada25 state that (community) innovation must occur in many different dimensions. This includes innovation in the economic, educational, social and cultural dimensions of community life. Young people recognize that they have several social, economic (employment) and educational needs that are not being addressed. By developing new and innovative ways to address these challenges (i.e. by developing more

unique youth events and activities, or, by actively supporting new forms of youth entrepreneurship), young people will begin to see their communities as innovative and exciting.

5.8 Promoting stronger partnerships between schools, local businesses and the ABCDC

Two interviewees and the members from one focus group felt strongly on this issue. One interviewee noted that the ABCDC has already forged many partnerships with local businesses and youth. He felt however, that not enough communication is occurring between the ABCDC, the local business community and the local high school.

The same interviewee felt that the high school does not offer enough trade-related courses to meet the community's needs.[33] Business owners know what skills and training are needed for their businesses—yet may have to recruit people from outside the community to meet their needs. High school administrators and local business leaders must work closer together to offer more trade-related courses that benefit both young people and the community simultaneously.

Another interviewee felt that school-business partnerships must focus around promoting youth mentorships. He felt that the most important partnerships are those that "pair up" a young person with local business or community groups. The point elaborates on a section of the literature review that also examines youth mentorships (see section 2.6.1). The literature review states that youth mentorships are important to a community. The literature review also states that youth mentorships can lead to the development of future community leaders. Young people however, should be encouraged to form mentorships with those individuals that share their own career interests. The ABCDC and other adults can help youth by helping them contact certain individuals, or introducing

---

[33] This interviewee included a possible list of trade related courses that can be offered by the high school. These include power and automotive mechanics, engine repair, hairstyling and carpentry.

youth to individuals with similar interests. Mentorships should be coordinated through the local high school.

Another interviewee felt that it was important to "find and identify new economic opportunities" in the community. New opportunities can thrive only if local businesses and schools work together to highlight the current (and future) skills needed in the community. These skills have to be offered through new high school courses. [34] This is seen as "directed skill development".

5.9 Greater regional partnerships

Stronger partnerships between communities in the Northern Interlake are needed to properly address youth migration and youth attraction. Communities in the region can share knowledge and information, resources (i.e. volunteers) and project costs. Two interviewees and the members from one focus group spoke on this subject.

One interviewee felt that youth migration and attraction must be seen as a regional priority. If migration and attraction is not a regional priority—it cannot be successfully addressed through local municipal programs. He also felt that youth must be seen as a "valuable (regional) resource".

The same interviewee felt that CDCs must develop stronger partnerships with other regional CDCs. He stressed that Interlake "communities must begin to see the Interlake as a unit". The ABCDC must (therefore) form stronger partnerships with the Fisher CDC and the Riverton-Bifrost CDC—especially when addressing youth migration and developing attraction strategies. This important point expands on a point made in the literature review (see Section 2.3). The literature review states that the positive relationships between CDCs and their community groups are central to their success. CDCs however, must also engage in partnerships at the regional level. CDCs must work

in conjunction with other regional groups like Community Future Development Corporations (CFDCs), Regional Development Corporation (RDCs) and regional tourism associations to discuss and address issues that are of common interest to each organization.

All three Northern Interlake CDCs should work collaboratively to address youth community issues. Officials from all three CDCs should get together on a regular basis to share ideas on youth migration and other pressing issues facing the Northern Interlake Region.

5.10 Greater youth decision-making power

ABCDC projects that involve youth must provide for greater youth decision-making powers. Youth must be involved in project visioning, goal and objective setting, project implementation and monitoring of projects that affect them [35]. One interviewee spoke extensively on this subject. He stated:

> Youth want decision-making powers. The community must develop (systems that) allow young people to have decision making powers.

The interviewee felt that (if) young people are given more powers to effect change in areas that affect them—young people will then become more interested (and involved) in their communities. Young people need to feel that they are owners of the projects that affect them. Young people will not get involved in projects if the ideas guiding the project are not their own, and if the program hasn't been developed by them. Young people will also not get involved if the project doesn't involve them in the project management.

---

[34] Arborg Collegiate and local businesses should partner with other regional schools to offer new trade programs and courses. Partnering with other schools allows a sharing of resources, funding and facilities.

[35] See chapter two for an explanation of how youth should be involved in the strategic planning process.

These comments reflect an important statement stressed in the literature review. The literature review stated that young people must be given more decision-making powers (see section 2.4.6). The literature review also points out that the way to do this is by giving youth greater access to community strategic planning processes—especially in projects and initiatives that affect them. Young people must be involved at the beginning of project planning and development. Young people must also be involved in determining project goals and objectives and in project management and monitoring. One of the most effective (and practical) ways to do this is by encouraging (and developing) youth round table programs.

The same interviewee felt that the ABCDC region must take a long-term view of youth involvement. While high school youth should be encouraged to volunteer and help operate local projects (such as the rural youth round table), the ABCDC must get returning youth involved in community decision- making processes. Returning youth (in many cases) are ready to reinvest in their communities. Many of these youth are either setting up a new business or establishing (or moving) a family into the region. The ABCDC should help past graduates (especially those 2-5 years out of high school) move back into the community. These youth are:

> ...now coming back to their community following their education, and looking for opportunities. It is very important to have programs and initiatives already "in place" (to assist and involve these people when they return). These programs must address young peoples' needs once they return

The ABCDC should work hard to get returning youth involved in the local community once they have moved back. The ABCDC should especially get these youth involved in business and community leadership positions. These may include positions in groups like the Chamber of Commerce, ABCDC, NEICOM and various tourism organizations. The ABCDC should also encourage returning youth to be involved in local government positions.

The ABCDC must also help support the development of strong youth leaders in the community. This idea of supporting youth leadership is stressed in the literature review

(see section 2.6). Youth leadership training and development is needed to maintain a pool of potential (and future) community leaders. Young community leaders can also help motivate and encourage other youth into greater community engagement.[36] The literature review points to the fact that young people (especially those in their early to mid twenties) have inherent characteristics that make them potentially good community leaders. These include the ability to embrace (social, economic and political) change, work with a multitude of perspectives and ideas, and develop important intergenerational community partnerships (see section 2.5).

Supporting leadership development would help young people learn the skills needed for future leadership positions. Skill development can focus on improving mediation and facilitation skills, conflict resolution skills, listening and public speaking skills and problem solving and strategic planning skills. Youth interested in community leadership positions as local councillors and board members (as well as) young entrepreneurs can benefit from such leadership training.

Youth leadership development should occur on a regional scale with CDCs, municipal governments and development organizations (NEICOM, IDC) working together to offer training. Fostering the development of young leaders will help maintain a pool of young, innovative and competent community leaders.

5.11 Forging stronger youth partnerships

This is one of the most important themes discussed in the research. It is also closely related to the prior theme (increased youth decision-making power). One interviewee and members in both focus groups spoke extensively on this subject.

Both focus groups were asked about partnerships. One group was asked to define the characteristics of a successful partnership, while the other was asked to define the word

---

[36] See section 2.6 for a discussion on the importance of youth leadership training and development.

itself. Overall, both groups provided an extensive and comprehensive definition of what partnerships are—and how they can be made more effective and successful.

Members in both focus groups felt that understanding (between each partner) and participation were important in partnerships. Partners must understand why the partnership is being formed and why they are being asked to participate. Partners must also understand how they will participate and what are the benefits (and potential drawbacks) to participating. These issues must be discussed before any partnership with youth occurs.

The ABCDC must understand that young people have limited time commitments. School and extra curricular activities take up much of youth's free time. Youth will only volunteer on projects that interest them. Youth will also volunteer for projects that can benefit them the most (i.e. exposure to a potential job, or skill development).

Members from one focus group felt that partnership means participation. Partnerships work "both ways". One focus group member stated that "partnerships are a mutual arrangement" where partners learn from each other. Youth must feel that (potential partners) are using their skills and talents effectively. Focus group members felt that youth must also feel that they are learning valuable skills in return for their efforts. These members further felt that a mutual learning environment that challenges both partners— characterizes good partnerships. Partners should be challenged to use their skills in creative ways and receive new skills and knowledge in return.

One interviewee felt that youth partnerships can be strengthened by giving youth greater "community responsibility". He felt that youth should be made more responsible for initiating and managing local events and activities—especially those activities that directly affect them. Greater responsibility placed on youth can result in a greater appreciation for their communities. This can also help develop youth's sense of pride in

their communities and themselves.[37] These comments relate to an important topic discussed in the literature review.

Arnstein's "ladder of citizen participation" (as adapted by Hart) explores the different levels of participation that young people are given in community projects and initiatives.[38] Comments made by focus group members and interviewees about partnership and participation relate to the topmost rungs of Arnstein's ladder. One interviewee especially felt that greater youth involvement in youth initiatives (i.e. the top two rungs of the ladder) results in a greater sense of youth community responsibility and better community pride. Greater youth engagement therefore, is related to positive community outcomes, whereas youth manipulation and tokenism does not develop youth's connection to community, sense of citizenship or community pride.[39]

Members from one focus group alluded to an important recommendation. These members felt that more has to be done by community groups (and the school) for youth that do not have extensive community networks. These individuals may include students who are from different ethnic or racial backgrounds, lower income students, students with different sexual orientations and students who live in remote locations.

Community groups must work closely with elementary and high school teachers to identify students that feel "left out" of school and community activities. Focus group members felt strongly that all students should be encouraged to engage in school and community programs—regardless of their backgrounds, beliefs and values. Students should take the initiative (and be given the opportunity) to encourage others to participate, and to become active and involved in their local community.

---

[37] This interviewee felt strongly on this issue. He felt that it is important for youth to learn from their successes and failures. The only way youth can do this is by being given greater roles as citizens in their community. Local projects and initiatives should be given to high school kids to manage and operate.
[38] See "Empowering Youth: Arnstein's Ladder of Empowerment" (chapter 2, section 2.4.6).
[39] As stated in the literature review (see section 2.4.6), Arnstein's ladder of citizen empowerment can be used as a practical tool by communities to determine the level of youth involvement that is occurring in current community projects. The ladder should also be used on a regular basis to determine how youth involvement can be improved, and where youth tokenism and manipulation is occurring.

6 Recommendations and Conclusions

This chapter outlines the twenty-five recommendations developed by the researcher. These recommendations are meant to help the ABCDC form more effective youth attraction strategies and stronger youth-community partnerships. Recommendations are also directed towards other rural municipalities in Manitoba interested in addressing the issues raised by rural youth migration.

6.1. Applicability of proposed recommendations

Several of the recommendations made below are specific to the ABCDC. However, the researcher feels that the recommendations can be tailored to meet the unique needs and environment of any rural CDC interested in addressing youth migration. Recommendations proposed in this practicum are also directed towards rural CDCs that:

- Are based in rural areas or small towns
- Are active in community projects and initiatives
- Have an active youth population (i.e. are home to a local/ regional high school)
- Are interested in forming strong partnerships with their youth

Rural CDCs interested in acting upon these recommendations should tailor these recommendations to the resources available within their regions. [40] Adapting these recommendations to the resources available within each CDC region can result in more effective (and successful) youth attraction strategies and stronger youth-community partnerships.

---

[40] The availability of resources in each CDC region varies. Resources that CDCs should consider when addressing youth migration and attraction may include funding, support from local businesses and high schools, and the availability of volunteers interested in working with young people.

6.2 Improving communication with youth

The first step to effective youth attraction strategies is to forge strong partnerships with community youth. The first step to stronger partnerships is through regular communication with young people. The ABCDC must improve communication with the community's young people in three areas. These areas include:

- *Improved communication with high school youth*
- *Improved communication with former graduates*
- *Improved communication (promotion) of youth programs and services*

The ABCDC must have a presence in the local high school. Greater communication will give the ABCDC information on the social /recreational and employment needs that face these youth. Simultaneously, the ABCDC must improve communication with former graduates that live abroad. The ABCDC must keep in touch with former graduates to learn what programs and services they need to help them relocate back to their home communities. This may include assistance in finding employment, housing or recreational opportunities for children. The ABCDC (and local community) must ensure these initiatives are "in-place" when former graduates return.

