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**RESIDENTIAL MOBILITY OF THE URBAN POOR: A STUDY
OF FEMALE-HEADED SINGLE PARENT ABORIGINAL
HOUSEHOLDS IN WINNIPEG**

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

BY

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(B. Ed., M.A)

**IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF CITY PLANNING**

UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA, WINNIPEG

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SINGLE PARENT ABORIGINAL HOUSEHOLDS IN WINNIPEG**

BY

AGNES N. MOCHAMA

**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**

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ABSTRACT

An investigation of the pattern and determinants of frequent residential mobility among highly mobile low-income families in Winnipeg, this study features an examination of the pattern and reasons for frequent mobility among low-income families in an impoverished neighborhood using qualitative interviewing. The study particularly advances previous knowledge about the residential mobility of the urban poor, especially poor Aboriginal single-parent women in Winnipeg.

The main findings are that highly mobile households are predominantly headed by poor, unemployed, single parent Aboriginal women. The major factors that influence residential mobility among low-income Aboriginal households are the need for low rental accommodation and more living space. Since many of them were unemployed or worked in low paying service jobs, the women limited their housing searches to inner city neighbourhoods where they could access low rental accommodation. Their need for low rental accommodation reflected their low incomes, low levels of education and reliance on government transfer payments such as social assistance.

The other finding was that the residential mobility of the low-income Aboriginal women was determined in part by their perceived racial discrimination in the housing market. This perception served to limit their housing search to, and within, neighbourhoods with a high Aboriginal population. The need for affordable housing, reliance on agency help and prior networks of friends and relatives for current housing information, and the desire to live among people of similar ethnic/cultural background also led to a high concentration of Aboriginals in the study area.

These findings have implications for policy and programs aimed at the stabilization and revitalization of impoverished inner city neighbourhoods in Winnipeg. Programs aimed at improving neighborhood housing conditions should feature targeting of highly mobile Aboriginal lone-parent women. Additionally, policy and programs aimed at improving neighborhood conditions should take into consideration specific residential attributes, levels of housing and neighborhood satisfaction, and other non-housing circumstances, that trigger the mobility of single-parent Aboriginal women. Neighborhood revitalization strategies for this neighborhood should take gender considerations into their program planning and implementation and strive to make physical development a vehicle for achieving social and economic equity for Aboriginal lone parent women.

Further, instead of just targeting outcomes such as housing and neighborhood satisfaction, neighborhood improvement programs would have greater positive impact on low-income mobile families if they addressed other factors such as income and employment. Initiatives attempting to increase the supply of adequate, suitable and affordable housing for low-income families must also take into account the need for appropriate training, and employment and childcare, for low-income single mothers. Neighborhood revitalization initiatives should therefore provide more economic opportunities for the poor in this neighborhoods so that families can earn a steady income that could enable them to move upwards in the social and housing hierarchy.

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The love and support of my family were essential to the completion of my thesis. While pursuing their own educational and occupational goals, they took on responsibilities that I had no time for and cheered my successes. My husband Charles, has been very supportive, proof reading and giving suggestions to the document without complaining. His steadfast belief in me has meant more to me than I can express. My children, Kemunto, Maati, Moraa and Kwamboka endured a distracted and cranky mother with patience and understanding. I am very proud of them. To all my many friends who believed in me and supported me all the way, I would like to say a big thank you, asante sana!

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For my children

Kemunto, Maati, Moraa and Kwamboka

For whom,

“Home is nowhere...a variety of locations....”

Home is the place, which enables and promotes ever-changing perspectives, a place where one discovers new ways of seeing reality, frontiers of difference.

(Hooks, Bell 1990: 48 – *Yearning: Race Gender and Cultural Politics*)

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

Residential mobility is a form of housing adjustment that involves a household move within the same labor market and is assumed to be motivated by a desire to change some aspect of the housing unit or neighborhood (Quercia and Rohe 1993; Speare et al. 1975). As a form of housing adjustment, residential mobility enables individuals and households to change their residence to the one that suits them better (Mandic 2001). Residential mobility is therefore the principal means by which individuals and households adjust their housing needs to changes in household size, housing arrangements, income levels, lifestyles, and job opportunities and preferences (Clark and Dieleman 1996; Rossi 1955). Residential mobility patterns indirectly tell us how city neighborhoods are linked together and how they function as social and economic entities.

High levels of residential mobility in many parts of inner city Winnipeg lead to a high turnover of students in inner city schools. Teachers report that many of the movers are households on welfare, that many of the households are headed by single women, and that many are Aboriginals. The present study focuses on the mobility experiences of low-income families that live in a poor inner city neighborhood in Winnipeg – William Whyte. The neighborhood targeted for the present study serves a school with one of the highest mobility rates in Winnipeg School Division 1. This neighborhood is located in what is known as the North End. This area contains one of the largest concentrations of Aboriginal people in Canada, many of them being first or second generation migrants from reserves, and many are living in poverty.

The study examined households with kindergarten to sixth grade children, and the reasons for and pattern of frequent short-distance residential moves among these families. The study used face-to-face in-depth interviews with a sample of movers in order to explore circumstances that initiated frequent moving.

1.1 Family Mobility

Residential mobility is the household decision that generates housing consumption changes. This in turn changes the housing market and influences housing demand and housing consumption. The housing stock is the context within which households make choices and acquire housing (Clark and Dieleman 1996). A household's decision to change residence in given socio-political contexts thus manifests individual choice. It is assumed that, an affluent two-parent family is likely to move 'upwards' and 'outwards' to take advantage of a new job, better housing and better neighborhoods (Kearns and Smith 1994), whereas a single-parent, poor or minority family is likely to be forced to move because of poor housing conditions, unpaid bills, and evictions (Larner 1990).

According to Larner (1990), families that move frequently are likely to be receiving public assistance, and headed by young, lowly educated individuals. They live in low-income neighborhoods in central cities where there is a shortage of quality low-income housing. Moreover, these families are often faced with other stressful life events such as unemployment, family or relationship troubles, disruptive neighbors, substance abuse, and debt (Harris 1995; Kearns and Smith 1994; Lee et al. 1994; Lowe et al. 1998; Pribesh and Downy 1999). Besides, these families have such few resources that they cannot freely choose to move nor can they cope well with a move. They not only lack the economic

security that enables families to choose freely to move, but social policies also play a major role in constraining their choices to move.

A number of studies have found that residential mobility often goes hand in hand with children's school transfers (Astone and McLanahan 1994; Kerbow 1996; South and Crowder 1998a; Swanson and Schneider 1999). Residential mobility has in turn been hypothesized as a possible cause of lower school achievement for children from highly mobile families (Astone and McLanahan 1994; Hagan et al. 1996; Pribesh and Downey 1999). Frequent changes of homes, friends, schools and neighborhoods are purported to lead to ill health, behavior problems, and poor school performance for children and to worry and stress-related illness for parents. Furthermore, having to move again and again deprives children not only of their present health, comfort and security, but also their future, which depends in part on a stable home and a good education (Doyle 1992, quoted in McIntyre 2000). The complex relationships between residential mobility and children's educational attainment and socialization have been well-documented (Hagan et. al. 1996; Ingersoll, Scamman, and Eckerling 1989; Straits 1987; Kerbow 1996; Newman 1988; Pribesh and Downey 1999; Wright 1999). These researchers argue that as a family relocates to a new community, there can be detrimental consequences on a child's academic and social development because of the breakdown in social networks, such as extended family, friends and neighbors (DeWit et al. 1998).

Residential mobility weakens community-based social support systems as constant moving often affects community social networks when movers leave behind friends and familiar places, and begin to develop new friendships and social connections in new neighborhoods. This negatively affects children's development and well-being, particularly

when children reside in economically-disadvantaged neighborhoods. The effects of high residential mobility for children from low-income families are multiple – they do not develop a sense of belonging to the school and community, and students fall behind academically, behaviorally and emotionally. Furthermore, pervasive student mobility not only affects those students who frequently change schools, but it generally disrupts the functioning of classrooms and the basic operation of schools (Kerbow 1996).

