



Nov 21, 2023

Dear Mayor Gillingham, City of Winnipeg

Re: Item 16, Housing Accelerator Fund (HCF) and affordable, equitable and climate resilient communities

CAPE Manitoba is the official local chapter of The Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment (CAPE) and collaborative health care workers.

CAPE Manitoba is concerned about Winnipeg's Public Service's recommended Action Plan's failure to include climate resilient housing as one of the seven initiatives in its submission for HCF funding. CAPE Manitoba recognizes the need to deliver health-promoting climate change action while supporting accessible / affordable housing within our communities. Mental health is improved and premature mortality is reduced by increasing city tree coverage to 30%. (Lungman, Lancet, 2023) Winnipeg's tree coverage is decreasing and ambient air temperature is increasing partially due to new infrastructure, on private property, which does not enhance or protect our tree canopy. The City of Winnipeg needs to take steps to protect the health of residents by implementing planning policies and regulations to protect trees and green spaces throughout the city, while creating or maintaining affordable housing. (See Figures 1 and 2)

Our inner city communities are dealing with an increase in temperatures partially due to a loss of green space and canopy with an increase in hard spaces. Canopy loss is occurring from a number of factors which include new infrastructure occurring without green guidelines and penalties to ensure the retention of green space and trees. The City currently adheres to an urban / pedestrian-oriented built form which is obtained through the use of reduced setbacks. The outcome of this approach is the loss of capacity to support canopy trees around new builds, with an increase in ambient temperatures and rain run-off plus adverse health effects on local residents. A key theme in Winnipeg's Strategic Priorities Action Plan (SPAP) is the use of a **green approach** that supports sustainable infrastructure. A 'green approach' needs to be clearly defined and used in any future housing developments in Winnipeg.

The stated primary objective of the Housing Accelerator Fund is, "Encouraging initiatives that increase housing supply and promote the development of *affordable*, inclusive and diverse communities that are *low-carbon and climate-resilient*." Climate resilience will only occur with clear targets and pathways that lead to achieving housing that can meet the needs of those who cannot afford current rents.

Winnipeg may have a sufficient housing supply in some community areas, but not necessarily a high demand for the available units due to high rental costs. There is a mismatch between available housing and affordable rents. This discrepancy as can be seen by reading the vacancy signs and advertisements for apartments; a sample of these advertisements from November 21, 2023, are shown in Figure 3. A Winnipeg Free Press article stated that, "for the lowest income quintile (the first 20% of the income distribution) earning less than \$25K a year, an affordable monthly rent would be less than \$625. *This income group has affordable access to less than 3% of the total rental universe, but it represents roughly 20% of all renter households.*" Currently, CMHC policy is not leading to an increase in the number of affordable units for low income renters. "Rental vacancy is on the rise, but increased supply hasn't moderated average local rates, which are higher than they've been in 25 years. (Winnipeg Free Press, Feb 22, 2022, <https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/business/2022/02/28/rental->

[vacancy-on-the-rise](#)). Winnipeg needs to track vacancy rates by community and document housing needs so that the appropriate housing can be built or sustained.

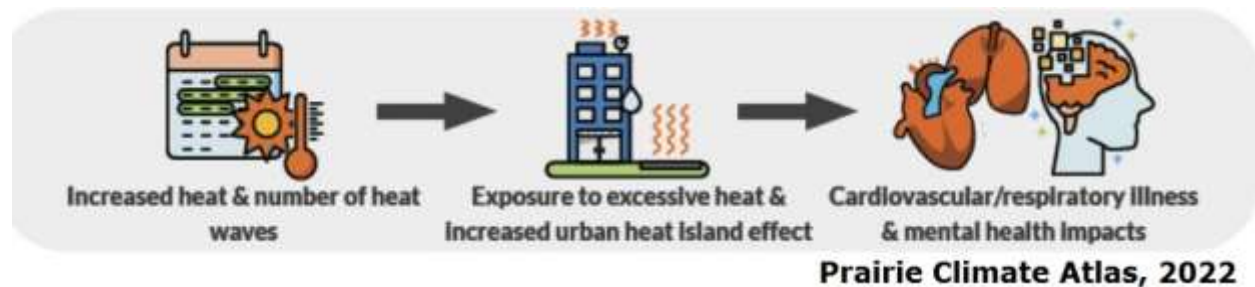
It is extremely important that there be more housing in the City of Winnipeg that has a rent which can be afforded by low income individuals and families of all sizes. Approvals of all new housing should need to take into consideration green spaces and sustainability, for the good of our planet and our health. Winnipeg is trailing other Canadian cities in green space and this needs to be rectified by community. (See Table 1) New housing needs to be coupled with federal policies that support climate resilience and the needs of low income Canadians or the number of homeless will continue to increase.