1) Develop a high school youth round table

The ABCDC should establish a youth round table program in Arborg Collegiate. The round table would be a continuous conduit for communication between the ABCDC and high school youth. The round table program would allow high school youth to discuss issues that concern them—and then pass these concerns onto the ABCDC.

Students should be responsible for developing round table goals and objectives. Youth round table participants (with help from the ABCDC) can develop the objectives and goals for these projects—and work on meeting these goals and objectives over the

school year. The program's emphasis should be on addressing current youth community concerns.[41]

The ABCDC, school administrators and round table members need to establish basic parameters for the round table. Co-facilitators and youth round table members must first establish a common vision statement for the round table. Co-facilitators and youth round table members can then establish long-term goals for the round table. Outcomes of the round table process must benefit all partners.[42]

2) Develop a graduate e-mail contact list

The ABCDC and high school should maintain a current listing of e-mail addresses of current and former graduates. The email contact list should be updated yearly. The e-mail list should be used to keep students updated about new business or community developments in their region. The list can also be used to keep former graduates informed about upcoming community events and activities.

3) Develop an on-line youth e-bulletin and survey graduate needs

The ABCDC should develop an online e-bulletin to keep former graduates updated on new initiatives and programs being developed by the ABCDC and other community groups. The ABCDC and community should especially use the e- bulletin to highlight those programs aimed at assisting former graduates relocate back to their home communities.

---

[41] The youth round table can be developed as part of a course curriculum. Possible courses include a journalism or world issues class. Individual course projects could coincide with individual round table tasks (i.e. developing a mission statement, getting feedback from the student body on youth issues etc).

[42] The ABCDC, Government of Manitoba, student council and school administration would act as co-facilitators for the round table program.

The e-bulletin should be used by the ABCDC to obtain feedback from former graduates on a number of different topics. Online surveys and interviews can question former graduates about the effectiveness of new ABCDC programs and community initiatives. Surveys can also be used to obtain feedback on topics such as jobs for young people in rural areas and social and recreational concerns that young people have. The ABCDC can then use the data to help inform policy and program development.

The e-bulletin and surveys can be co-ordinated by high school youth and sent (via e-mail) to former graduates on a regular quarterly basis.

Promoting the ABCDC region to new youth

The ABCDC must also attract new youth to the region. These include youth with no ties (family or friends, employment) to the region. The ABCDC should especially look at attracting young professionals whose skills are needed in the community.[43]

4) Maintain community web sites and develop a youth recruitment package

The ABCDC and Town of Arborg should maintain their web sites on a regular basis. It is frustrating for youth to find information that is dated or wrong. The ABCDC and Town must keep current all contact names and information for community leaders, organizations and local businesses. Contact lists should include the names of significant individuals, their public mailing addresses, e-mail addresses and telephone numbers.

The ABCDC (with other community groups) should develop an online youth recruitment package. This package would highlight the social / recreational attractions of the region as well as the current economic and employment opportunities. Innovative community and business opportunities should be highlighted in this package. The

---

[43] This recommendation must be closely developed in conjunction with recommendations made in section 6.4 (promoting internships and forging post-secondary linkages).

package should be tailored specifically to youth. The package can be developed on-line as a link from the ABCDC web site, or Town of Arborg web site.

High school youth can help develop the online package. Hard copies of the package (i.e. in CD format) can also be developed and designed by youth as a class project.

6.3 Addressing the needs of students and former youth

The ABCDC must better address youth social / recreational and employment needs. Recommendations are broken down into three areas. These include:

Youth social and recreational needs
Youth employment and educational needs
Youth volunteer opportunities

5) Establish youth social and recreational priorities

The ABCDC must partner with youth to determine short term and long term community recreational improvements. The youth round table program should play a central role by co-ordinating discussions between young people and community leaders. Youth should then present their findings to the local town council and the ABCDC Board.

6) Develop a one stop "job / volunteer shop" and encourage youth employment

High school students liked the idea of a central location where local job and volunteer opportunities for youth can be posted. This central location would run year round. Students also alluded to the fact that youth without close community networks (to family, friends and potential employers) must be afforded the same opportunity to gain employment and volunteer experience.

The ABCDC (in conjunction with local businesses) should establish a central location where community job and volunteer opportunities are posted (i.e. Arborg Collegiate). The ABCDC should encourage all local businesses to send notice of youth job and volunteer opportunities to this central location. This information must be updated regularly and be accessible to all students in the community.

The ABCDC must also be aggressive in marketing local youth employment. The ABCDC should encourage local businesses to offer more entry-level positions for high school youth. The ABCDC must also approach local businesses to offer more professional level positions for returning youth. Businesses should be approached during the early winter and spring to consider offering professional youth internship and youth summer positions.

7) Encourage youth volunteerism and develop a youth contact list

Many students currently volunteer in the community. Students felt that local businesses and community groups have to make more youth volunteer opportunities available—especially in areas that interest them and that are related to their future career plans.

Youth who are not currently volunteering must be given the chance to volunteer. The ABCDC and Arborg Collegiate should compile a list of potential youth volunteers and their areas of interest. The youth contact list could then be provided to all businesses and community groups interested in acquiring a youth volunteer. Business and community groups can then contact young people directly.

8) Encourage ABCDC youth volunteers

Areas exist within the ABCDC for youth volunteers. High school students should be encouraged to volunteer on a project-by-project basis. Young professionals (returning youth) can be encouraged to take more leadership positions. Possible volunteer positions

105

within the ABCDC include:

- Committee members (i.e. environment committee)
- ABCDC youth liaison
- ABCDC job / volunteer shop coordinator
- Project volunteers
- Board of directors

ABCDC youth volunteer positions must be interesting for young people and related to social and career interests. Youth should be encouraged to volunteer based on their time availability and interests.

9) Develop youth volunteer events and awards

Students mentioned that volunteering makes them feel appreciated. The ABCDC (in conjunction with the Town of Arborg) should develop new ways to show youth volunteers that they are appreciated. Ideas include a youth volunteer appreciation evening or barbecue sponsored by the ABCDC, town and rural councils and local business committee.

Youth can also be rewarded with youth awards or certificates. Young volunteers should be highlighted in local media stories for their contribution to their communities. These awards may help youth see that their efforts are well appreciated by local citizens and the community.

Highlighting the efforts of youth volunteers can also help create possible role models for younger students. Young students can also begin to see the benefits of volunteering—and possibly become volunteers themselves.

6.4 Promoting internships and forging post-secondary linkages

Rural communities must forge stronger partnerships with Manitoba's post-secondary institutions. Many university and college programs require students to participate in internship or mentorship programs. Internships provide students with valuable experience in their field of study while providing their sponsoring company or community with semi-professional expertise.

10) Identify community gaps and post-secondary internship programs

The ABCDC (in conjunction with the local business community) have to determine which local businesses can benefit from student internships. The ABCDC must also identify which post-secondary programs operate internship positions. This can be done by examining post secondary web sites and university / college calendars, meeting with faculty and department officials and talking to current youth enrolled in various university or college programs.

11) Promote Arborg internships through post-secondary media and events

The ABCDC should use local campus media to promote internship opportunities in Arborg. This includes using newspapers and radio. The four biggest post-secondary institutions in Manitoba (University of Manitoba, University of Winnipeg, Brandon University and Red River College) each publish student newspapers that are read by a wide range of students of various backgrounds. Radio "spots" that promote internship opportunities in Arborg can also be an effective means to promote community internship positions.

The ABCDC (and both municipal councils) can also promote internship opportunities at local "career days" and symposia held in post secondary institutions. A listing of internship positions available in Arborg can be displayed at these events. These

events can also help the region recruit permanent positions for job openings within the community.

12) Provide incentives for student interns

Local businesses must offer youth interns a positive and challenging internship experience. The ABCDC (and Town) must also offer interns a range of incentives that go beyond career development. The ABCDC should work with local businesses to offer interns (staying in the community) discounts in food, accommodation and in the use of recreational facilities. Possible incentives include:

- Reduced (or free accommodation) over the duration of the internship
- Discounts on food (grocery stores and restaurants)
- Discounts on local products (clothing and other merchandise)
- Discounts on the use of local recreational facilities

The ABCDC (and both town and rural councils) must promote local community attractions to possible interns. Community groups must also encourage interns to get involved in local clubs and events. A positive internship experience (both career-development and community experiences) can help motivate students to relocate to the ABCDC region after they have completed their education.

6.5 Promoting community ambassadorship and an innovative atmosphere

The ABCDC must ensure that positive community attributes are protected for future residents. Young people felt that their experiences growing up were positive. These experiences however, must also be fostered and protected for younger generations. The ABCDC must consider:

- *Promoting close connections to family and friends*
- *Promoting a clean and safe community*
- *Maintaining an affordable rural cost of living*

Young people also have to be aware of local "success stories". Simultaneously, young people must feel their communities are exciting and full of opportunities. The ABCDC must promote new technologies, innovations and business developments in their region. Marketing must be directed towards current and former youth.

13) Promote family activities and increase the mandate of the Arborg Bifrost Recreation Commission

The ABCDC (in collaboration with the Arborg Bifrost Recreation Commission) should continue to develop more family events and activities. Family events and activities should be held on a regular basis (i.e. once every two months) and can be small in scale. Current events run by the Commission (i.e. such as family curling bonspiels) are a good example of family-oriented activities. The ABCDC (and Commission) must increase the number of winter activities. Possible ideas include:

- Family skiing and outdoor skate nights
- Family barbecues or softball tournaments
- Family swimming nights [44]
- Family bowling nights

Festivals and community events must have a larger youth component. Youth should be engaged in community celebrations as participants or as festival organizers. A regional "youth celebration day"—where young people of all ages from surrounding communities can "party and have fun" is one possible suggestion.

---

[44] Facilities from other communities may need to be used for certain events or celebrations. Events and activities must be interesting and fun for people of all ages.

The ABCDC (and Arborg Collegiate) should collaborate to develop an annual homecoming festival. This festival would be directed towards former Arborg residents that want to maintain their ties to their community. The festival would strengthen community bonds between current and former Arborg residents.

Arborg must stay clean and safe. Cleanliness and safety is related to one's image of community. High school youth and elementary children can be involved in this.

A youth maintenance and safety committee can be developed under the Recreation Commission. The sub committee would make sure recreation facilities like parks, ball diamonds and the soccer field stay clean and safe. The committee can also beautify the community through planting flowers, painting murals or removing possible graffiti. The committee can also be charged with the responsibility to operate local community safety measures such as a Neighbourhood Watch program.

The maintenance and safety committee can be operated by local youth from the high school. Youth should be given a portion of the Commission's budget. The budget would allow the committee (in collaboration with the Commission) to establish annual maintenance projects and programs. The budget would also allow the youth committee to hire other students (elementary and junior high students) to help with committee initiatives (i.e. have students pick up garbage, plant flowers etc). The youth committee can also use existing programs (such as Communities in Bloom) to meet their goals and objectives.

The ABCDC and Town of Arborg should also promote greater youth volunteering on the Commission. High school students can be involved in helping organize and run community events and festivals. Youth volunteers can also help determine how existing events and clubs can be improved to increase youth participation.

14) Maintain and protect affordable rural living for young people

Affordability is a key concern for young people when determining where to live. [45]
This especially includes affordability with respect to the "cost of living". The ABCDC (in conjunction with the Town of Arborg and the Rural Municipality of Bifrost) must maintain and protect the affordability of living in the region. Possible suggestions include:

- Maintaining a competitive (and low) municipal tax rate
- Maintaining a competitive (and low) business tax rate [46]
- Ensuring the affordability of basic necessities (such as groceries and other non-grocery items) [47]
- Ensuring the affordability of basic services (i.e. health care services, other professional services)

The ABCDC (in conjunction with the Town of Arborg and Rural Municipality of Bifrost) should also develop innovative incentives to encourage youth home ownership in the Town of Arborg and the Rural Municipality of Bifrost. [48] One possibility includes offering (through local banks) competitive mortgage lending rates for young homeowners. [49]

---

[45] This point was stressed in focus group two.
[46] Business taxes affect consumers since business owners may pass on increased costs to consumers by increasing the price of purchased goods and services.
[47] This includes goods such as clothing and household items.
[48] Affordable housing incentives should especially be targeted towards youth returning to the region. These youth (in many cases) are ready to settle in the region—and would especially benefit from any such incentives.
[49] Housing incentives would require partnerships formed between the ABCDC and local financial institutions.