According to Kerbow, issues of community and neighborhood poverty contribute to high levels of student mobility because poor families are always making repeated attempts to secure better housing, a safer environment and better educational settings for their children. In neighborhoods with a highly mobile population it is not possible to build community, as people have no long-term vested interest in their place of residence as families that are highly mobile tend to show little involvement in their neighborhoods and communities (Bartlett 1997). The insecurity and transience experienced by mobile families weakens the social bonds necessary to bind neighborhoods together and often extends to the interactions of neighborhoods with their social institutions including schools. This erosion of community social ties is viewed as a key factor in inner city decay and the lead cause of children's behavioral problems in impoverished neighborhoods. If children growing up in impoverished environments in the inner city are expected to succeed, the public school environment in which they grow and develop should be stable (Buerkle 1997). The viability of many inner cities not only depends on current community development and policy initiatives to revitalize and stabilize impoverished inner city communities, but on the ability to continuously predict and plan for changes in these communities, and the inclusion of inner city public schools as catalysts for revitalization.

1.2 Residential Mobility and Community Planning

This study focuses on housing and community-based planning, and specifically on neighborhood-based planning. It is important to place residential mobility in the context of neighborhoods if planners are to formulate appropriate and effective community development strategies that strive to revitalize impoverished communities. Community planning often focuses on revitalizing impoverished low-income neighborhoods by improving the housing and infrastructure of these neighborhoods. A study of the pattern and determinants of residential mobility of households at the neighborhood level is important in developing programs aimed at neighborhood stabilization and revitalization, and at the preservation and efficient use of existing housing stock. Such a study would clarify relationships among specific residential attributes, levels of housing and neighborhood satisfaction and other circumstances under which household mobility is undertaken (Quercia and Rohe 1993). For public programs to be effective, it is important that they consider the overall housing and non-housing determinants of mobility for people leaving or coming into an area. In order to place residential mobility in the context of communities and neighbourhoods, the next paragraphs will provide a brief background on community planning.

Community planning in Canada, the United States and Europe has for long used the neighborhood unit notion in a variety of formats to structure the residential portion of the city (Hodge 1998). According to Hodge, community planning is not only focused on the physical environment, but it is a vehicle for achieving social and economic objectives. Community planning takes into account social and economic factors and seeks to incorporate non-physical planning goals into the physical development proposals. The

analyses of current conditions and the forecasts of future conditions in a community form one of the cornerstones of a community plan. The analyses of population, economic base, and land use, define the range of possibilities for the community planner. Many of these analyses assist in clarifying the relationships between the physical plan and the social and economic factors in the community (Hodge 1998: 230-231). Housing is one of the most important subject areas where there is a strong interrelationship between the social and economic objectives of community plans.

A city is usually comprised of a variety of distinct neighborhoods each with its own character and reputation created by the characteristics of residents, housing types, ages and styles and economic activities. Moreover, each of the distinct neighborhoods have different needs, issues and problems which necessitate different kinds and styles of programs (Rohe and Gates 1985:3). Over the years, neighborhood-based planning has increasingly become a viable and essential part of comprehensive community planning processes that inform city-wide policy, encouraging inputs, clarifying priorities and garnering support for neighborhood-level details of comprehensive plans (Chaskin 1998). As a unit of planning, the neighborhood allows for better identification of particular populations and issues, it provides a manageable scale that allows for a more effective focusing of resources and an opportunity to focus on particular planning needs and outcomes. Neighborhood planning therefore attempts to address issues of concern to local residents (as defined by residents) that are crucial to the continued viability of neighborhoods and ultimately the city as a whole. Neighborhood-based planning then "ultimately concerns the issue of comprehensiveness and the realization that families -

particularly poor families living in poor neighborhoods - have multiple needs and concerns" (Chaskin 1998:16).

According to Rohe and Gates (1985), neighborhoods represent the building blocks of a city as the health of a city is largely dependent on the vitality of its individual neighborhoods. The vitality of neighborhoods, as represented by their physical and social conditions, to a large extent defines the quality of life of urban residents and influences individual decisions to stay or move to more desirable living environments. The decision to move or stay in turn affects the local tax base and the overall viability of urban area. The neighborhood is therefore chosen as the unit of study in this investigation because of its "position at the crossroads of individual and family needs" and also because its scale offers greater opportunities for community capacity-building (Chaskin 1998:16).

In poor inner city neighborhoods, inadequate housing and subsistence are everyday concerns for poor, marginal families. One of the by-products of poverty and inadequate housing for marginalised families is a tendency towards frequent relocation. Although inadequate housing plays a significant role in supporting a pattern of constant mobility, frequent relocation for other families is re-inforced either by eviction, hostilities with neighbors, or by the desire to improve living conditions (Bartlett 1997). For some of the poor urban families, the coming together of multiple stressors force them not to remain in one place for long or force some to move constantly. Consequently, there is growing recognition among planners, community development practitioners and policy makers that the availability of adequate and affordable housing is one critical component in the creation of stable and vital communities. Planners who work with impoverished

communities draw upon many theories of planning in order to formulate policies and programs for the stabilization and revitalization of neighborhoods.

1.3 Community Planning and Planning Theory

Planners working in poor and impoverished neighborhoods are constantly faced with challenges that cannot be effectively dealt with unless community control of the planning process is sought and fostered. Planning with communities therefore often requires that planners look into and draw upon planning theory to carry out *what they do* and to critically examine their own practices in communities. The purpose of planning theory is to guide and improve the practice of planning. However, there is not one all-embracing planning theory that informs the everyday realities that planners are confronted with in different communities. Sandercock (1998) contends that because planning is mainly done in the political sphere, planners need to acknowledge “a variety of theories, depending on the context, depending on the purpose of the planner” (: 103). To this end, the role of the planner in community-based neighborhood planning is guided by many competing planning theories that have sought to “redefine precisely what it is that planners ‘do’” (Sandercock 1998: 87).

The practice of community-based neighborhood planning is informed by critiques of the rational comprehensive model of planning, that planners have traditionally relied on to guide their activities. The rational comprehensive model emphasizes the development of a general plan that covers the entire municipality. This model contends that a planner would be acting rationally by following three general steps: (1) to consider all the possible courses of action; (2) to consider all the consequences following from the adoption of

each alternative; and (3) to select the alternative that would most likely achieve the community's most valued objectives (Hodge 1998:191). Under this model, planners develop a general city-wide plan that covers the entire municipality. This model assumes that the overall public interest can be defined and that the planner is the indisputable knower who relies on professional expertise and objectivity to do what is best for an undifferentiated public (Sandercock 1998). This leads to little public participation as most city residents do not have a city-wide agenda but are concerned about immediate problems in the areas they live in – i.e., their neighborhoods.

Many planning theorists and practitioners have critiqued the rational comprehensive model and called for planning approaches that are more responsive to local problems. That is, critics have faulted comprehensive planning for ignoring or misrepresenting the needs of local neighborhoods, excluding citizens from meaningful participation, achieving few tangible results and overemphasizing physical development at the expense of service delivery and social and political development (Altschuler 1965, quoted in Rohe and Gates 1985; Friedman 1971). Others have also argued that the comprehensive planning model has limitations that restrict its ability to address the full range of urban problems facing cities because it ignores the redistributive consequences of planning decisions and ends up being used to promote the interests of the economically advantaged over the disadvantaged (Rohe and Gates 1985:53). These criticisms have led planners to seek other ways to plan with communities.

Some of the challenges to the rational comprehensive model of planning came from advocacy planning. This model of advocacy planning was popularized by Paul Davidoff (1965), who faulted the rational model of planning for failing to involve a

substantial number of citizens in the plan development process and hence failed to address the question of *who gets what* (Sandercock 1998) in the planning process. The idea of advocacy planning is that those who had previously been unrepresented would now be represented by advocacy planners, who would go into poor neighborhoods, find out what those folks want and bring back their findings to the table in the planning office and city hall. Because of the claim that the public interest is not being served by the rational comprehensive model, advocacy planning calls for many plans rather than one master plan, and the full discussion of the values and interests represented by different plans (Sandercock 1998). Advocacy planning expanded the definition of what it is that planners do because, under this model, planners would now think about, and go into, poor neighborhoods and represent the poor in the planning process.