Recognition of the connections between housing infrastructure and the environment needs to be included as one of items in the list of actions for the CMHC Housing Accelerator Fund prior to acceptance of plans for housing infrastructure. Not to do so, is to increase the disparities between the low and high income households, including the increase in ambient temperature and health ramifications. The federal Housing Accelerator Fund is intended to encourage initiatives that increase much needed housing supply and to promote the development of affordable, inclusive and diverse communities that are low-carbon and climate-resilient.¹ There is no turning back climate change and all housing decisions need to take this into consideration, as well as ensuring that there is housing for the low income Canadians who are now excluded from the housing market.

Best Regards,

Dr Tamara Miller, MD, FRCPC

CAPE Manitoba



¹ Housing Accelerator Fund, <https://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/professionals/project-funding-and-mortgage-financing/funding-programs/all-funding-programs/housing-accelerator-fund>

Figure 1 and 2: Tree Location and Temperature in River Osborne and Area

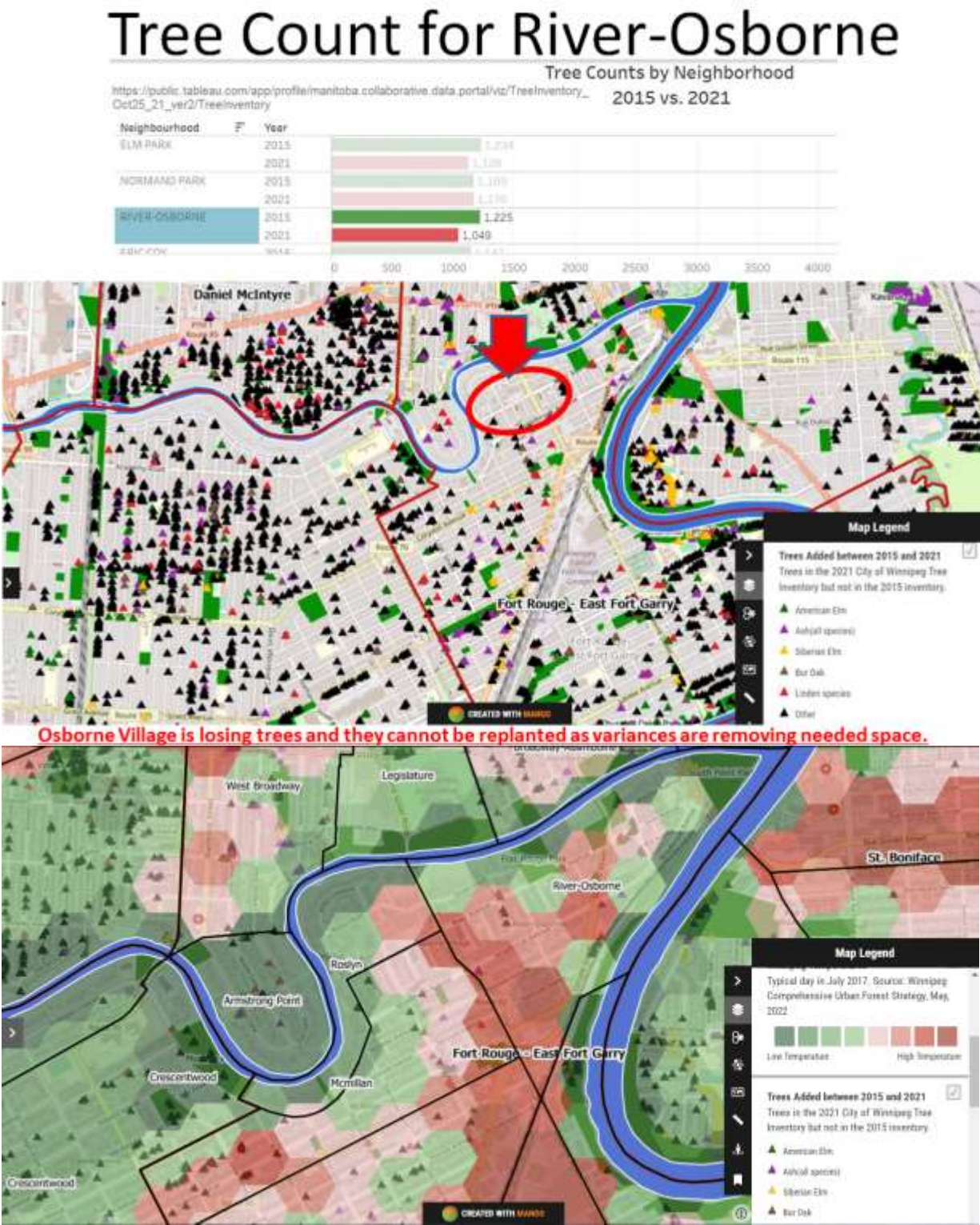


Table 1: Statistics Canada's study "[Urban greenness, 2001, 2011 and 2019](#)" *EnviroStats* (Catalogue number [Catalogue number16-002-X](#)). The data table, "Urban greenness by population centre, 2001 to 2019," is available upon request.

Urban greenness, 2001, 2011 and 2019

This table displays the results of Data table for Chart 1 2001, 2011 and 2019, calculated using percent units of measure (appearing as column headers).