15) Promote innovative industries and expansion of existing businesses

The ABCDC must continue supporting new industries that diversify the local economy. [50] The ABCDC should focus on greater research and development into value-added industries. [51] Young entrepreneurs should be encouraged to develop businesses in value-added sectors. Young people should especially be encouraged to partner with older business people to develop Arborg's value-added sectors. The ABCDC should also encourage existing businesses to invest in research and technical development in their fields of expertise. Continued innovation, research and development can lead to new professional positions for young university/ college graduates.

The ABCDC must better promote new developments in innovation and business to their youth. Better communication of the opportunities that exist for young people will help convey a positive image of community to young people.

16) Support alternative forms of youth entrepreneurship

The ABCDC should promote and support alternative forms of youth entrepreneurship. These include succession planning for youth, co-operative youth businesses and opportunities for women entrepreneurship. The ABCDC should ensure that their current loan program supports alternative forms of youth entrepreneurship. The ABCDC should also continue offering one-on-one business development assistance to young people.

---

[50] The ABCDC must especially support those industries that use new technologies, are innovative and that are reflective of the new economy.
[51] The ABCDC region has access to primary sector resources such as grain and fish. Value-added industries (that use these resources) should be encouraged and supported both by the ABCDC, Chamber of Commerce and local governments.

17) Use new media to promote youth "success stories"

The ABCDC should highlight the profiles of successful young community or business leaders. This should be done through new media formats such as the Internet or e-bulletin. Profiles should be designed to appeal to both current students and youth living abroad.

6.6 Promoting stronger partnerships between schools, businesses and the ABCDC

Communication must be improved between local high school administrators, local businesses and the ABCDC. Communication must be strengthened in two specific areas. The first area consists of improving communication between students and local businesses through mentorship opportunities. The second area consists of improving communication between local businesses and the high school to address current and future "gaps" in the local economy.

18) Develop a youth mentorship contact list

The ABCDC should develop a list of community and business leaders willing to mentor youth. Students should be encouraged to contact mentors themselves. The ABCDC can facilitate student-mentor relationships by sponsoring mentorship events where students get to work with their mentors on local volunteer projects and develop youth skills and career interests.

Mentorships can especially benefit youth that do not have strong networks with local employers or community groups. The ABCDC should promote youth mentorship events though the school and local media.

19) Facilitate school board / business brainstorming sessions

The ABCDC should facilitate sessions between the Evergreen School Division and the local business community to identify where economic "gaps" exist in Arborg's economy. These sessions should focus on developing a plan to improve youth training and skill development to fill these gaps. Emphasis should be placed on improving (and increasing) high school trade courses and increasing youth mentorship and internship opportunities. [52] Sessions should occur on a regular basis (i.e. once yearly).

6.7 Developing greater regional partnerships

Youth migration needs to be seen as a regional priority in the Northern Interlake. Municipal governments and community development organizations should pool their resources to address this issue—and come up with a regional plan to address it.

20) Encourage dialogue with regional CDCs and municipal governments

The ABCDC should meet regularly with the Riverton-Bifrost CDC and the Fisher CDC to discuss the issue of youth migration and youth community involvement. These organizations should discuss where opportunities for regional co-operation exist when tackling youth issues. Potential areas of regional co-operation include:

- Developing shared projects that address youth social / recreational needs
- Addressing regional youth employment and education needs
- Increasing youth community participation
- Developing a regional youth attraction strategy

---

[52] School boards and business groups must also focus on initiatives to improve "skills transfer" from older employees to younger employees.

114

Young people from all three communities must be involved in these regional discussions. The ABCDC should use youth delegates from the youth round table to participate in these discussions. The youth round table can also gauge current youth concerns from Arborg. Concerns can be forwarded to youth delegates who can discuss these issues with youth delegates from Fisher Branch and Riverton.

21) Develop a youth issues committee and youth attraction strategy

Regular meetings between all three CDCs can lead to the development of a regional youth issues committee. This committee would forward concerns and recommendations (from youth in all three communities) to regional organizations such as NEICOM and the Interlake Development Corporation.

The committee should comprise youth delegates from all three communities. These members must play a central role in the committee. Youth delegates must be allowed to develop the committee's goals and objectives, timetables and yearly budget.

The committee can also develop a regional youth attraction strategy. The strategy would highlight where regional co-operation can occur. The regional youth issues committee would be a prominent partner in any planning that affects the Northern Interlake Region.

6.8 Developing greater youth decision-making power

The ABCDC should provide young people with the power to make decisions in areas that affect them. Conversely, the ABCDC and local governments must offer training and development programs that teach young people to make these decisions responsibly. Training and development must focus on developing leadership skills in youth.

22) Provide autonomy to the youth round table

The ABCDC (in conjunction with both municipal governments) should establish an annual budget for the youth round table. The budget however, should be spent on projects and priorities that youth members feel are most important to them—and that best reflect the goals and objectives of the round table. Youth round table members would be accountable to the ABCDC and both municipal governments for their budget.

Greater youth autonomy in the youth round table will help young people develop a greater sense of responsibility and pride. Operating a budget will also teach young people budgeting and priority setting skills.

23) Develop a regional youth leadership training program

The ABCDC (in conjunction with regional CDCs) should develop a regional youth leadership training program. Young people need to develop competent and effective leadership skills—regardless of where they decide to live. The training program should focus on skill development in five areas. These areas include:

- facilitation skills
- public speaking skills
- mediation and conflict resolution skills
- budgeting skills
- basic business skills (developing a business plan and writing grant proposals)

The program should be developed in conjunction with NEICOM and the IDC. Both organizations can provide experts to help instruct individual sessions or financial assistance.[53]

---

[53] The leadership training program can be offered "for-credit" by the high school. The program can also be offered as a pre-requisite for local scholarships or bursaries.

116

6.9 Forging stronger youth partnerships

Many of the recommendations suggested in the previous sections (when acted upon) will lead to stronger partnerships with young people. Stronger partnerships can be formed with youth living in the community and those living abroad. Stronger youth partnerships can also increase youth in-migration into Arborg. Stronger partnerships require adults to understand why young people commit to their local communities and how their involvement can be improved.

Understanding youth's ability to commit

Young people (especially those in high school) have busy schedules. School work, part-time jobs, volunteering, and commitments to family and friends require a careful balance of schedules. The ABCDC (and other community groups) must be aware that student commitment to community organizations and boards may be on a limited, short-term and infrequent basis. Returning youth however, may be more able to take a long-term approach to community participation. These youth may also be able to volunteer on a more consistent and regular basis. The ABCDC should:

24) Promote flexible volunteer positions for high school youth and long-term leadership positions for returning youth

ABCDC board members should highlight youth volunteer opportunities in each project that it undertakes. These opportunities should involve a short-term commitment (i.e. in weeks or months). They should also allow students the flexibility to arrange their involvement around other time commitments. Students should be encouraged to volunteer on a project-by project basis—and in those projects that match their interests best.

The ABCDC needs a regular influx of new members in leadership positions within its organization. Returning young people and young professionals new to the community should be encouraged to take on leadership positions with the ABCDC, other community groups and both municipal governments. Positions may include board and committee members, committee Chairpersons, executive positions and town and RM councillors.

25) Increase the level of responsibility in ABCDC youth volunteer positions and promote partnerships with marginalized youth

The ABCDC should encourage their student volunteers to take on more responsibilities. For instance, youth volunteers can be responsible for recording notes at sub committee meetings, present committee findings to the executive and co-ordinate and organize fundraising activities for the ABCDC. Youth can also be responsible for:

- designing and preparing ABCDC print materials (i.e. meeting minutes, handouts)
- updating the ABCDC web site
- organizing and managing various ABCDC events (Arborg Prime!)
- representing the ABCDC at regional and provincial trade shows and conferences

The ABCDC, local businesses and community groups must work closely with elementary and high-school teachers to better involve marginalized students in school and community events and volunteering.[54] The ABCDC should facilitate regular sessions with elementary and high school teachers to develop strategies to engage young people better. These sessions should focus on understanding why certain students feel marginalized. These sessions must also focus on understanding how traditional volunteer and employment opportunities offered in the community can be tailored to meet the

---

[54] Youth participation for some students (especially younger students) may be a very sensitive issue. Community groups and teachers must be careful to not have their actions perceived as forcing students to participate.

needs of these students. [55]

Community groups should work closely with Arborg Collegiate student council. Student council would help the ABCDC promote new youth events and activities. Student council can also help the ABCDC act upon the strategies developed by teachers and parents. Student council members should be encouraged to promote school and community events to all students through daily interactions with other students.

6.10 Conclusion

Youth migration is not a new phenomenon. Statistics show that Manitoba's young people have been migrating to larger urban centres since the mid seventies.[56] Young people migrate to larger urban centres for increased job opportunities, education and also to "see the world". However, youth migration poses special challenges for rural communities, their leaders and community development organizations. Youth migration results in less consumer spending in rural communities, a reduced pool of employees and a reduced tax base. Most importantly, youth migration can lead to less community spirit and vitality.

That said, rural communities and their leaders must view youth migration as an opportunity. Youth leaving their home communities is good—especially if they are gaining work and life experiences or an education. Youth who return with new skills and experiences infuse their communities with new business and leadership skills, innovative business and community development ideas, and possibly a long-term commitment to stay. Rural communities then must address a central question: what to do to bring youth (returning and new youth) to our communities?

Attempts by different governments (federal, provincial and municipal) and community development organizations to increase youth attraction have addressed

---

[55] Interested youth and parents should also be encouraged to attend these sessions. Youth especially can provide insight on this subject.

several central concerns. These concerns include improving youth employment opportunities, improving opportunities for youth to improve their education (through training programs and skill development) and by providing financial and training assistance to young entrepreneurs. However, local and regional initiatives to attract former and new youth must go beyond this. Youth attraction strategies must improve the level of participation and involvement of young people (both current youth and returning youth) in local community life. Youth participation must be increased in areas that directly affect young people. This means providing young people with greater decision – making power in the political, economic and cultural spheres of community life. This also means improving the partnerships made between young people, CDCs and other community groups.

Improving the partnerships that exist between young people and CDCs is the first step to develop more successful youth attraction strategies. Better (and stronger) partnerships will result in young people communicating their issues, needs, and concerns more effectively to community groups and community leaders.

Youth attraction strategies should aim at engaging returning youth in community decision-making. Attraction strategies must be "in-place" in the community before these people return. Attraction strategies must also engage young high school students that currently live in their communities. These young people can provide their CDCs with important insights into the current issues and concerns facing young people. These youth can help CDCs plan for future generations of youth.

Community organizations must forge two levels of partnerships—those with their current youth, and those with youth who want to return (or relocate) to these communities. More opportunities for community involvement and participation for both youth cohorts allow communities to better understand the immediate and long-term concerns of young people. By addressing the immediate concerns of young people, community organizations are fostering a positive youth image of community. Young

---

[56] See chapter 1 for supporting statistics.

students will feel that their ideas are being listened to. Developing programs and services for returning youth (or new youth) will assist young people to settle. Programs and services must address a number of issues that include social and recreational improvements, housing incentives and opportunities to get involved in local political, economic and community leadership.

Youth attraction strategies advanced in this practicum are based on the belief that stronger youth partnerships (forged at the local level) will result in greater youth participation and involvement in community. Youth that are engaged in their communities may then be more inclined to return to their communities. Along with more youth job opportunities, social and recreational activities and educational training— increased youth participation in community life can re-attract (and attract) youth to Arborg.

Youth attraction strategies uncovered in this practicum revolve around three areas. These areas include improving levels of communication with young people, promoting an innovative and exciting community, and improving youth involvement in local decision making.