The early advocacy planners, who were typically white middle class professionals, offered their advocacy skills in poor neighborhoods and communities of color. But they soon found out that, as outsiders, they would not bring the community together to plan, and they were often not working with the truly poor but with the more organized and upwardly mobile elements of poor areas. Most important, they came to recognize that what members of the poor communities lacked was not the technical skills that the planners offered, but the power to control action (Sandercock 1998). From this experience with advocacy planning, some planners sought to perfect advocacy planning by allying themselves with 'progressive' politicians in order to give the poor a voice in the planning process and seek equity for poor neighborhoods. These came to be referred as equity planners (Krumholz and Forester 1990; Krumholz 1994).

The equity planners sought to perfect the advocacy planning concept by working with progressive politicians to 'redistribute power, resources, or participation away from local elites and towards poor and working class residents' (Sandercock 1998:93). Equity planning defines what planners do much more broadly than does the rational comprehensive model. The equity planners are expected to gather information and analyze it, formulate and reformulate problems, and shape public attention to issues that they see as important (Krumholz 1994). Although equity planners begin with an understanding of urban inequalities and questions of who is getting what out of local policies and plans, the poor and the marginalised do not feature as part of the action, and do not feature as active agents in the theory of *Making Equity Planning Work* (Sandercock 1998). A number of planning theorists and practitioners (Forester 1989; Healey 1992, 1997; Innes 1995; Peattie 1987) have drawn on the local knowledge and political skills that exist in poor communities to improve on equity planning. This has led to the social learning and communicative action model of planning.

Planning as social learning and communicative action is based on the "fundamental observation that planning is above all, an interactive, communicative activity" (Sandercock 1998: 95). This model of planning was inspired by Forester (1989) and popularized by such other notable scholars as Peattie (1987), and Innes (1995). These scholars emphasize communicative rationality and rely more on qualitative, interpretive inquiry rather than on logical deductive analysis; they seek to understand the unique and the contextual milieu of community planning, and look for insights instead of trying to impose order and definition (Sandercock 1998). The social learning and communicative action model contends that planning is a form of critical listening to what is said and what is not

said, by whom and why, in what circumstances, and the observation of others' non-verbal behavior (Forester 1989). It is a mode of intervention that is based on speech acts, on listening and questioning, and learning how, through dialogue to shape attention (Sandercock 1998:96). Although this theory departs significantly from the rational comprehensive model, it does not address issues of empowerment as raised by the radical planning model (Heskin 1980; Leavitt 1994), that is discussed below.

The radical planning model has thus grown out of experience with and as a critique of existing unequal relations of power, opportunity and resources, and from questions about what planners can do about these inequalities. The radical planning model was inspired mainly by the works of Heskin (1980) and Leavitt (1994) who proposed that an empowerment approach to planning is required if planners are to make a difference in the lives of the poor, the excluded and the marginalised. They advocate bottom-up, community-based approaches to planning and community enablement. Heskin's and Leavitt's description of radical planning is that of the community-based planner who thinks strategically about the state and makes alliances with those planners who work with state agencies; it is that of the planner who "enables, assists but never imposes his/her solutions and only offers advice when asked; this planner immerses him/her-self in the community, hangs out with them, helps with research and preparation of documents, advises on how to deal with bureaucracies, never does these things *for* the community, but always *with* them" (Sandercock 1998:94).

According to Sandercock (1998), radical planners need to develop a kind of professional practice whose objective and method is that of 'crossing back and forth' between the community and the state. This would mean developing new ways of knowing

as well as new ways of acting, in order to listen and understand voices that resonate with marginality, exploitation and domination. These are 'voices from the borderlands': "the voices of the multicultural city, of those who have been marginalised, displaced or dominated ... subjective voices of experience, insisting on the relevance of that experience" (Sandercock 1998: 110). This researcher has sought to listen to some of the marginal voices and to put their experiences in perspective by using research strategies that accorded them the 'marginals' the opportunity to share their mobility histories.

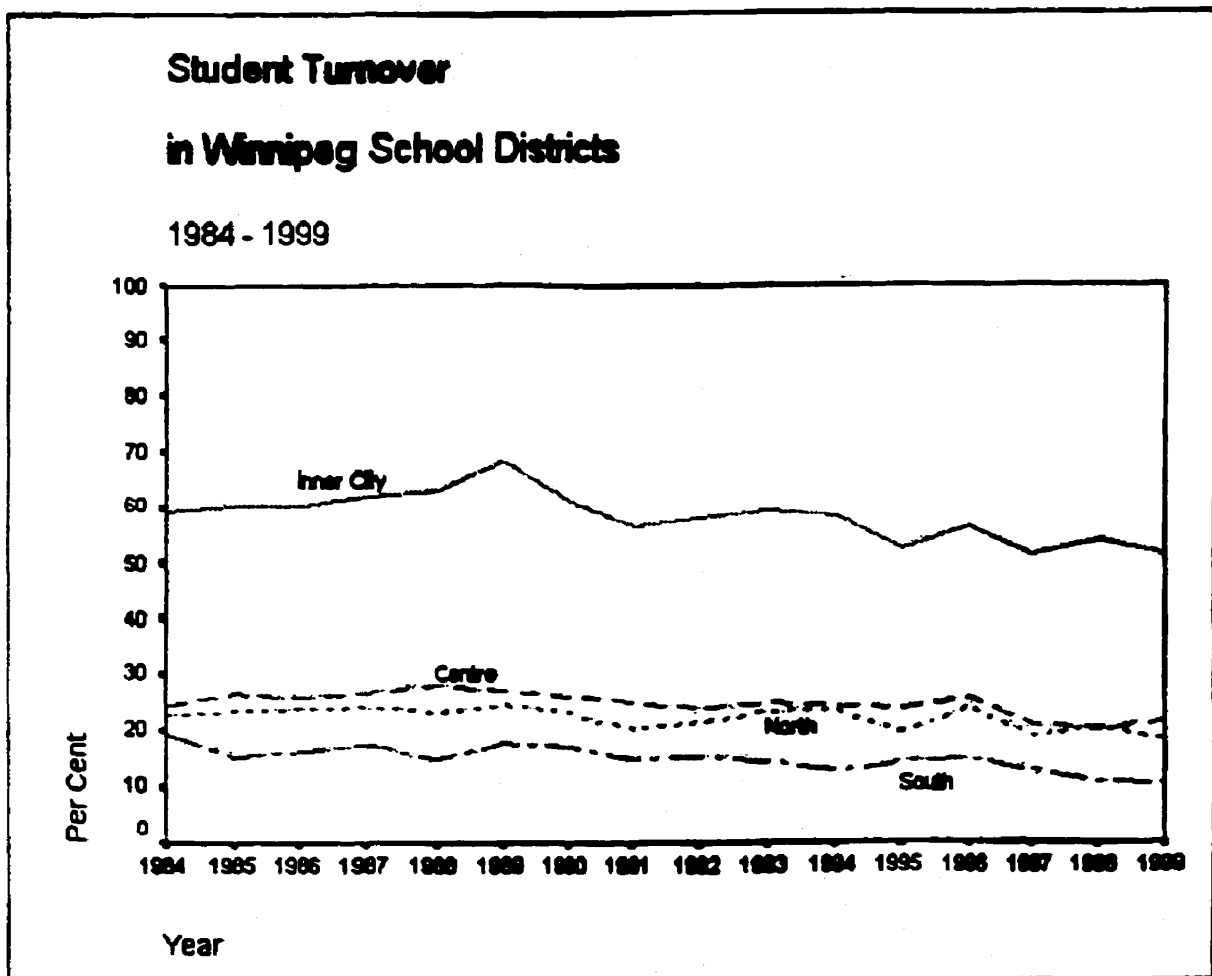
1.4 Mobility Rates in Winnipeg School Division One¹