Data table for Chart 1

	2001	2011	2019
	percent		
Winnipeg	70	51	38
Calgary	49	56	42
Regina	42	53	44
Saskatoon	27	61	46
Kelowna	72	53	48
Milton	77	48	53
Windsor	76	85	56
Edmonton	65	60	60
Toronto	69	68	65
Vancouver	84	81	68
Montréal	76	78	70
Barrie	85	80	74
Hamilton	78	71	76
Trois-Rivières	76	79	77
Abbotsford	89	91	79
Kitchener	79	76	81
St. Catharines – Niagara Falls	83	87	82
Ottawa – Gatineau (Ont.)	91	89	83
Kingston	88	92	84
Oshawa	86	87	85
London	87	88	86
Victoria	88	91	86
Guelph	79	80	86
Chicoutimi – Jonquière	88	92	87
Québec	91	91	88
Halifax	93	93	90
Ottawa – Gatineau (Que.)	93	93	90
Moncton	89	95	92
Sherbrooke	94	94	92
St. John's	94	93	93
Kanata	92	97	94

Notes: Estimates of population centre greenness are based on the Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI) from MODIS. Large urban population centres are presented here in order by size of land area, from largest to smallest.

Source: Statistics Canada, Environment and Energy Statistics Division, special tabulation from Statistics Canada, 2020, Corrected representation of the NDVI using historical MODIS satellite images (250 m resolution) from 2000 to 2019, <https://open.canada.ca/data/en/dataset/bc70076-19d5-4913-9846-78615ca93784> (accessed April 29, 2020).

<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/18-002-x/2021001/article/00002-eng.htm>

Figure 3: Winnipeg vacancies, deals for apartments, examples of posts seen on Nov. 19, 2023,
<https://www.zumper.com/apartments-for-rent/winnipeg-mb>

RENT STARTING FROM \$2395
 Spacious 3-Bedroom Suites, 3 Bathrooms + In-suite Laundry, Balcony, & More!
 Over 1560 sq. ft. and two units available.