Communication must be improved between the ABCDC, current youth and former graduates who live abroad. Improving the lines of communication with youth is the first step towards stronger youth partnerships—and the first step to address youth migration. Members from the ABCDC board and local high school students felt that communication is central to understanding the needs and issues facing both current and former students.

The ABCDC must have a presence in the local high school. Communication must focus on two specific areas. These include understanding the current needs and concerns of young students, and informing and promoting ABCDC projects that affect them. Most importantly, relationships formed with high school students will provide valuable feedback on how ABCDC youth-oriented projects and initiatives can be improved.

Communication must also be improved with former graduates—especially those who live outside of Arborg. The ABCDC must maintain contact with former graduates. Contact with former graduates will help the ABCDC understand how to develop better services and programs needed to attract them back.

The ABCDC must continue to promote the development of new businesses and industries. The ABCDC should especially focus on supporting new developments in value-added industries. This can help diversify the local / regional economy—as well as interest young entrepreneurs in new businesses. The ABCDC must also encourage existing businesses to invest in research and development. An increased emphasis on research and development can lead to new professional positions for young people. The ABCDC must also promote and encourage young people to be involved in unique forms of business entrepreneurship. These include business co-operatives, youth succession planning and more opportunities for women entreprenuership and business development.

Supporting an innovative community also means encouraging more mentorship and internship opportunities. Mentorships provide young students with valuable lessons and skill development in their interested areas of career development. Internships can help existing businesses gain new (cutting-edge) knowledge, and valuable help in new projects and initiatives. Internships can help bring new, skilled youth into the community and possibly lead to more permanent (long-term) job opportunities for young people.

Innovative communities require increased dialogue between local businesses and their high schools. Dialogue is needed to explore where gaps in the local economy exist. Dialogue is also needed to understand how to fill these gaps through new trade courses and training for young employees. Dialogue between the business community and local high school can also help discover where opportunities for future economic development can occur. Better dialogue is needed to make Arborg competitive and successful in the changing new economy.

Innovative communities need young people to know that opportunities exist for them. The ABCDC must promote local "success stories". These include the stories of Arborg residents who have left their communities and returned to become business and community leaders. Youth (both current and former students) must also be kept informed of new innovations, businesses, and community developments that happen in Arborg. Keeping young people informed about their community will create a positive image of community. Young people will see Arborg as being innovative and exciting.

Youth must be given greater decision-making powers from their communities. Youth have to be able to effect change in areas that directly affect them. These include being involved in decisions that address social and recreational opportunities available in their community, and in improving student job and volunteer opportunities. This also includes being actively involved in decision-making that affects the long-term community, economic, and social development of Arborg.

The ABCDC and other community groups must design programs that give students power to effect change. Programs must be designed in partnership with students and returning youth. Two examples include a new youth round table established in Arborg Collegiate and a regional youth issues committee. Both programs would allow young people to discuss the issues important to them—and to begin to effect local and regional changes in collaboration with other community groups and municipal governments.

Effective youth involvement depends upon competent young leaders. Young people cannot be expected to make good decisions unless they are trained to understand how the local decision-making (and strategic planning) processes occur. A regional youth leadership training program would help young people learn important facilitation, mediation, conflict resolution and public speaking skills. The training program can help youth develop basic business skills (i.e. developing a business plan and budgeting) and understand how to strategically plan. Most importantly, a leadership program would help youth develop skills needed to take on any leadership position within their community or in other communities.

The ABCDC and other community groups must encourage more youth volunteering. Youth are an important pool of potential volunteers. Current students volunteer extensively in the community. High school students should be encouraged to volunteer with the ABCDC for short-term or for "project-by project" positions. Students should be encouraged to volunteer for projects that interest them personally and that are related to future career decisions. Older youth should be encouraged to volunteer for longer-term leadership positions. Young volunteers must be appreciated publicly by the community for their efforts.

Acting on recommendations in this practicum will help the ABCDC forge stronger youth partnerships—and help address the challenges created by youth migration. The ABCDC however, must also develop stronger partnerships with youth that are marginalized. The ABCDC must work closely with elementary and high school teachers, student council, parents and youth themselves to understand why students do not participate. Most importantly, the ABCDC (in conjunction with these other groups) must understand how to tailor existing activities and opportunities to better meet the needs of marginalized youth.

The migration of smart and creative young people is a reality for many rural and urban communities. Youth migration however, can never be "solved". Many young people will move throughout their lives to gain better (and more) job experiences, education and life experiences. CDCs however, must take seriously the challenges resulting from the migration of young people. Approaches to attract youth back must address central issues such as increasing job opportunities for young people and improving educational programming and facilities. However, attraction strategies must go further than this. Youth attraction strategies must focus on building stronger partnerships with young people—specifically, youth already living in these communities and former youth that live abroad. Stronger youth partnerships will result in young people feeling more appreciated and important. Stronger youth partnerships require action in three central areas. These areas include: improving communication with current and

former students; promoting new innovation, development and youth entrepreneurship; and involving young people more in local decision-making—especially in those areas that affect them the most.

Bibliography

Annis, Robert C., & Bessant, Kenneth C. (2004) "Report on the strengths, challenges and opportunities of Community Development Corporations in Manitoba". (A report submitted to the Manitoba Community Development Corporations Association) Brandon, Manitoba: Rural Development Institute, Brandon University.

Arborg-Bifrost Community Development Corporation (ABCDC) website http://www.abcdc.mb.ca Accessed on July 2003 and February 2004 Arborg, Manitoba: Arborg Bifrost Community Development Corporation

Arnstein, Sherry, R. (1969). "A ladder of citizen participation". Journal of the American Institute of Planners. Vol. 35, No. 4, p 216-224. Baltimore, Maryland: American Institute of Planners.

Azmier, J., & Stone, L. (2002). Manitoba in Profile Calgary, Alberta: Canada West Foundation.

Azmier, J., & Stone, L. (2003). The Rural West: Diversity and dilemma Calgary, Alberta: Canada West Foundation.

Barnard, R., Cosgrave, D., & Welsh, J. (1998). Chips and pop: Decoding the Nexus Generation Toronto: Malcolm Lester Books

Berdahl, L. (2003). Looking West 2003 A survey of Western Canadians Calgary, Alberta: Canada West Foundation.

Boothroyd, P., & Davis, C. (1993). "Three Approaches to Community Economic Development" Journal of Planning Education and Research. 12: 230-240. Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning.

CBC Radio News Analysis (May 7, 2003) "Reality check: Keeping our youth" Manitoba Votes 2003 section. Retrieved from the world wide web on July 8, 2003 at http://www.cbc.ca. Winnipeg: The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.

Canada25 (2002). "Building up: Making Canada's cities magnets for talent and engines of development". Toronto: Canada25

Canadian CED Network (2001). Accessed from web site: http://www.canadiancednetwork.org. Accessed on May 1, 2003.

Castells, M. (2001). The rise of the network society.(2nd ed). Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd.

Choy, Kevin A, and Rounds, Richard C (1992-1998). Community development strategies on the northern plains Brandon: Rural Development Institute.

Christenson J., and Robinson J.(1989) Community development in perspective Iowa: Iowa State University Press.

Dorsey, Jane Candas and Ticoll, Ellen (eds) (1982). The nuts and bolts of Community Economic Development. Selected papers and proceedings from a conference held in Edmonton Alberta on November 19-20 1982 Edmonton: Edmonton Social Planning Council

Douglas, David J.A., (1994) Community Economic Development in Canada Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Ltd.

Dupuy, R., Mayer, F., and Morissette, R. (2000) Rural youth: Stayers, leavers and return migrants Prepared for The Canadian Rural Partnership. Ottawa: Government of Canada.

Fielding, V., Dominguez, M., and Perreault, M. (September 2001). "Findings of the Youth Engagement Project: Youth views on community partnerships". Winnipeg: Social Planning Council of Winnipeg.

Florida, Richard. (2002). The Rise of the Creative Class : And how its transforming work, leisure, community and everyday life. New York, New York: Basic Books Publishers.

Galaway, B., and Hudson, J., (1994) Community Economic Development: Perspectives on research and policy Toronto: Thompson Educational Publishing Inc.

Garkovich, Lorraine. (1989). "Local organizations and leadership in community development" in Community development in perspective (chapter ten). Christenson, J., and Robinson, J. eds. Iowa: Iowa State University Press.

Gertler, Michael (2001). Rural Co-operatives and Sustainable Development Saskatoon, Saskatchewan: Centre for the study of co-operatives, University of Saskatchewan.

Guidelines for the Seventies: Regional perspectives (March 1973). Volume 3. Winnipeg: Government of Manitoba.

Hacker, Diana (2001). A Canadian Writer's Reference Scarborough, Ontario: Nelson Thompson Learning (Thompson Canada Ltd).

Hart, Roger A. (1997). Children's participation: The theory and practice of involving young citizens in community development and environmental care London: Earthscan Publications Ltd.

Hay D., & Basran, G. (1992) <u>Rural sociology in Canada</u> Toronto: Oxford University Press.

Kruger, R. (1988). "The process of conducting focus groups" 49-105 in <u>Focus Groups: A practical guide for applied research.</u> Newbury Park: Sage publications.

Landry, Frank. "We must keep our young here" <u>The Winnipeg Sun</u> June 14, 2003, p. 11 Winnipeg, Manitoba.

MacLeod, Greg (1982). "Community control" in <u>The nuts and bolts of Community Economic Development.</u> Dorsey, Candas Jane and Ticoll, Ellen (Eds). Selected papers and proceedings from a conference held in Edmonton Alberta on November 19-20 1982 Edmonton: Edmonton Social Planning Council

Manitoba Intergovernmental Affairs (2002) <u>Manitoba Municipal Officials Directory</u> Winnipeg: Government of Manitoba.

Manitoba Intergovernmental Affairs (May 2000) <u>Manitoba Community Profiles</u> Retrieved July 3, 2003 from the world wide web: <u>http://www.communityprofiles.mb.ca</u>. Winnipeg: Government of Manitoba.

Manitoba Intergovernmental Affairs (2003)(a). "Building strong communities. A vision for Rural Manitoba". Winnipeg: Government of Manitoba

Manitoba Intergovernmental Affairs and Manitoba Education and Training (undated). "Manitoba Young Entrepreneurs". Winnipeg: Government of Manitoba.

Manitoba Intergovernmental Affairs and Manitoba Education and Training (2000). "Start Me Up! Manitoba Young Entrepreneurs program". Winnipeg: Government of Manitoba.

Manitoba Intergovernmental Affairs (2003)(b). Manitoba Intergovernmental Affairs Programs and Services http://www.gov.mb.ca/ia/programs Accessed July 2003 Winnipeg: Government of Manitoba.

Manitoba Rural Development (1998). Resource manual for Community Development Corporations (CDCs). Winnipeg: Government of Manitoba.

MB4Youth division (2003)(a). "Manitoba Mentorships 2003 / 2004". Winnipeg, Manitoba: Manitoba Education and Youth (Government of Manitoba).

MB4Youth division (2003)(b). "Youth Serves Manitoba 2003 / 2004". Winnipeg, Manitoba: Manitoba Education and Youth (Government of Manitoba).

Mokwena, Steve (2001). "Deepening democracy: Meeting the challenge of youth citizenship" in Young people at the centre: participation and social change. (chapter 2). Foster, Jane and Naidoo, Kumi eds. London: Commonwealth Secretariat.

Nenshi, Naheed (2002). "Building up: Making Canada's cities magnets for talent and engines of development". Toronto: Canada25.

NIECOM Developments (2004)(a). NEICOM Developments: A Community Futures Development Corporation. http://www.neicom.mb.ca/general_page.html (accessed on January 6, 2004). Riverton, Manitoba: NEICOM Developments.

NIECOM Developments (2004)(b). "NEICOM Developments financial criteria, Western Youth Entrepreneur Program". Riverton, Manitoba: NEICOM Developments.

NEICOM Developments (2003)(a). "Arborg, Manitoba Community Profile" extracted from "Community profiles North-East Interlake" Riverton, Manitoba: NEICOM Developments.