Residential mobility in the inner city neighborhood understudy is higher than that of the other Winnipeg School Division 1 districts. The 1996 Census of Canada shows that 1-year and 5-year population mobility rates for this part of the division are 30.4% and 62.4% compared to with 21.2% and 50.5% for Winnipeg School Division 1 and 15.6% and 42.8% for the whole city. While student turnover rates for the center, north and south districts of the Division are similar to the Division 1 year average reported in the 1996 Census, the inner city turnover is considerably higher than the corresponding census figure. This means that in the inner city, school children are more mobile than the general population and that households with school-age children in the inner city are more mobile than those in the other districts of the Division. Mobility rates in the inner city are consistently in the fifty to sixty per cent range, contrasting with rates elsewhere that do not exceed thirty per cent. Graph 1 shows the student turnover rates in the four school

¹ Paragraph 1 and graph 1 are adapted from Skelton, I. and Mochama, A. (2000). *Hypermobility: A Study of Moving on the Margins*; A paper presented at the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning (ACSP) Conference, Atlanta: Nov 1-5, 2000.

districts over the period 1984 - 1999. The vertical axis shows the student mobility rate as a percentage of the total enrolment for each school year (shown in the horizontal axis). The school division determines the turnover rate for each school by calculating the student mobility rates using data from the eight-month period from October 1 to May 31. Mobility is defined as the ratio of the total transfers (includes transfers in and transfers out) over the average month-end enrolment (Winnipeg School Division No. 1. 1996/97).

Graph 1: Student Turnover in Winnipeg School Division No. 1



Studies that have examined the relationship between mobility and academic achievement in Winnipeg (Madak 1980; Madak and McIntyre 1983) have suggested that frequent student transfers negatively affect a variety of social and educational outcomes for pupils in inner city schools. These studies have revealed that student turnover rates in schools that have large Aboriginal enrollments exceed 80 percent annually. Since Aboriginal students seem to experience several transfers annually, frequent transfers are highly correlated with Aboriginal educational underachievement (Clathworthy 1983).

High rates of residential mobility among Aboriginal households have been a long-term concern in Winnipeg. A study on the *Migration and Mobility of Aboriginal Peoples in Canada* by Clathworthy (1996) found that the residential mobility rate of Aboriginal households in Winnipeg was as high as 72 percent. Chronic mobility was particularly pronounced among Aboriginal families with preschool and school-aged children, and was even higher (80 percent) among Aboriginal lone-parent families. The primary reasons given for Aboriginal's chronic mobility were shortage of low-cost family housing, extremely poor housing conditions and unavailability of culturally-appropriate housing for urban Aboriginals.

Over the years the Winnipeg School Division No. 1 has put in place a number of interventions to ease the negative impact of student mobility on academic achievement. These interventions have involved the use of migrancy teachers and community development workers to try and help parents resolve housing issues without moving (Higgitt, 1994). In schools with very high rates of turnover, the division has set up housing registries to assist parents in locating safe and affordable housing within the boundaries of their children's

(child's) schools. Despite these interventions, mobility rates in the inner city continue to be high.

1.5 Significance of the Study

Frequent changes of homes, friends, schools and neighbourhoods are purported to lead to ill health, behavior problems, and poor school performance for children, and to worry and stress-related illness for parents. Furthermore, having to move again and again deprives children not only of their present health, comfort and security, but also their future, which depends in part on a stable home and a good education (Doyle 1992, in McIntyre 2000). An understanding of the residential mobility of the poor will consider the adequacy of existing theoretical understanding of residential mobility in the context of highly mobile low-income households, offer insights into the nature of their marginalisation and suggest intervention strategies.

A study of the factors that affect frequent residential mobility among low-income families in Winnipeg's inner city and its implications for urban school instability is important for several reasons. First, a focus on the mobility experiences of poor families is important because mobility is closely associated with the wealth and well being of households that move frequently. An understanding of the kinds of families that move frequently will give policy makers a better idea as to who the chronic movers are, and their specific reasons for moving. Second, there is need to understand that curriculum and policy interventions to improve academic achievement and reduce high student turnover cannot be effective unless families and communities are stable. A better understanding of the housing conditions and neighborhood environments where mobile families reside and

how these affect the mobility behaviors of households, would lead to the development of programs that would provide greater family stability. Third, an understanding of the pattern of residential mobility for families can help school districts to not only seek more comprehensive housing-linked strategies to ease the negative impacts of mobility on achievement, but would give schools additional insights into the housing consumption patterns of mobile households.

The realization that families move because particular housing situations do not work for them should prompt schools, as well as social service and community agencies to actively work with communities to develop effective multiple and interrelated solutions that cater to the unique housing situations for different families. As well, an examination of factors that diminish or enhance mobility into and out of neighborhoods should refocus discussion on the issue of housing and neighborhoods as areas in which improvements should be made, in order to strengthen family stability, communities and schools. The intent of this study is to provide greater insights into the residential choices and constraints that bear on poor Aboriginal households. As such, the findings should serve as lessons for those interested in comprehensive community building, and the involvement of public schools as catalysts for community revitalization. In particular, this study will help to inform current community development strategies that focus on the provision of affordable housing in low-income communities in Winnipeg.

1.6 The Purpose of the Study

Identifying the specific reasons for constant mobility among poor Aboriginal families with children, especially poor single-parent women, would lead to the review of current

interventions and development of more effective and culturally appropriate services, and support systems for families dealing with residential and school changes.

The specific objectives of this study were to:

1. Explore the housing and neighborhood factors that influence frequent mobility. The main goal has been to identify the interplay of factors that motivate frequent mobility among low-income families and to better understand the residential environment where these families live. The second goal has been to explore the experiences of multiple residential changes and the different ways in which families negotiate these experiences. The mobility histories of various households have been documented to help explain why these families moved several times as well as explain how their experiences in different arenas have 'come together' (May 2000) to place them in a position of multiple disadvantage.
2. Identify the pattern of mobility, in order to determine the contribution of frequent family residential changes to high student mobility rates in elementary schools in the inner city school district of Winnipeg.

In order to attain the above objectives, the following research questions were formulated:

- What are the major reasons for moving among low-income families in the study area?
- What patterns of family movement within the study area can be discerned?
- What are the relationships between mobility and housing conditions in the study area?

A detailed discussion of the research strategy and methods is presented in Chapter Three. In brief, the study specifically focused on those households with kindergarten to sixth-grade children, who had moved two times or more in the last four years. Data was collected on the following: family demographics; situation of current accommodation; reasons for recent and previous moves, perception of current and past residential neighborhoods; mobility history; and the presence of social connections among residents.

The current study used in-depth qualitative interview method to explore reasons why poor families in a poor neighborhood moved frequently and then explored their pattern of relocation. The study not only sought to identify key dynamics that caused frequent moves but attempted to “re-insert the question of agency within a proper consideration of the structures of opportunity and constraint” (May 2000, p.616) that frame a poor household’s mobility decisions and behavior. By understanding mobility in a choice-constraint framework, we can begin to understand the complexity of mobility among families dealing with residential and school changes. This should enhance our understanding of the residential mobility experiences of poor marginalised families, in a poor urban neighborhood in Winnipeg, that may be extended to similar populations and neighborhoods across Canada.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

This study has a number of limitations:

1. The main limitation for this study stems from the fact that it was conducted with only those who had moved two or more times in the past four years. The study did not

examine the views of those who had used mobility intervention programs like community development workers and housing registries.

