

THE  
MANITOBA  
HOUSING  
STORY

A social  
procurement  
case study

BUY  
SOCIAL™



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Manitoba Housing now awards contracts to six social enterprises: BUILD, Manitoba Green Retrofit, North End Community Renewal Corporation, New Directions' Genesis, Inner City Renovations, and the Brandon Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation's BEEP.

*“In 2008, we started doing energy and water retrofits for Manitoba Housing. And then, we were approached by some provincial officials who were involved with a program called Housing First. Housing First was a partly federally funded program that took people off the streets and gave them housing first, and then resources alongside it. They knew that a lot of these apartments were going to be trashed on an annual basis—as much as 50% or more. **A lot of money was going to be spent fixing up apartment suites. And they said, can you guys at BUILD do these apartment renovations? And we set up Manitoba Green Retrofit to do that work.**”*

Shaun Loney  
Founder and former Executive Director  
BUILD Inc., a social enterprise contractor



2008

Manitoba Housing starts awarding small 'handshake deal' contracts to BUILD for energy retrofits on social housing units.



2011

Manitoba Housing begins testing social procurement by partnering with social enterprises and setting aside work components on social housing unit turnover renovations for five social enterprises.



2014

Manitoba launches their Manitoba Social Enterprise Strategy framework, which includes doubling current investment in social procurement through Manitoba Housing to \$10 million annually and brings in an intermediary between government operations and procurement staff and the social enterprise sector.



2014

Relationships between the Province of Manitoba and social enterprises are formalized through "memoranda of understanding" - giving Manitoba Housing the authority to directly award contracts to social enterprises.



2016

A Social Return on Investment (SROI) report finds that for **every \$1 invested, \$2.23 of social and economic value is created** for construction-related purchases from social enterprises in Manitoba.





# Learning Opportunities



The **narrow focus** on workforce integration allows Manitoba Housing to target where the most social value could be created.



Social procurement requires an **intermediary to facilitate** between government procurement staff and social enterprises to facilitate.



Completion of a **Social Return on Investment** report helps quantify and demonstrate the value of social procurement to high-level politicians, which is crucial especially during elections.



There is a need for **redirection of government money** towards innovative social enterprises offering higher social returns.



# Ongoing Challenges



Government procurement is **stagnant**: the practice is not being taken up by other departments or implemented at higher levels of government.



There is a need for stronger support from high level political staff to **champion** for social procurement.



Due to the narrow focus on construction jobs, there may be concerns over **gender balance** as the construction sector typically employs men.

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*Buy Social Canada works with social enterprises to increase their business opportunities and grow their social impact.*

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