NEICOM Developments (2003)(b). "RM of Bifrost Community Profile" extracted from "Community profiles: North-East Interlake" (CD-ROM) Riverton, Manitoba: NEICOM Developments.

NEICOM Developments (undated) "What can we do for you or your community?" Riverton, Manitoba: NEICOM Developments.

Neighbourhoods Alive! (Author unknown).(2001). "Neighbourhoods make a toolbox to strengthen neighbourhoods". (Based on the Neighbourhoods Alive forum held on June 14, 2001). Winnipeg: Government of Manitoba.

Ninacs, Bill. (September 2002). "Empowerment and CED" A presentation to members of the CCED conference held in Winnipeg. September 24th to 26th 2002. Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Nozick, Marcia (1994) "An integrated development model for building sustainable communities in Canada" in Community Economic Development: Perspectives on research and policy. (chapter seven). Galaway, B and Hudson, Joe eds. Toronto: Thompson Educational Publishing Inc.

Parkland Community Futures Development Corporation and Dauphin Youth Serves Canada (2003). "Get involved: How youth can create community-based initiatives". Dauphin, Manitoba: PCFDCD and DYS.

Perry, Stewart (2000). <u>Tools and Techniques for Community Recovery and Renewal.</u> Port Alberni, British Columbia: The Centre for Community Enterprise.

R.A. Malatest and Associates (2002) <u>Rural youth study phase II: Rural youth migration: Exploring the reality behind the myths</u>. Prepared for The Canadian Rural Partnership. Ottawa: Government of Canada.

Robinson, Carla Jean. (1989). "Municipal approaches to economic development: Growth and distribution policy." <u>Journal Of The American Planning Association,</u> 55 (3): 283-296.

Rocha, Elizabeth. (1997). "A ladder of empowerment" <u>Journal of Planning Education and Research</u> 17: p 31-44. Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning.

Shafer, R. & Summers, G.F. (1989). "Community Economic Development" in <u>Community development in perspective</u> (chapter nine). Christenson, J., and Robinson, J. Eds. Iowa: Iowa State University Press.

Shragge, E. (1997). <u>Community Economic Development: In search of empowerment</u> New York: Black Rose Books.

Social Planning Council of Winnipeg. (March 2003). "Youth engagement: Empowering youth to identify and address youth issues". Winnipeg: Social Planning Council of Winnipeg.

South West Regional Round Table (2003). <u>http://swrrt.cimnet.ca</u> (accessed on January 8, 2004).

Statistics Canada (2002). <u>Labour Force Historical Review 2002.</u> (CD-ROM) (CD One) Catalogue no: 71-0004. Ottawa: Statistics Canada.

Statistics Canada (Beshiri, R.) (2001) "Employment structure in Rural and Small Town Canada". Rural and Small Town Canada Analysis Bulletin. vol 2, no 6. Ottawa: Statistics Canada.

Statistics Canada (McLaren, L.) (2002) "Information and communication technologies in Rural Canada". Rural and Small Town Canada Analysis Bulletin vol 3, no 5. Ottawa: Statistics Canada.

Town of Arborg web site (2003) Town of Arborg: A Tradition With A Future Retrieved July 3, 2003 from the world wide web: http://www.townofarborg.com. Arborg, Manitoba: Town of Arborg.

Watkins-Murphy, P., & Cunningham, J. (2003). Organizing for community controlled development: Renewing civil society. Thousands Oaks, California: Sage Publications.

Western Economic Diversification Canada "Fact sheet—Western Youth Entrepreneur program (accessed from Wheatbelt Community Futures web site on January 7, 2004). http://www.wheatbelt.mb.ca/youthprogram.html

Zeisel, J. (1984). Inquiry by design: Tools for Environment-Behavior Research. New York: Cambridge University Press.

APPENDIX 1:
Map showing the location of CDCs in Manitoba
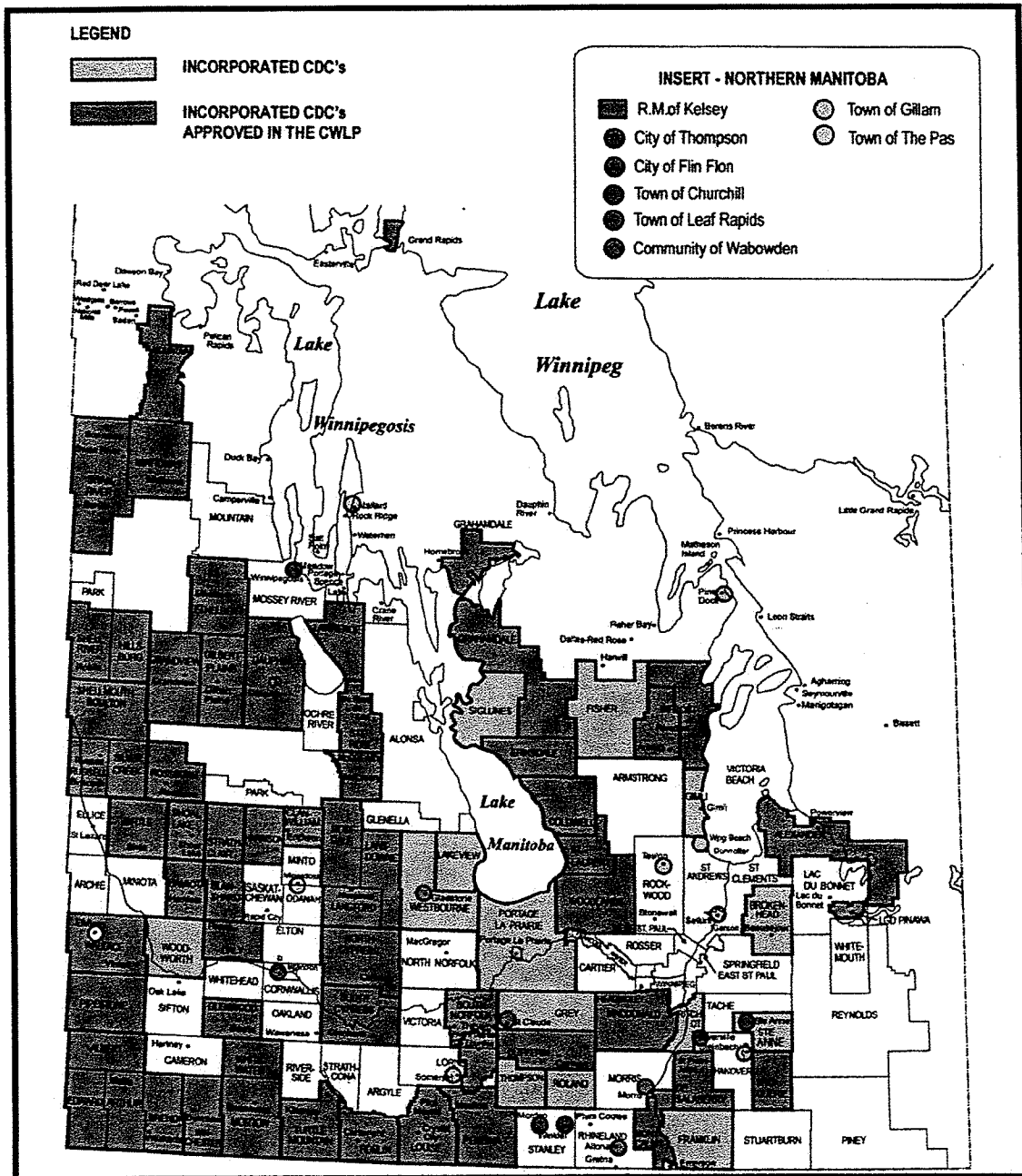
Map courtesy of Provincial Planning Services, Manitoba Intergovernmental Affairs (January 2001)

Government youth programs and services

The following <u>is not an extensive</u> listing of youth programs throughout the province. However, the following section serves to highlight significant federal and provincial youth programs that are currently operating in the province and that are related to the topic of this practicum.

Government of Canada programs and services – Western Diversification Canada

Western Diversification Canada (Government of Canada) helps sponsor and fund Community Future Development Corporations (CFDCs) within the Province of Manitoba. CFDCs primarily function to "assist communities in their regions to develop their economic (and community) potentials" (Community Future Partners of Manitoba 2004). CFDCs offer their communities and residents assistance in:

- Developing and assessing individual business plans
- Providing marketing research and information (to communities and residents)
- Providing start up loans to local entrepreneurs

CFDCs also help their regional youth. Western Diversification Canada (through each CFDC) operate a youth entrepreneurial program accessible to potential young entrepreneurs (Community Future Partners of Manitoba, 2004). CFDCs have also in the past hosted conferences that address youth migration, youth involvement and youth leadership in rural communities (Community Future Partners of Manitoba, 2004).

Western Youth Entrepreneur Program

All CFDC offices in Manitoba partner with Western Economic Diversification Canada to offer the Western Youth Entrepreneur Program. The program aims at providing financial and business development assistance to youth (between 18 and 29)

interested in setting up a small business in rural Manitoba (Western Economic Diversification Canada).

The loan program offers youth 18-29 with up to a maximum of $ 25,000 to assist in the development and operation of their new businesses (Western Economic Diversification Canada). Young entrepreneurs are expected to be able to contribute up to five percent of all funds needed for the businesses. Young entrepreneurs are expected to eventually pay back the loan to their local CFDC office (NEICOM Developments, "Financial assistance criteria").

Young entrepreneurs are encouraged to use the services of their local CFDC office. Young entrepreneurs must also prove that their potential businesses will be economically viable and benefit the local economy.

Government of Manitoba

The document "Building Strong Communities. A Vision for Rural Manitoba" (2003) prepared by the Government of Manitoba outlines four specific ways the current provincial government is supporting rural young people. These four ways include:

- Maintaining affordable post-secondary education (through continued grants to post secondary institutions and bursaries for students)
- Supporting rural round table sessions
- Maintaining a provincial web site promoting youth specific services and programs[1]
- Funding programs and initiatives oriented towards rural and urban youth

---

[1] See MB4youth web site at http://www.mb4youth.ca for more information on Government of Manitoba services and programs that are available for youth.

Youth Entrepreneurs Program (YEP)

The Youth Entrepreneurs Program (YEP) is a component of the "Partners with Youth" program that is operated jointly by the departments of Intergovernmental Affairs and Education and Training ("Manitoba Young Entrepreneurs", program description).

The YEP program is geared towards young people who are interested in setting up and operating their own full time business. Applications are accepted year round. Applicants must be between the ages of 18-29 ("Start Me Up!" Manitoba Young Entrepreneurs program, 2000).

The YEP offers business grants of up to $ 5,000 to eligible youth that qualify for business development assistance. Potential applicants must submit a completed business plan and program application to their local CDC office, regional Intergovernmental Affairs office or Education and Training office ("Manitoba Young Entrepreneurs", eligibility criteria). There are two components to the YEP. These include:

- Business assistance – The YEP provides young entrepreneurs with up to $ 4,000 to help with business start-up. This money can be used as capital needed to purchase equipment and services needed to operate or promote the youth business.

- Training and skill development – The YEP offers up to $ 1,000 for young entrepreneurs to develop their skills or for undertaking training related to their business.

Young entrepreneurs must spend a minimum of $ 1,000 to be eligible for funding under the business set up component of the program. Young entrepreneurs must spend a minimum of $ 2,001 to be eligible for funding under the capital costs components of the program ("Manitoba Young Entrepreneurs", financial assistance).

Applications are reviewed by local CDC offices and by the youth entrepreneurs assessment committee. The final decision to approve a grant lies with the young entrepreneurs assessment committee ("Manitoba Young Entrepreneurs", what happens next). Young entrepreneurs who receive provincial grants must also maintain a log book of expenses and hours worked by staff. Approved applicants are also subject to monitoring by provincial staff throughout the duration of the program ("Manitoba Young Entrepreneurs", grant reimbursement procedure).

Hometown Green Team Program

The Hometown Green Team Program is a program operated by Manitoba Education and Training (Community Learning and Youth Programs, 2003). The purpose of the program is to "encourage rural communities to initiate projects that will result in benefits to the local community. These projects are based on local priorities and provide valuable work experience for Manitoba youth." (Community Learning and Youth Programs, 2003).