2. The sample for the present study was derived from one neighborhood in the inner city and did not investigate other neighborhoods of similar or different characteristics. This sample may not be representative of serial movers and it is unclear if and how these results can be generalized to other marginalised populations. It is recommended that future studies examine a large number of participants in similar neighborhoods.
3. Housing markets vary across urban areas and these markets undoubtedly affect mobility. The data for this study comes from Winnipeg, a city with a relatively inexpensive housing market and with high housing vacancy rates in the downtown area. It is unclear whether the mobility experiences of families in this neighborhood with high vacancy rates and low rents would be replicated in tighter and even more expensive markets in cities such as Toronto or Vancouver.
4. It was not possible to compare mobility data with school achievement data. In order to determine the impact of mobility on academic achievement, it would be necessary to compare achievement data for children from highly mobile households with data for children of non-movers in the same or different neighborhoods. Not only was this kind of comparison beyond the scope of this study, but it would have been impossible to isolate the effects of mobility from other stressors in the lives of families and children. It was therefore not possible to discern the effect of mobility on academic achievement using the data collected for this study.
5. Being the sole researcher and working with limited financial resources, the extent of data collected and the interpretation provided may be clouded by subjectivity. Thus, as

is common in qualitative research, subjectivity in ‘hearing’ and interpreting data is a recognized limitation for a study of this nature.

1.8 Organization of the Thesis

Chapter Two begins by reviewing literature about residential mobility, the impacts of mobility on children’s schooling and the effects of mobility on neighborhood social connections. Chapter Two also examines the variables that have been associated with residential mobility such as individual and social characteristics, inadequate housing and issues of residential and neighborhood satisfaction as they relate to mobility. The chapter ends by examining family mobility of the poor and outlines the framework used to explore the residential mobility of the poor in the present study.

Chapter Three outlines the socio-economic context of the neighborhood that was the focus for this study and discusses methods used for this study. Specifically, this chapter explains how participants were selected for the study, the type of data collected, the interview process and procedures for data analysis.

Chapter Four presents the research findings. Factors that cause frequent family moves and the patterns of relocation for the participants are discussed. By way of selected mobility histories, a detailed discussion of personal experiences of frequent movers is presented.

Chapter Five discusses the findings of this study. The first part of Chapter Five provides a summary of the major findings. The second part provides a detailed discussion of the findings in relation to the variables identified in the literature, and links chronic mobility to poor quality and unsuitable housing in the inner city. The last part of Chapter

Five discusses the contributions of the study by looking at the implications of the study's findings for planning policy and current community development regarding mobile families and children residing in poor inner city neighborhoods.

CHAPTER 2:LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.0 Chapter Overview

Chapter Two is divided into five parts. The first part examines the theoretical mobility models and the reasons why families move, while the second section reviews the variables associated with residential mobility. The third section examines the effects of mobility on children's academic attainment and the effects of mobility on social ties as well as reviewing recent literature that has specifically examined the mobility of the poor. The last part of Chapter Two presents a framework to help understand the key dynamics that determine residential mobility among the poor.

2.1. Models of Mobility

Various theoretical mobility models have been advanced to explain why people move. In general, these models have been used to address such questions as who is likely to move, why they move and where they choose to move to. Mobility studies that have used these mobility decision models have recognized the importance of life cycle, location and microeconomic considerations in the individual household's decision to move (Quercia and Rohe 1993: 21).

Models of mobility have been categorized into two types: (1) utility maximization models and (2) threshold models (Quercia and Rohe 1993: 21). Derived from macroeconomic theory, *utility maximization models* theorize that a household will choose its optimal level of housing and nonhousing consumption on the basis of its needs and preferences, given its income and the prices of the housing and nonhousing goods. These models suggest that if a household shifts away from its optimal housing consumption due

to changes in needs and preferences for housing and nonhousing goods or changes in household income, the household may adjust its consumption back to optimal levels by moving. Accordingly, a household will move if it perceives that future benefits derived from moving will be greater than those derived from remaining in the present environment, taking into account all the costs associated with moving (Quercia and Rohe 1993). The utility maximization models assume that households have perfect information about all alternative residential locations and all the costs and benefits associated with each move.

Threshold models assume that households have limited information and thus evaluate only a limited set of alternatives. However, as for utility maximization models, threshold models consider moving to be a response to unsatisfactory or suboptimal conditions (Quercia and Rohe 1993). Threshold models theorize that a household will decide to move if the characteristics of the household or neighborhood cease to satisfy its needs and preferences. A household's dissatisfaction with the residential conditions would be caused by changes in the house or neighborhood or in the household economic conditions. The threshold models therefore view moving as a household's reaction to unsatisfactory housing conditions.

Rossi (1955) first advanced the relationship between residential satisfaction and mobility in his book, *Why Families Move*. Since then researchers have often conceptualized the decision to move as a response to a range of stresses associated with the current residence. Rossi's work hypothesized that household life cycle factors such as marriage, having children or the death of a spouse significantly affect the decision to move. Rossi conceptualized the mobility process as consisting of: (1) the decision to move from the current location, (2) the search for alternatives, and (3) the choice among

alternative options. According to Rossi, a household will decide to move from its current residence when the household feels dissatisfied with the residential environment. A household's dissatisfaction with housing arises when there is a gap between its housing needs and the characteristics of the residential environment. A household that is dissatisfied with its present residential environment will then be expected to make the decision to move in order to adjust or alter its current housing conditions. Rossi's work led to the development of other threshold models of mobility (Bolan 1997; Brown and Moore 1970; McHugh, Gober and Reid 1990; Landsdale and Guest 1985; Lee et al. 1994; Morris and Winter 1978; Newman and Duncan 1979; Speare 1974; Speare et al. 1975; Varady 1983; Wolpert 1966;).

Wolpert (1966) proposed that a household uses a factor called "space utility" to evaluate whether or not its residential environment is satisfactory. According to this threshold model, a household will find its residential environment satisfactory if the housing space is suitable to the household's needs and expectations. A household that finds its residential environment unsatisfactory will either, i) move to an alternative location, or ii) change the housing unit so that it better satisfies the household's needs, or iii) adapt the household's needs to the unsatisfactory situation (Brown and Moore 1970 quoted in Quercia and Rohe 1993: 24).

Speare (1974) proposed a threshold model of mobility that treated housing satisfaction as an intervening variable in the decision to move. This model contends that an individual's satisfaction with their present residential location is a close determinant of mobility considerations. Speare hypothesized that members of individual households can be viewed as tied to a particular location by bonds to other individuals, attachment to the

particular housing unit, attachment to a job, attachment to a local neighborhood organization or other local bonds. The strength of these bonds is reflected in a general level of residential satisfaction. Since social bonds take time to build, the longer people live in an area, the more friends they are likely to have, and the less they are likely to move. The higher the level of residential satisfaction, the less likely the person is to consider moving. Speare's model suggests that a person only begins to consider moving from their current residential location or house when a threshold of dissatisfaction has been reached. In such a case, residential satisfaction acts as an intervening variable between individual variables and the desire to move to an alternative location.

This model views residential relocation as a possible response to the residential dissatisfaction that may occur at different stages of the life course. Residential satisfaction is in turn thought to be influenced by an individual's personal and life cycle factors such as age, education, income and household composition. According to Speare (1974) residential dissatisfaction beyond the threshold level could be caused by such factors as a change in needs of a household, a change in the social and physical amenities offered by particular housing or a change in the standards used to evaluate these factors. Speare et al. (1975) found empirical support for the model in a study of moving decisions of Rhode Island residents. For instance, physical deterioration of a dwelling unit, the neighborhood, a change in job conditions or a change in social bonds to other persons in the area would lead to dissatisfaction with a residence and trigger a decision to move.

A number of researchers have tested Speare's model and found that the model is not applicable across different groups in the population. While several studies have found that housing satisfaction and neighborhood satisfaction are important determinants of the

propensity to move (Deane 1990; Landsdale and Guest 1985; Varady 1983), other studies have suggested that several other factors affect mobility directly without first affecting the level of residential satisfaction (Landsdale and Guest 1985; Newman and Duncan 1979; Varady 1983). For example, Varady (1983) found that the age of the head of household, race, length of residence, size of metropolitan area and other factors had a direct effect on the likelihood of moving. These factors had no effect on the levels of housing and neighborhood satisfaction. Varady found that the level of housing satisfaction and the likelihood of moving were negatively associated with black households, long tenured residents and households with older household heads. Renters and households headed by females were associated with the likelihood of moving but not with the level of housing satisfaction (p.194). Landsdale and Guest (1985) found that the level of housing satisfaction and neighborhood satisfaction were not good predictors of the decision to move. They contend that structural factors such as age, household size, income, housing tenure, and community attachment and the number of friends in a neighborhood directly affect "thoughts of moving" more than they affect residential satisfaction.