ONE MONTH FREE RENT!
 Promo Expires Oct 31/23

BOOK NOW **204-471-6561** 35 Photos

New Construction

ONE MONTH FREE
 BRAND NEW - AVAILABLE NOW
 gym • sauna • cinema

5d+ ago

10 Excellent Verified Quick look

The Frontier
 550 De La Seigneurie Blvd, Winnipe...
 Assigned Parking Wheelchair Accessib

2-3 Beds 2 Baths
 \$1,778-\$2,158

Check availability

New Construction

Now Open

Book a tour with our leasing agents.
 Call Today: 204.818.2333
 or email leasing@300main.ca

300

5d+ ago

10 Excellent Verified Quick look

300 Main
 300 Main St, Winnipeg, MB R3C 1E1
 Onsite Management Storage Res...

1-2 Beds 1-2 Baths
 \$1,910-\$2,125

Check availability

Online tours

5d+ ago

10 Excellent Verified Quick look

The Onyx
 1792 Pembina Hwy, Winnipeg, MB R...
 On Site Laundry Fitness Center B..

2 Beds 1-2 Baths
 \$1,748-\$1,798

Check availability

Online tours

2d ago

10 Excellent Verified Quick look

The Spot At Tuxedo Point
 825 785-825 Sterling Lyon Parkway...
 Outdoor Space Roof Deck In Uni...

2-3 Beds 2 Baths
 \$1,725-\$2,150

New Construction

ONE MONTH FREE
 one & two bedrooms only
 quartz counters • in-suite laundry

2d ago

10 Excellent Verified Quick look

The Allure
 70 Park East Dr, Winnipeg, MB R3Y ...
 Onsite Management Balcony Ass...

1-2 Beds 1-2 Baths
 \$1,673-\$1,853

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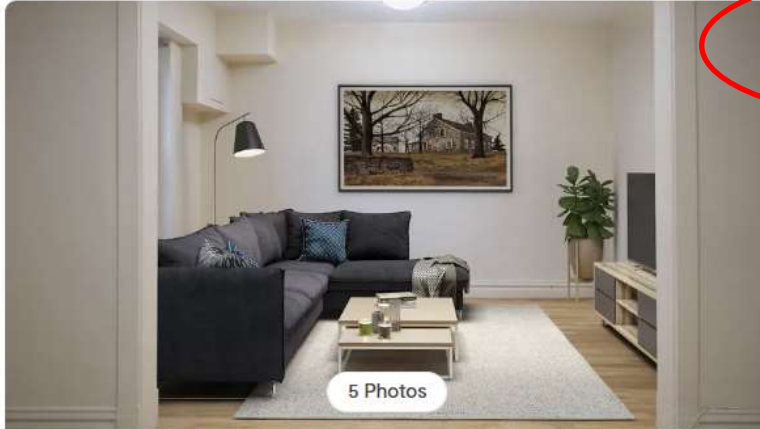
Submit

Nov 19, 2023

Panama Court Apartments

785 Dorchester Ave, Winnipeg, MB R3M 0P5, CAN | **9.4** Excellent

MONTHLY RENT	BEDS	BATHS	SQFT
\$1,869	3	1	1,326



5 Photos



OFFER: Get your first month free on select suites!

[Check availability](#)

Location



785 Dorchester Ave, Winnipeg, MB R3M 0P5, CAN | Mcmillan

[Winnipeg Apartments](#)

[Mcmillan Apartments](#)

Dorchester Apartments

742 Dorchester Ave, Winnipeg, MB R3M 0R6, CAN | **9** Excellent

MONTHLY RENT	BEDS	BATHS	SQFT
\$1,099	1	1	479



1 Photo

OFFER: GET 50% OFF YOUR FIRST MONTH!

[Check availability](#)

Location