The program operates by having a sponsor such as a municipal government or non-profit community group initiate a project that provides a significant physical improvement to their community (Community Learning and Youth Programs, 2003). These may include improvements to public recreation sites, tourist sites, resource conservation areas or the marketing and promotion of the community. Sponsors apply for financial assistance to hire local youth that would be involved in the project initiative directly as workers. Youth between the ages of 16 and 24—and who have completed their studies for the school term are considered eligible for the project (Community Learning and Youth Programs, 2003).

The program benefits youth by providing twenty-five hours of work for (a minimum of) six weeks of employment. Youth also gain valuable skills and work experience that may benefit them in future careers (projects are accepted based on the level of career related experience youth receive, and on the amount of skills and experience they gain

138

from the employment). Approved sponsors receive a wage incentive of approximately fifty percent of the hourly wage that is paid to their youth employees. Approved sponsors are eligible for a maximum of 320 hours (or approximately $1248) in reimbursement costs towards the hiring of each student.[2] The Hometown Green Team Program also offers a 50 / 50 matching grant to each sponsor to cover capital and support costs associated with each new youth position. Sponsors can receive up to a maximum of $ 500 for each youth position. Approved sponsors can apply for a maximum of five youth positions (Community Learning and Youth Programs, 2003).

Community Choices—Rural Round Tables[3]

The Rural Round Table program is operated under the Community Choices Program of Manitoba Intergovernmental Affairs.[4] The Round Table Program allows for "stakeholders from communities (to) come together…to examine the strengths, weaknesses and opportunities" inherent in their communities (Manitoba Intergovernmental Affairs, 2004) [5]. The purpose of a round table is to help "define a vision of where (communities) want to be in the future, identify local goals and priorities; and develop action plans to make the vision a reality" (Manitoba Intergovernmental Affairs, 2004) [6].

Rural communities are expected to support fifty percent of the costs to set up their round tables. The Government of Manitoba provides the rest of the funding needed to set up each round table. Manitoba Intergovernmental Affairs also provides on-going staff support to help interested communities develop, facilitate, and operate the round table

---

[2] Conservation Districts are eligible for up to 480 hours (or $ 1, 872.00) in reimbursement costs per student (Community Learning and Youth Programs 2003).

[3] Information was compiled from a telephone interview that was conducted with the rural round table regional co ordinator (Government of Manitoba) conducted in January 2004.

[4] See Department of Intergovernmental Affairs web site for more information. The web site is http://www.gov.mb.ca/ia/programs.

process. This assistance is provided on an on-going process (i.e. for as long as the round table exists). The round table program is closely related to the CDC program offered by the Government of Manitoba (see chapter two).

The opportunity exists within this program to form rural youth round tables. While there currently have been no examples of youth-specific round table programs, the Government of Manitoba would be interested in developing such a program. Youth have (in the past) mostly just been involved in the round table process as an individual youth member or as representatives of local youth groups.

Round table programs that involve youth must be careful to maintain the interests of young people. Round table members must make sure to discuss issues relevant to young people. These may include issues such as social and recreational opportunities for youth, and youth employment and educational concerns. Also, round table members must make sure to involve youth members in any decision-making that affects community youth.

Youth Serves Manitoba and Manitoba Mentorships programs[7]

The Youth Serves Manitoba Program (YSM) benefits post secondary students by awarding them with university bursaries once they have completed a minimum of 100 volunteer hours with an incorporated non profit organization or registered charitable organization in Manitoba. Once students have completed a minimum of 100 hours, they are eligible for a $ 500 bursary. Students who have completed an additional 100 hours are eligible to receive an additional $ 500 bursary. Youth 16 years and older—and who will be returning to attend college or university are eligible for these bursaries. Volunteer positions must also be related to the student's career path and provide a beneficial service to the community. Non profit organizations must also provide a mentor to work directly with the student applicant. Students are approved for the bursary before they begin the volunteer hours with the organization.

---

[7] Both programs are operated by Manitoba Education and Training

The Manitoba Mentorships Program offers Manitoba employers a wage incentive to hire youth enrolled in a post-secondary program in Manitoba. The program aims at providing youth over the age of 16 with career-related part time work during the school year. Eligible youth can qualify for up to 16 hours of work a week –for up to a maximum of 200 hours of employment. The program is a competitive grant program. Companies that offer the greatest opportunities for youth career-related skill training therefore would be more likely to receive funding.

Potential employers must show that the positions they are offering are related to the career goals of the youth that they intend to hire. The employer must also provide a minimum of 100 hours of employment and ensure that the youth position is flexible to allow for different youth obligations to school and extra curricular activities. Employers must also provide one-on-one mentoring and training. Approved employers receive a wage incentive of $ 3.40 / hour (for up to 200 hours) in reimbursement costs by the Manitoba Mentorships Program.

Youth benefit by receiving career-related skills and training through this program. Youth can also begin to establish career-related networks that are important for future job opportunities. The program also acts as an extra incentive for businesses in Manitoba to hire young students.

Community Works Loan Program

The Province of Manitoba (through Manitoba Intergovernmental Affairs) and in conjunction with individual CDCs offer the Community Works Loan Program (CWLP) to local entrepreneurs. The revolving loan pool program requires that each CDC raise between $ 10,000 to $25,000 to be eligible for matched (two-to one) funding by the Province (Manitoba Intergovernmental Affairs, "Programs and Services", 2003).

Local entrepreneurs apply to their local CDCs for funding assistance for their new or expanding local businesses. Individual CDCs can then offer local entrepreneurs up to

$ 10,000 in business assistance. Recipients then must repay the loan back to their local CDCs. Repaid loans are then lent out by CDCs to other entrepreneurs to help support their potential businesses (Manitoba Intergovernmental Affairs, "Programs and Services", 2003).

Local and regional youth programs and initiatives

Local community groups and municipal governments throughout the province are also addressing the issues of youth migration, youth retention and youth attraction. The following appendix outlines significant projects and initiatives that are currently being undertaken by different regions and communities throughout the province to address these issues.

Regional youth strategic plan: Eastern Manitoba

Communities in the Eastern Region of Manitoba have identified youth migration as a serious issue. Approximately twelve communities are in the process of developing a strategic plan that is addressing youth migration, youth retention and youth attraction.[1] The strategic plan focuses on three main areas:

- Retaining and attracting youth
- Diversifying the skill base of young people already living in the region
- Transferring skills from senior employees to youth employees

The strategic plan was initiated by the local CFDC. Partners in the strategic plan include representatives from local municipal governments and several local and regional community development organizations. Participating communities are located East of the Red River and North of the Trans Canada Highway.[2]

---

[1] Information is based on a telephone interview that was conducted with an Economic Development Advisor with the Government of Manitoba (January 2004).

[2] Participants include the Town of Beausejour, Town of Lac du Bonnet, Town of Pine Falls, Village of Powerview and the Rural Municipalities of Alexander, Springfield, Brokenhead, Reynolds, Whitemouth, St Clements, Lac du Bonnet and Victoria Beach.

Participating communities have identified goals and objectives that they want to accomplish over the duration of the initiative. A draft copy of the strategic plan is to be presented to municipal councils in September 2004.

Preliminary ideas may benefit youth in two specific ways. Firstly, participating communities have stressed the importance of increasing distance education opportunities for students and other youth. Secondly, participating communities are interested in working with large regional employers (such as Manitoba Hydro) to offer professional training in areas that can provide youth with future job opportunities. The strategic plan partners are also interested in developing youth opportunities in the tourism industry. This industry forms a large component of economic development in the Eastern Region.

Southwest Regional Round Table: Southwest Manitoba

The Southwest Regional Round Table is a partnership between approximately ten municipalities in Southwest Manitoba. The round table was formed in the spring of 2002 and includes partners from the communities of Baldur, Boissevain, Deloraine, Killarney, Souris, Wawanesa and Glenboro (Southwest Regional Round Table, 2003). The round table has formed partnerships with (and receives assistance from) the Rural Development Institute (Brandon University) and several provincial and federal departments and agencies (Southwest Regional Round Table, 2003).[3]

Youth Inclusion survey

The round table has partnered with the Canadian Agricultural Rural Communities Initiative (CARCI) to develop and operate the Youth Inclusion Project. The project is a regional survey of youth from the region's communities (Southwest Regional Round Table, 2003). The round table hired a local youth to undertake a survey of young people

---

[3] Information is based on a telephone interview and a series of electronic mail communications with an official from the Southwest Regional Round Table (January 2004).

from the region. The survey addressed a number of issues that include:

- Determining the educational, recreational, and cultural needs of young people
- Determining what young people need (in terms of the above issues) to stay in their communities
- Determining why young people leave their communities

The survey provides important background information for future youth projects or studies (Southwest Regional Round Table, 2003). One such project being considered by the round table is a study of how to provide proper educational training for young people in information technology dependent industries.

The project leader for the youth component of the regional round table is a youth. This individual has voting privileges in the round table. A youth consultant and youth researcher also work on various round table programs. These individuals help maintain a strong youth presence in round table discussions.

"Get involved" –youth in community based initiatives: Western Manitoba

The Parkland Community Futures Development Corporation (PCFDC) and Dauphin Youth Service Canada (DYSC) launched "Get involved: How youth can create community based initiatives" in the summer of 2003. The report is "a youth community development guide" that is meant to help young people get involved in local projects and initiatives (PCFDC and DYSC, 2003: 3). The purpose of the guide is to " provide youth with the necessary knowledge and tools to become active in their local communities through participating in CED partnerships" (PCFDC and DYSC, 2003: 3).

The report showcases two recent case examples of how youth from the City of Dauphin initiated, developed and operated small-scale community projects (PCDC and DYSC, 2003: 10).

Youth implemented a community-wide food bank drive and local recycling education session for these two projects (PCDC and DYSC, 2003: 10). These projects were extensive since youth were directly involved in the brainstorming, researching, planning and evaluating of these projects. Both projects received widespread media and community attention (PCDC and DYSC, 2003: 28-32).

Young people also played a direct role in helping the PCFDC and DYSC compile the final guide. Youth participants were involved in helping write specific sections of the final guide. Their work was then edited and compiled into the final document by the staff of PFCDC and DYSC.[4]

Student youth bursary program: Western Manitoba [5]

The Pelly Trail CDC (PTCDC) consists of five member municipalities. These include the Town and RM of Russell, the Village of Binscarth, and the RMs of Silver Creek and Shellmouth-Boulton. PTCDC communities are located West of Riding Mountain National Park in Western Manitoba.

The PTCDC municipalities support local youth currently pursuing some form of post secondary schooling. The PTCDC offers these youth:

> a cash bursary of between $ 2,500 to $ 10,000 to one student (maximum two) who have completed some form of post secondary education and who are guaranteed employment by a local business within the region.

All PTCDC communities support the bursary program. The bursary program operates on a competitive basis. Successful candidates are chosen based on how well their skills and (potential employment opportunities) matches the employment and skill needs of the region's communities.

---

[4] Information was provided to the researcher in a telephone interview with an official from the PCFDC (January 2004).

The PTCDC bursary program benefits local youth in three specific ways:

- Assisting with post-secondary costs: -bursaries provide students with money that does not have to be repaid to a bank or credit union. As outlined in Chapter two, post secondary costs are higher for students living in rural areas.

- Encouraging youth to find employment - the bursary program challenges young people to find employment in the areas that they are studying in. This can benefit youth by helping them forge networks with local (and possibly future) employers.

- Investing in future business and community leaders: - the bursary program shows that PTCDC communities are taking initiatives to help their youth. Young people who move back to their communities (once finished their schooling or work experience from elsewhere) will bring new skills, innovative business ideas and energy back into their communities.

---

[5] Information was gathered from a student-mentor project that was completed by the researcher during the spring of 2003.

APPENDIX 4:

Interview guides for key informant interviews

Government of Manitoba official

The Government of Manitoba official will provide insight into the economic and social challenges facing small rural communities. He will also explain how communities are addressing these issues. The official will also provide his opinion on how partnerships can be used to meet the economic development goals of small rural communities.