Speare's model of residential satisfaction is however, not applicable across different groups in the population (Stokols and Shumaker 1982). The model does not take into consideration factors in the wider social context within which moving decisions are made. Although households may consider housing and neighborhood satisfaction when moving, other quality of life indicators such as economic well being may be better predictors of moving. When choice and resources are factored in, residential mobility models may be limited in their usefulness for explaining mobility among disadvantaged households who lack resources and are severely constrained in terms of options or ability

to plan rationally (Higgitt 1994; Quercia and Rohe 1993; Stokols and Shumaker 1982). Furthermore, Speare's residential satisfaction model fails to take into account "interrelated variable effects" on moving decisions since various variables may simultaneously exhibit indirect, direct and both indirect and indirect effects on the mobility decisions (Quercia and Rohe 1993, p. 24).

Interrelated variable effects have been incorporated in subsequent mobility models. Based on the premises of the threshold models, Morris and Winter (1978) proposed a model that explains residential satisfaction in terms of "housing deficit". The *housing deficit* model suggests that families evaluate their housing according to certain cultural and family norms. If a household's current housing fails to meet their needs and expectations for tenure, size, quality and structure type, families experience a normative housing deficit between their current housing and housing norms. The household becomes dissatisfied with their housing and neighborhood, and makes attempts to reduce dissatisfaction by making changes in the housing or by moving to another place, so as to bring their housing into conformity with their needs. The choice of housing adjustment for a household is in turn influenced by such constraints as search costs, moving costs, other transaction costs associated with moving, and the emotional or psychological costs associated with moving away from neighbors, friends and familiar surroundings. Morris and Winter's model however, did not take into consideration "the level of housing adjustment relative to non-housing consumption in assessing the role of housing conditions on the housing adjustment decision" (Quercia and Rohe 1993:27).

Quercia and Rohe (1992) proposed a revised model that incorporated nonhousing consumption factors. According to this model, a household with low neighborhood

satisfaction is expected to move regardless of the level of housing satisfaction because individual households cannot, in general, correct unsatisfactory neighborhood conditions without moving. On the other hand, a household with high neighborhood satisfaction and low housing satisfaction may not move but will adjust its current residential environment. This kind of household is expected to choose among specific non-moving adjustments on the basis of relative costs (Quercia and Rohe 1993, p.28). Non-moving adjustment behaviors would include changes in the household members' expectations and standards so that the household "copes" with suboptimal housing conditions and standards (Cook and Bruin 1997).

Other studies have extended the residential satisfaction model to include the influence of housing characteristics and features of the neighborhood environment on an individual's assessment of residential satisfaction and considerations about moving (Bolan 1997; Lee 1978; Lee et al. 1994; McHugh, Gober and Reid 1990). These researchers have argued that some structural variables do not just influence residential satisfaction, but they directly determine actual mobility and that levels of housing and neighborhood satisfaction only predict the desire to move but do not influence actual mobility. Some households may not always change residence, despite being dissatisfied with their residential environments. However, they may attempt to reduce dissatisfaction with their dwellings by either undertaking physical improvements on their residence or by changing their attitude towards the residence (McHugh, Gober and Reid 1990, p.81).

In their study of mobility expectations, McHugh, Gober and Reid (1990) incorporated such housing characteristics as age of the dwelling, home/rental value and household crowding. These researchers found that these variables, in conjunction with life

cycle factors have a direct impact on owners' and renters' mobility expectations. Deane (1990) showed that an individual's housing adjustments both alleviate residential dissatisfaction and influence subsequent mobility patterns. Lee et al. (1994) demonstrated how measures of a neighborhood's objective and subjective context impact an individual's mobility expectations and behaviors and suggested that individuals' perceptions of, and experience in, their residential environments determine whether they move or stay. Moreover, a number of mobility studies have recognized that residential satisfaction is not just an important component of an individual's general quality of life, but it determines the way an individual responds to the overall residential environment (Cook and Bruin 1997; Ha and Weber 1994; Lee et al. 1994).

The general assumption underlying the above theoretical models and research concerns is that people plan and actually move because of reasons that are correlated with such variables as demographic, housing and neighborhood characteristics. Other research suggests that people often move in search of better housing quality, better neighborhoods and better schools (Lee et al. 1994; Speare 1974; McHugh et al. 1990; Harris 1995). Such research, however, focuses on moves that are voluntary and assumes that all moves are made in a bid to move to better housing and neighborhoods. Not all moves necessarily result in improvements of housing quality, improved neighborhoods or better schools. Many variables play an important role in influencing family residential relocation. The next section will examine variables that have been hypothesized to influence residential mobility.

2.2. Variables Associated with Residential Mobility

In the following sub-sections, the following factors are examined: age of households, family size and composition, race, gender, housing tenure, education and income. These factors are hypothesized to work together or in some combination to influence mobility.

2.2.1. Age of Households

Several researchers have considered the relationship between household characteristics and residential mobility. A number of these researchers have suggested that age has one of the strongest relationships with mobility because young households are likely to be more mobile than older households (Deane 1993; Earhart and Weber 1996; Rossi 1955; Speare 1974;). Rossi (1955 [1980]) suggested that a household will make the decision to move when housing needs change as they move from one life cycle to another. Rossi contended that most short-distance household moves are for life-cycle reasons and that residential mobility peaks when people form families and have young children. Younger households are likely to be more mobile because in this period in the life cycle changes typically occur that generate mobility, such as household formation and expansion and career and income changes (Clark and Dieleman 1996). The older households are the least mobile because their residential environments are either more suited to them or there are few residential options available to them (Bruin and Cook 1997; McHugh et al. 1990).

2.2.2 Family Size and Composition

Another variable that has been examined but where findings are not yet conclusive is family size. Some researchers contend that residential mobility increases with family size (Speare 1974; Roistacher 1975; Rossi 1955), while others maintain that mobility and family size are not related at all (McHugh et al. 1990). Those researchers who contend that family size affects mobility point out that it is extremely difficult to find adequate housing for large families. Large families tend to experience frequent moves because they are always trying to find a place to live that is safe, adequate and affordable when they need it (Hennepin County 1998).

2.2.3 Race, Gender, Education and Income

Some researchers who have examined the relationship of education and mobility (Morris and Winter 1978) suggest that the level of education and income are not related to the propensity to move, while others (Speare 1974) found that income is negatively related to changes in residential location. However education is closely related to income and income determines the kind of housing and neighborhood individuals choose to move to.

Studies have investigated the relationship between mobility and other household characteristics such as race, gender, employment, education and income (Clark 1992; Cook and Bruin 1996; Harris 1995; Spain 1990; Massey et al. 1987; South and Crowder 1988b). Massey et al. (1990), Clark (1992) and Harris (1995) suggest that race determines the kind of neighborhood people tend to move to and from. Minority and poor households are likely to move from one poor neighborhood into another poor neighborhood (Keenan

1998; May 2000; Massey et al. 1994; Skelton and Mochama 2000; South and Crowder 1997, 1998a, 1998b).

In their study of the racial differences in intra-urban residential mobility in the USA, St. John and Edwards (1995) found that African-Americans live in lower quality residential environments and get less housing and neighborhood quality in return for their socio-economic resources than whites. These researchers indicate that African-Americans operate in restricted housing markets that lead them to limit their searches to predominantly African-American neighborhoods. Although African-Americans move as often as whites, they improve their residential environments less when moving.