1) Development issues facing the Interlake Region

What are the most pressing issues facing Northern Interlake communities today?
(i.e. communities north of Gimli).

Do you think youth migration is a serious issue in Northern Interlake communities? Why or why not? (i.e. by migration I mean youth leaving their communities over long periods of time---or not returning at all).

With your experience in the region, how have communities in the Northern Interlake begun to address youth, youth issues and youth migration?

2) Provincial programs and local development strategies

What programs does the Province of Manitoba have to help Interlake communities with economic and community development?

In your opinion, how successful have communities been in addressing the needs of their youth and (in addressing) youth migration?

Can you think of any local (municipal) programs or initiatives (from your communities) that particularly address youth, youth involvement or youth migration?

3) Partnerships and communities

Is it important for CDCs to form partnerships with the local community (like local businesses, community residents)? Why or why not?

What do you feel are the most important partnerships that CDCs can form to address youth migration?

Given your knowledge of CDCs and local economic development, how do you feel partnerships with young people can be strengthened?

4) Future issues

What do you think will be the future economic and social issues facing Northern Interlake communities? How should these communities address these concerns?

ABCDC Chairperson

The purpose of this interview is to provide an understanding of how the ABCDC was formed and why was it formed. This interview will examine what are the main issues facing the communities of Arborg and Bifrost, and how these issues inform specific ABCDC goals and projects. The interview will also examine the roles that partnerships play in helping the ABCDC address development issues.

1) History—Structure

When was the Arborg-Bifrost CDC created? Why was the Arborg-Bifrost CDC created?

How involved were local stakeholders (community and business groups, and residents) in the setting up of the Arborg-Bifrost CDC?

How involved are community stakeholders (local businesses, citizens) in the ongoing activities of the ABCDC?

2) ABCDC Issues and initiatives

What (do you feel) are the most pressing development issues facing the communities of Arborg and Bifrost today?

How has the ABCDC addressed these issues?

Is youth migration a serious issue facing your communities today? Why or why not?

3) Partnerships

How important do you think partnerships are to helping the ABCDC address development issues?

What key partnerships have been formed between the community and the ABCDC to address these issues?

Do you feel partnerships are important in addressing youth issues in your region? Why or why not?

4) Future

What do you feel will be the key issues facing the ABCDC in the future, and what do you think will be the best way to approach them?

5) Optional Question

What is your own personal view (or experiences) with youth leaving your community? Why (or why not) do you think this is a personal issue for yourself?

ABCDC Economic Development Officer (EDO)

The purpose of the interview is to determine how important rural youth retention is in the communities of Arborg and Bifrost. The interview will also provide more specific information on what projects and initiatives the ABCDC is currently undergoing, and how these projects involve local youth.

1) Rural youth migration / rural youth issues

Do you feel rural youth retention is an issue in your communities? If so, why?

What (do you feel) are the current issues / challenges facing the youth in your communities?

Do you feel the ABCDC has begun to address these issues? If so, how?

2) Projects involving local youth

How important do you feel it is to get youth involved in ongoing ABCDC projects?

What (do you feel) is the best way to involve youth in ABCDC projects and initiatives:
(you can chose one or more responses)

1) Involve youth in project brainstorming (i.e. setting of goals / objectives of the project)
2) Involve youth in project planning (i.e. design of the project)
3) Involve youth in the project implementation
4) Involve youth in providing feedback/ recommendations on how the project can be improved

Are there currently any projects / initiatives (undertaken by the ABCDC) that involve the youth in your communities? (If no, skip to section three).

In these projects, how are the youth involved?

Are there any proposed projects/ initiatives that involve the youth in your communities?

3) Partnerships involving youth / youth stakeholders

Do you feel partnerships are important in addressing rural youth retention / rural youth issues? Why or why not?

What partnerships has the ABCDC forged with local youth/ youth organizations in your communities to address the issue of rural youth retention?

How do you think these partnerships can be strengthened?

What other partnerships do you think the ABCDC must forge with local youth to address the issues or rural youth retention?

5) Optional Question

What is your own personal view (or experiences) with youth leaving your community?
Why (or why not) do you think this is a personal issue for yourself?

APPENDIX 5:

Interview guides for focus groups

Arborg Bifrost Community Development Corporation (ABCDC) Board

The purpose of this interview is to gain insights into projects and partnerships being undertaken by the ABCDC to address the issue of rural youth migration. The focus group begins by discussing the issues of rural youth retention and attraction in the region. Members will then be asked questions about ABCDC projects that address these issues, as well as about partnerships between the ABCDC and local youth. The focus group will then discuss how ABCDC programs and partnerships can be improved upon in the future.

1) Rural youth migration in the northern Interlake

1a) In your opinion, do you feel youth migration is an issue facing your community? Why do you think this way? (By youth, I mean those between the ages of 18-29)

1b) What do you think is the larger challenge facing your community? Is it to retain your youth, or is it to attract youth back? Or is it both? Why do you think this way? (Give explanation if necessary)[1]

2) ABCDC Projects and initiatives

2a) What current ABCDC projects do you feel address youth issues in your community today?

2b) How do these projects address these issues?

3) The role of partnerships in ABCDC projects

3a) Do you think partnerships with young people in your community can help address youth migration? Why or why not?

3b) What current partnerships exist between the ABCDC and youth from your region?

3c) In your opinion, what are the characteristics of a successful partnership?

4) Potential concerns facing the ABCDC in the future

4a) How do you think the ABCDC's approach to retaining and attracting young people can be improved in the future?

4b) In your opinion, how do you think youth partnerships with the ABCDC can be improved in the future? (For instance, what other youth partnerships should be forged, or, how should partnerships be strengthened in the future)?

---

[1] Youth retention is based on a shorter time frame for return into the community (i.e. youth returning after 1-4 years). Youth attraction is based on a longer time frame for return (i.e. attracting young people who have been away for 5-10 years).

Arborg Collegiate Institute students (grade 12)

The purpose of this research is to explore the issue of youth migration. The research will explore why young people would stay (or leave) their community once done high school. More importantly, the research will find out how young people can be better involved in their local community.

This research will also examine partnerships. This research will find out what you think about partnerships, how partnerships can be made stronger, and how partnerships can help attract (or bring back) young people into the community.

Decisions facing young people today

The first set of questions asks about the decisions facing you at this point in life—especially as you move from high school to work or more schooling.

1) You are finishing high school this year. What are the main decisions facing you right now as you graduate? (Specify education, employment, etc).

2) Why are these decisions important to you?

Reasons for leaving (or staying) in Arborg

Some of you might stay here once you are done high school, some of you may move. The next set of questions asks you why you would make these decisions.

3) If you were to leave your community once you graduate, what are the reasons why you would leave?

4) If you were to stay in your community once you graduate, what are the main reasons why you would stay?

Youth community involvement and partnerships

The next set of questions looks at how young people are involved in the community.
These questions also look at the role of partnerships in communities.

5) In what ways are young people involved in local community events and activities?

6) In your opinion, is it important to get young people involved in the community?

7) What does partnership mean to you, and what characteristics make up a good partnership?

8) What does the community need to do to make stronger partnerships with young people?

Attracting young people to your community

The final question makes you think how you could make your community a more interesting place for young people to live and work.

9) If you were a town Mayor, what would you do to attract more young people to your town?

APPENDIX 6:
Written and verbal ethical consent forms

Key informant interviews

CONSENT FORM

This consent form, a copy of which will be left with you for your records and reference, is only part of the process of informed consent. The following will give you a basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. If you would like more detail about something mentioned here, or information not included here, you should feel free to ask. Please take the time to read this carefully and to understand any accompanying information.

The purpose of this research is to discover how CDCs address rural youth migration through the partnerships they form with their local youth. Specifically, the purpose of this research is to study the relationships between CDCs and youth organizations, youth oriented stakeholders (such as schools and youth associations) and community youth themselves. The researcher proposes to study the Arborg-Bifrost Community Development Corporation (ABCDC) as one example of an organization that has been forming partnerships with their local youth to address the issues of rural youth retention in Manitoba's rural communities.

Your expertise as (enter position name) is being requested as a participant in an in-person interview with the researcher. The interview will consist of an approximately 40 minute interview that revolves around the projects / initiatives being undertaken by the ABCDC that specifically involve local youth.

The risks associated with this type of research are minimal since no deception or stated use of this information either than for the purposes of gaining background information to inform the researcher's interests is intended. The research gained from this interview session will be solely used to inform the ongoing research being undertaken by the researcher.

The interview session will be recorded using a hand held tape recording device. The purpose of recording is solely to facilitate the researcher in translating the interview into notes. The tape recording will be destroyed by the researcher once translation into note form has been completed. If you have any objections to the use of a tape recording device by the researcher, please feel free to inform him as soon as possible.

The anonymity and confidentiality of your responses is not guaranteed in the subsequent document and presentation of the research gained from this session. While the researcher will not use personal names in the documentation and presentation associated with this session, the potential to be acknowledged with specific comments is high, since the researcher may reference individual comments by the position titles of each interviewee. If you do not consent to the use of your position title in the subsequent document and presentation associated with this research, please inform the researcher immediately. If consent to reference individual comments by professional titles is not provided, the interviewee will not be identified by their position title. The researcher will impose no prejudice or negative consequences against the interviewee if consent is not given.

154

The researcher will have sole access to material developed from this session. All materials developed from this session (raw data from interviews and tape recordings) will be destroyed once the researcher completes translation into notes.

Feedback from this session will be provided to you in the form of a one-page summary. Since your interview session is one of four to be completed with other individuals, your responses will be combined with other respondents in the summary. Your personal name and professional title will not be used in this document to ensure a level of anonymity and confidentiality.

Your signature on this form indicates that you have understood to your satisfaction the information regarding participation in the research project and agree to participate as a subject. In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the researchers, sponsors, or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time, and /or refrain from answering any questions you prefer to omit, without prejudice or consequence. Your continued participation should be as informed as your initial consent, so you should feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout your participation.

Principal Researcher:

Martin D. Frigo Department of City Planning, University of Manitoba

Advisor:

Dr. Ian Wight, Department of City Planning, University of Manitoba
ian_wight@umanitoba.ca

This research has been approved by the Joint- Faculty Research Ethics Board (JFREB) at the University of Manitoba. If you have any concerns or complaints about this project you may contact any of the above-named persons or the Human Ethics Secretariat at 474-7122, or e-mail margaret_bowman@umanitoba.ca. A copy of this consent form has been given to you to keep for your records and reference.

Participant's Signature_____

Date_____

VERBAL CONSENT FORM

The purpose of this research is to discover how CDCs address rural youth retention through the partnerships they form with their local youth. The researcher proposes to study the Arborg-Bifrost Community Development Corporation (ABCDC) as one example of an organization that has (and is) forming partnerships with their local youth to address the issues of rural youth retention in Manitoba's rural communities.

The interview revolves around questions about the economic and social development issues facing the Interlake region, as well as programs offered by the Province of Manitoba to help communities meet their economic development goals. The research gained from this interview session will be solely used to inform the ongoing research being undertaken by the researcher. You should feel free to refrain from answering any question that you feel uncomfortable with. Refraining to answer any question will not result in prejudice or retribution by the researcher.

The anonymity and confidentiality of your responses is not guaranteed since the researcher intends to reference comments made in this interview with the your position title in the document and presentation associated with this research. If consent to reference your comments by your professional title is not provided, your comments will not be identified by your position title. The researcher will impose no prejudice or negative consequences if consent is not given.

The following research has been approved by the Joint-Research Ethics Board (JFREB) at the University of Manitoba. If you have any comments or concerns in regards to this interview please contact the human Human Ethics Secretariat at (204) 474-7122, or e-mail margaret_bowman@umanitoba.ca.

Feedback from this session will be provided to you in the form of a one-page summary. Your personal name and professional title will not be used in this document to ensure a level of anonymity and confidentiality.

Do you provide your verbal consent for participation in this interview?

Do you provide verbal consent for use of your position title in the document and presentation associated with this research?

Thank you very much for you time.