Researchers that have examined racial differences in housing quality as a return to socio-economic status, have found that African-American housing tends to be older, more structurally inadequate and more crowded than white housing (Bianchi, Farley, and Spain 1982, quoted in St. John and Edwards 1995). Similarly, a report on the *Housing Conditions of Aboriginal People in Canada* by the CMHC (1996b) found that, compared to non-Aboriginal populations, approximately three quarters of urban Aboriginals live below one or more core housing need standards of affordability, suitability and adequacy. The report states that one response to poor housing and economic conditions is to move. According to the CMHC study's findings however, moving either did not resolve their housing need or they experienced little improvement in their housing situation because the housing conditions and residential environments in the housing markets in which they operated were inferior.

Also, researchers that have examined racial differences in neighborhood or community quality as a return to socio-economic status (Massey and Condran and Denton

1987) found that African-Americans in the United States live in neighborhoods with lower percentages of owner-occupied housing and lower median household incomes than did whites and other minority groups. African-Americans were also less likely to live in census tracts with less desirable social, economic and physical characteristics (Massey et al. 1987). African-Americans were found to experience less improvement in housing and neighborhood quality when they moved because they moved in much more restricted housing markets than whites and other minority groups. The same can be said of Aboriginal populations in Canada since most of them live in neighborhoods with low median household incomes and with low percentages of owner-occupied housing (Social Planning Council of Winnipeg 2000).

In a study of the migration and mobility of Aboriginal people in major Canadian cities, Clathworthy (1996) found that chronic mobility among Aboriginal households in major Canadian cities was due to a combination of the factors of race, gender, education and income. Urban Aboriginals experienced extremely poor housing conditions because they had lower incomes than the general population and therefore could not access quality affordable housing. Lower incomes were attributed to lower levels of educational attainment. Levels of educational attainment, in turn, correlated positively with unemployment status since those with lower educational levels were likely to be unemployed. Aboriginal people “continue to be at the bottom rung of the economic ladder in Canada, have the highest unemployment rates, earn less, depend more on welfare and suffer from extreme poverty more than non-Aboriginal Canadians” (Beavis et al. 1998:7). Also, Beavis et al. suggest that Aboriginal single-parent families, large families and women-headed families were worst hit by adverse economic conditions that included

very poor housing conditions. Because of this position of multiple disadvantages, Aboriginal households moved frequently in a bid to resolve their housing situation.

Spain (1990) contends that female householders typically have fewer economic resources than married couples or male householders. Because of their meager economic resources, female householders are disproportionately located in central city neighborhoods with the oldest most deteriorated housing and lowest rents. Their meager resources not only limit their ability to compete in the housing market, but their move into certain "neighborhoods of last resort" tends to mark the beginning of the eventual abandonment of this housing (p.90). Because female householders are relegated to the most deteriorated, albeit least expensive, housing they move frequently in an attempt to reduce housing costs. However, with each move their housing affordability declines and housing quality does not improve. Female householders are thus more likely to experience horizontal or downward mobility than upward mobility after a move (Spain 1990, p.99).

A low-income single mother's decision to move or stay in a given residential environment is said to be influenced by both family structure and resources. Single mothers have the sole responsibility of providing for their families with few financial resources. Because of the strain of attempting to provide single-handedly for the needs of their households with limited resources, single mothers develop preferences for housing that tends to differ from the 'cultural' norm. By developing 'unconventional' housing preferences female-headed households 'avoid' dissatisfaction with their housing environments (Bruin and Cook 1997). Besides, female-headed and racial minority households tend to have the fewest housing and neighborhood options because their

mobility is restricted within a particular urban setting due to housing market discrimination and limited financial resources (Cook and Bruin 1993; South and Crowder 1998b).

2.2.4 Housing Tenure

Housing tenure has been suggested as one of the most decisive housing-related predictor of residential mobility. A number of studies have shown that homeowners tend to be more stable than renters (Rossi 1955; Speare 1974; Speare et al. 1975; Varady 1983) and to have lower mobility desires than renters (McHugh, Gober and Reid, 1990). Explanations for this relationship centers on the economic investment of home ownership and the ability of homeowners to make structural changes in their residence (Earhart and Weber 1996). Homeowners have much greater authority to modify their dwellings and thereby increase their satisfaction with their residence (Rossi 1955) while renters have no such authority. Also, renters have little financial commitment to their homes as not renewing a lease and looking for a new residence is a much easier process than selling a home (Harris 1995).

Mobility researchers have also given considerable attention to the duration of residence as an explanation between housing tenure and mobility. It has been hypothesized that because of the greater investment that owners place in their homes, they tend to live in their neighborhoods longer than do renters. Speare (1974) and McHugh et al. (1990) conclude that the longer a family lives in a home, the less likely they are to move. Recent studies have shown that in addition to housing tenure, time spent in a neighborhood significantly reduces the likelihood of mobility (Bolan 1997; Earhart and Weber 1996).

House age, quality, value and structure types have also been hypothesized as factors that affect residential satisfaction. Research findings on the relationship between house age, quality, value and structure type and mobility has been conflicting. Some researchers have found that housing size determines mobility behavior (Landsdale and Guest 1985; Rossi 1955; Speare 1974) while other researchers (e.g., McHugh et al. 1990) have suggested that there is no relationship between house size, quality of the dwelling, house value and mobility. House age and quality may however determine the condition of housing and determine the household members overall satisfaction with the dwelling. Since older houses may be in poorer condition than newer houses, people who live in older stock housing may experience more housing problems.

In Canada, the *Core Housing Need* model is used by the federal government, provincial housing agencies and others to monitor housing conditions and assist in design, delivery and evaluation of housing initiatives. This model is said to reflect contemporary Canadian values and is used to compare the housing conditions of different groups in/or different jurisdictions. The *Core Housing Need* model is based on the concept that a household should have access to a dwelling unit which is adequate in condition, suitable in size and affordable. According to this model, a dwelling is deemed to be below:

- Adequacy standard if it is perceived by its residents to be in major repair or if it is lacking adequate functioning bathroom facilities.
- Suitability standard, and thus crowded, if fewer bedrooms are available to household members than prescribed by the National Occupancy Standard (NOS).
- Affordability standard if 30% or more of household income is used to acquire shelter (CMHC, 1996a: 2).

If a household's housing falls below any of these standards that household is considered to be in *core housing need*. Similarly, a household may be dissatisfied with

their housing if they perceive it as being below one or more of the core housing *need* standards and therefore decide to move in an attempt to improve their housing conditions. Satisfaction with the house may also be determined by the perceptions of household members of how well the dwelling meets their overall needs and the suitability of the surrounding community in terms of how the neighborhood is perceived to be (CMHC 1996a, p.3).

2.2.5 Neighborhood Effects

Studies that have examined the role of social problems in mobility decisions touch directly on neighborhood quality and satisfaction (Harris 1995; Higgitt 1994; Lee et al. 1994; Oropesa 1989; Varady 1983). These studies stress such social issues as neighborhood crime rate, neighborhood deterioration, neighborhood socio-economic status and the quality of public schools, as factors that affect mobility in or out of neighborhoods.

Oropesa (1989) points out that certain aspects of neighborhoods context play a role in actual mobility decisions because neighborhood characteristics influence residents' decisions to remain in or move from an area. For those households wishing to change residence, both the current neighborhoods of residence and potential destination neighborhoods form the context relevant to residential mobility. Within each (current or destination) neighborhood, properties of the local real estate market (e.g. prices, vacancies, and housing segregation) facilitate or constrain movement (Lee et al 1994). Moreover, certain perceived neighborhood attributes such as neighborhood deterioration, adequacy of services, safety, social ties, and accessibility increase one's chances of moving

or staying (Lee et al. 1994, Varady 1983). If any of these attributes poses some degree of threat to a household's investment in a residential setting, relocation from that neighborhood is considered. Such investment may be in exchange (economic) or use (quality of life) value of the housing-neighborhood package and may involve a significant emotional component (Lee et al. 1994, p. 265).