Focus Group One

CONSENT FORM

This consent form, a copy of which will be left with you for your records and reference, is only part of the process of informed consent. The following will give you a basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. If you would like more detail about something mentioned here, or information not included here, you should feel free to ask. Please take the time to read this carefully and to understand any accompanying information.

The purpose of this research is to discover how CDCs address rural youth migration and attraction through the partnerships they form with their local youth. Specifically, the purpose of this research is to study the relationships between CDCs and youth organizations, youth oriented stakeholders (such as schools and youth associations) and community youth themselves. The researcher proposes to study the Arborg-Bifrost Community Development Corporation (ABCDC) as one example of an organization that has (and is) forming partnerships with their local youth to address the issues of rural youth retention in Manitoba's rural communities.

Your expertise as a board member of the ABCDC is being requested as a participant in a focus group to be conducted with the researcher on October 20th at 6:30 PM at the Arborg town office. The focus group will consist of a one and quarter hour discussion with other board members about the projects / initiatives being undertaken by the ABCDC that specifically involve local youth.

No deception or stated use of this information other than for the purposes of gaining background information to inform the researcher's interests is intended. The research gained from this interview session will be solely used to inform the ongoing research being undertaken by the researcher.

The interview session will be recorded using a hand held tape recording device. The purpose of recording is to facilitate translation of the interview into notes. The tape recording will be destroyed once translation into note form has been completed. If you have any objections to the use of a tape recording devise by the researcher, please feel free to inform him as soon as possible. If permission to use the tape recording device is not granted, the tape recording device will not be utilized by the researcher.

The anonymity and confidentiality of your responses is guaranteed in the subsequent document and presentation of the research gained from this session. The researcher does not intend to use personal names or information in the documentation and presentation associated with this session and with the practicum.

The researcher will have sole access to material developed from this session. All materials developed from this session (raw data from interviews and tape recordings) will be destroyed once the researcher completes translation into notes.

Feedback from this session will be provided to you in the form of a one-page summary that will be distributed to all focus group participants. Personal names will not be used to identify individual responses. This precaution will help ensure a level of anonymity and confidentiality in the provided summary.

Your signature on this form indicates that you have understood to your satisfaction the information regarding participation in the research project and agree to participate as a subject. In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the researchers, sponsors, or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time, and /or refrain from answering any questions you prefer to omit, without prejudice or consequence. Your continued participation should be as informed as your initial consent, so you should feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout your participation.

Principal Researcher:

Martin D. Frigo Department of City Planning, University of Manitoba

Advisor:

Dr. Ian Wight, Department of City Planning, University of Manitoba
ian_wight@umanitoba.ca

This research has been approved by the Joint- Faculty Research Ethics Board (JFREB) at the University of Manitoba. If you have any concerns or complaints about this project you may contact any of the above-named persons or the Human Ethics Secretariat at 474-7122, or e-mail margaret_bowman@umanitoba.ca. A copy of this consent form has been given to you to keep for your records and reference.

Participant's Name _____
(Please print)

Participant's Signature_____

Date_____

Focus Group Two

CONSENT FORM

This consent form, a copy of which will be left with you for your records and reference, is only part of the process of informed consent. The following will give you a basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. If you would like more detail about something mentioned here, or information not included here, you should feel free to ask. Please take the time to read this carefully and to understand any accompanying information.

The purpose of this research is to discover how local groups work at reducing youth migration. More specifically, this research aims to study what partnerships need to be formed between local groups and youth to address youth migration. Partnerships between local community groups and young people can help reduce the number of young people leaving their communities today—and also help attract new youth. Successful partnerships can begin to address the needs and issues of young people today. By looking at the needs of young people, local groups can then begin to tackle the issue of youth migration.

Your participation is being requested as a member of a focus group. The focus group will occur on **Thursday, December 11th at 2:00 PM.** Your knowledge of the issues that affect you will help the researcher understand what are the needs of young people today. Your knowledge will also help the researcher understand why young people leave their communities, and what needs to be done to attract them. Most importantly, your input will help the researcher understand how young people can be better involved in the life of their communities.

The focus group will consist of <u>an hour and twenty-minute</u> discussion with other students in your grade.

The interview session will be recorded using a tape recorder. The purpose of recording is to help me translate the interview into notes. The tape will be destroyed once I have made notes from this interview. If you have any objections to the use of a tape recorder please tell me as soon as possible. If permission is not granted to use the tape recorder, it will not be used.

The researcher <u>cannot guarantee your anonymity</u> in this study. Since Arborg is a small community, there is a slight chance that you may be identified as being part of this focus group— or for making certain comments during this focus group. The researcher will reduce the chance that you may be identified in the local community by:

- Not using your personal name or information in the document or presentation of my practicum
- Destroying all raw data (notes and tapes) once the research has been completed
- Ensuring that all raw data stays with the researcher and advisor (i.e. myself and my advisor).

** NOTE: <u>By signing this consent form you agree to keep the discussion raised in this focus group strictly confidential.</u> It is expected that comments and ideas made in this focus group do not get discussed after this session. Your participation is dependent upon agreement to abide by this guideline.

The researcher can guarantee the <u>limited confidentiality</u> of your responses. Two organizations have requested the final copies of research gained from this session. These include the:
- Arborg and Bifrost Community Development Corporation
- The Evergreen School Division

Research will be given to these organizations <u>only after students have had a chance to highlight any responses they do not want published.</u> Students will then be given a final copy of the research to be published and shared with these organizations. If any student is uncomfortable with the sharing of his or her responses, these <u>responses will not be shared</u> with the above mentioned organizations.

The researcher and advisor have sole access to material developed from this session. The researcher will destroy all materials developed from this session (raw data from interviews and tape recordings) once raw data has been translated into notes.

Feedback from this session will be provided to you in the form of a one-page summary that will be distributed to all focus group participants. Personal names and identification will not be used.

Please feel free to contact me at _____ _ if you have any concerns with this project. I would be happy to respond to any of your concerns or questions.

IMPORTANT NOTE—PARTICIPANTS UNDER THE AGE OF 18:

If you will be under the age of 18 before the date of the focus group, the researcher and the University of Manitoba requires a parental signature to allow your participation in this study. If you are under the age of 18 before the date of the focus group, please have a parent or guardian read this consent form and sign it. Please return this signed form to your teacher as soon as possible.

Your signature on this form indicates that you have understood to your satisfaction the information regarding participation in the research project and agree to participate as a subject. In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the researchers, sponsors, or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time, and /or refrain from answering any questions you prefer to omit, without prejudice or consequence. Your continued participation should be as informed as your initial consent, so you should feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout your participation.

Principal Researcher:

Martin D. Frigo Department of City Planning, University of Manitoba

‾‾‾‾

Advisor:

Dr. Ian Wight, Head, Department of City Planning, University of Manitoba
ian_wight@umanitoba.ca

160

This research has been approved by the Joint- Faculty Research Ethics Board (JFREB) at the University of Manitoba. If you have any concerns or complaints about this project you may contact any of the above-named persons or the Human Ethics Secretariat at 474-7122, or e-mail margaret_bowman@umanitoba.ca.   A copy of this consent form has been given to you to keep for your records and reference.

** Please return this completed form to your teacher as soon as possible.

Participant's Name _____
(Please print)

Participant's Signature_____
(All participants must sign here)

Parent's Signature
** (Required if participant is under the age of eighteen before focus group date)

_____

Date_____
(Please print)

APPENDIX 7:

Focus group two information package

The information package was given to focus group members nine days prior to the focus group session. It was meant to give students a basic understanding of what the researcher was studying, and explained how they were being asked to participate. The information package also provided a brief biography of the researcher and his contact information—in case students or parents had any questions they wanted to ask before the focus group session occurred.

The final part of this appendix includes a copy of the letter of agreement signed between the researcher, ABCDC and the Evergreeen School Division. The researcher has retained the original signed letters.

Project Summary:

The migration of young people is a challenge facing Manitoba's communities today. Young people leave their home communities for many reasons. Several reasons may include education, employment and to "experience the world". Youth migration however, has a negative effect on communities. Declining youth populations reduces the economic and social life of communities. Most importantly, the loss of young people reduces the pool of creative, talented people—reducing the overall vitality and liveliness in our communities.

One solution to slow youth migration is through Community Economic Development (CED). CED is a process of development that is based on local citizens getting involved in decision making.. CED is based on community involvement in economic and community planning. CED is also based on all types of people planning for the future of their communities. Strong partnerships between all residents, leaders and different groups are needed for successful CED.

Communities must improve relationships with young people. The needs of young people go unanswered many times. Community Development Corporations (local groups that work at improving the economic and social life of communities) must strengthen their relationships with young people. Young people need to be listened to. Young people must be involved in the planning, decision making and running of projects that affect them. Most importantly, young people must be involved in partnerships with local groups, since young people know best what they need to develop their skills and talents.

How can local community organizations (through CED practices) better involve and form strong partnerships with their young people? How can partnerships with young people encourage them to stay (or move back) to their communities? How can communities attract new youth? These are the questions this research seeks to answer. It is with this that your help is needed.

Talking with young people – a focus group with grade twelve students

A focus group with you in it will help shed light on the above. The focus group asks what are the issues (educational, economic and social) facing you now and in the near future. The discussion will then look at why young people may leave their communities, or decide to stay. We will then discuss how young people can be better involved in their communities. We will finish by discussing what needs to be done to strengthen partnerships with young people. Your input in this focus group will help me understand how partnerships with young people can help address the issue of youth migration.

Find the following sheets attached to this one:

- **2 consent forms**

  - Get the first consent form signed by your parent. Sign this copy also and return to (teacher name) <u>BEFORE Thursday December 11th</u>.

  - Keep one consent form for your records.

- **Researcher biography**

Thanks a lot for your help. Your help and input into this topic has been very much appreciated. Please contact me if you have any other ideas, comments or concerns. My phone number is (enter phone number). My e-mail is

Researcher biography:

Martin Frigo
Winnipeg, Manitoba
(enter phone number)

As part of my research with you, I think it is important that you know a little about me. The following is a few words about who I am, and why I am doing this research with you.

I am 26 years old, and have lived in Winnipeg my whole entire life. I have a wide variety of interests that include travelling, art, music, mountain biking, camping and volunteering.

I recently completed a Bachelor of Environmental Design (Faculty of Architecture) from the University of Manitoba. I am currently working on my Masters of City Planning, and want to finish by May 2004. My school interests include making interesting and healthy communities, getting people to understand needs of young people today, and getting young people involved in their communities.

I think young people have a lot to offer their towns and communities. We have the skills and talents needed for today's world—we just need to be listened to and involved. People, community leaders and politicians must understand our needs and our talents. Young people are the future of our communities. We need to have a greater say in planning the future of our communities.

If you have any questions or suggestions about my research, please feel free to contact me. My telephone number is (enter phone number). Also, my e-mail address is . Looking forward to seeing you next week!

The purpose of this sheet was to give students an additional chance to record ideas or recommendations that they thought of after the focus group session was completed. It was also an extra measure used to mitigate potential negative effects of a large focus group. It was provided to students the day of the focus group with an envelope and postage attached to it. The envelope was labeled with the researcher's address.

Did you forget to say something? Did you not get a chance to say something? Write me a few notes or comments on anything we talked about in our session. Please mail me any comments you have made with the envelope I have given you.

165

January 16, 2004

Dear Sir,

Please find attached a copy of a final report entitled "Arborg Collegiate students' focus group". This report is being provided to you courtesy of the researcher who compiled the information from this session.

This report is being provided for use by your organization for information purposes only. This information provided to you can be used for discussion purposes. This information can also be used to aid the development of future policies and programs by your organization.

By signing this form, you (as a member or employee of your organization) agree not to use this information in any public document, marketing campaign or public debate. You also agree not to use any information from this report in any written public document or on any web site or document placed on the Internet. The researcher defines "information" as direct student quotes and student ideas and opinions.

I would like to thank-you for your assistance in helping me conduct the above stated research. Your assistance provided me with valuable information needed to help complete my practicum. A copy of the final practicum can be provided to you upon request.

Your signature:

_____

Sincerely,

Martin Frigo