Lee et al. (1994) studied the impact of neighborhood context on mobility thoughts and on actual mobility on a sample of Nashville residents. They found that while individual statuses such as age and tenure remained important antecedents of mobility, subjective features of neighborhood context played a major role in the decision to move or stay. Although being older, being a homeowner and being a long time resident reduced the chances of moving, how urbanites viewed and experienced their neighborhoods indirectly determined whether they moved or stayed put (p. 264). Lee et al.'s findings also suggest that in a household's mobility process, "resident's perception of what their community and other communities are like" may influence mobility. Neighborhood perceptions are, in turn, influenced by the social milieu (such as the racial mix, income level, crime rate, relations among neighbors) and the physical quality (density, congestion, street maintenance, type of housing) of the neighborhoods in which residents live. Therefore, when residents' perception of their communities is cross-cut by both social/physical and current/change dimensions, they inform the residents' decisions to move or stay in a neighborhood (p. 253).

Neighborhood satisfaction has also been hypothesized as a significant predictor of housing satisfaction and mobility (Cook and Bruin 1993). In their examination of factors that contribute to housing and neighborhood satisfaction among urban dwellers and the

effect they have on mobility, Cook and Bruin found that individuals were likely to be satisfied with housing if they were satisfied with their neighborhood. Neighborhood satisfaction in turn depended on a lack of problems, removal of negative elements in the neighborhood or absence of complaints. The more neighborhood problems a householder experienced, the more likely he or she was to move (Varady 1983). The existence of neighborhood problems therefore influenced residential mobility through higher levels of housing dissatisfaction.

2.3 Effects of Residential Mobility

2.3.1 Effect on Children's Schooling

The negative effects of residential mobility on academic attainment have implications for the viability of many inner cities, hence the need to discuss them here. Education, which increases a youth's skills and employment opportunities, is an important component in the revitalization of impoverished inner cities. As indicated earlier, residential mobility erodes children's community social support and leads to increased conflicts between the impoverished environments in which children growing in the inner city grow and develop and the school environment in which they are expected to succeed (Buerkle 1997). The erosion of community social support is viewed as a key factor in inner city decay and the cause of children's behavioral problems in impoverished neighborhoods. Consequently, if schools are to be catalysts for the revitalization of impoverished communities, we must look at the impact of family residential mobility on academic achievement.

Family residential mobility is often considered a risk factor for children because it often goes hand in hand with school changes. As a result of moving, children not only experience a loss of friends and social networks, but they have to adjust to a new school, a new curriculum and a new set of academic standards at the same time as they try to fit in with a new peer network (Buerkle 1997). A number of studies (Haveman, Wolfe and Spalding 1991; Ingersoll, Scamman and Eckerling 1989; Wright 1999) have found that for children from highly mobile families, moving is associated with emotional and behavioral problems, declines in educational attainment, and decreased occupational attainment. In particular, low achievement scores are associated more highly with students who move within the same school district than with students who move into or out of a school district.

Mobile low-income students have been found to frequently transfer within the same school district while higher income students often transferred into and out of a district (Alexander et al. 1996). Wright (1999) compared the impact of intra-district and inter-district mobility on academic achievement and found that low achievement scores were associated more highly with students who moved within the school district than with students moving in or out of a district. However, the effect of mobility was confounded with family income and ethnicity. Likewise, Nelson et al. (1996) found that both poor performance and mobility for of low-income urban students could be related to other influences such as at-risk-family traits.

Independent of family background characteristics, moving has been associated with dropping out of school (Coleman 1988). Coleman contends that each time a child changes schools because the family moved, important social ties that are important for the child's

cognitive and social development are often damaged and sometimes completely severed. Residential mobility is therefore a significant measure of the strength of the social connections between individuals (e.g. parents, teachers, neighbors and children) and in social groups or institutions (e.g. families, schools and neighborhoods). Student performance is enhanced by strong social connections between residents and institutions in their community. Frequent mobility therefore negatively affects school performance because within-family ties are stressed and within-community ties with teachers, administrators and other community members are often lost:

Because parents are less likely to have relations with teachers ... or with other parents of children in the school ... and the child is less likely to have relations with other adults in the community ... if the family has recently moved and the child has had to change schools (p. 596).

Children (and parents) who are new to a community have less information about the school system and are less likely to take full advantage of the resources in a particular school than children who have lived in the community for a long time. In addition, children attending a new school may feel socially isolated and marginalised because teachers are less likely to invest in a child they do not know very well (Astone and MacLanahan 1994). As such, families who are more embedded in a network of social exchanges outside their households (with schools, parent-teacher organizations and other families) are better able to develop their children's human capital than those who are not (Hofferth et al. 1998, p. 248-9).

Moving is believed to have a negative impact on social relationships because moving disrupts (or interrupts) the network of important social relationships with persons in the school, the neighborhood, the community and perhaps, the family (Pribesh and

Downey 1999, p. 522). According to Pribesh and Downey, social ties both within the family and between the community can determine students' performance and school completion because social ties are a resource that interacts with parents' other resources to enhance or reduce the amount of schooling completed. According to this perspective, a student who changes both schools and residences loses both school and community ties and should experience the biggest decline in social relationships (Pribesh and Downey 1999, p. 522). Thus, differences in academic achievement between movers and non-movers can be partially attributed to the declines of social relationships experienced by students who move. Also, the kinds of families that tend to move are likely to have other pre-existing disadvantages that combine with mobility to cause poor academic achievement. For instance, children who frequently moved were also more likely to live in poor families, were less likely to live with both biological parents and their families are less integrated into the peer network and community (Buerkle 1997).

Residential mobility adversely affects educational outcomes and particularly explains the difference in school completion between children in two-parent intact families and step-parent families (Astone and McLanahan 1994; Hagan et al. 1996; Haveman, Wolfe and Spaulding 1991; McLanahan and Sandefur 1994;). McLanahan and Sandefur (1994) found that residential mobility following divorce accounted for 25 percent of the increased risk of dropping out of high school for children of divorced parents, and residential mobility explains 18 percent of the educational disadvantage associated with living in a single-parent family and 29 percent of the disadvantage associated with living in a step-family (Astone and MacLanahan 1994). These effects are influenced by age (Haveman, Wolf and Spaulding 1991), social support (MacLanahan and Sandefur 1994)

and poverty (Hofferth, Boisjoly and Duncan 1998). Hagan et al. (1996) found that compared to non-movers, movers were significantly less likely to complete high school or college and were more likely to have lower levels of educational attainment.

A study carried by the Hennepin County Office of Planning and Development using data from the Minneapolis Public Schools found evidence that it is not mobility in and of itself that determines educational outcomes for mobile children (Hennepin County 1997). The Hennepin County study focused on public school students who had transferred within the district or moved into the district. Students were defined as mobile if they changed residence three or more times in a year and a half. The study found that mobile children were more likely to have significantly lower test scores than students who did not move and that mobility was highly correlated with factors such as ethnicity, low socio-economic status and family structure. The Hennepin County study also found that a family's attitude and reason for a move was important in predicting mobility outcomes. In particular, if a family moved to better quality housing or a better neighborhood, then moving was associated with positive academic outcomes for school children.

2.3.2 Effect on Social Connections

One of the effects of residential changes is the breakdown of social relations and networks among residents in communities with highly mobile populations. Families need social networks to handle disruptions such as residential mobility and school transfers and to meet the day-to-day challenges facing them as well as provide their children with skills necessary to be successful across environments (Buerkle 1997; Gunnarsson and Cochran 1990). Social networks provide families with the social support to mediate the negative

effects of residential mobility and school transfer. In the literature (Coleman 1988, 1990; Gunnarsson and Cochran 1990; Larner 1990), this support is described as social capital, support networks and social connections among residents.

One of the consequences of frequent residential moving is breakdown of social networks. Coleman (1988) uses residential mobility as a proxy for the loss of social relations and argues that residential mobility disrupts the social relationships among households and within communities. Coleman argues that those who move several times leave behind familiar places, and established networks of family and friends on which they depended for assistance, information and normative controls, and have to develop new friendships and establish new connections with the new place. Because it takes considerable investment to build up social connections in a new place, serial movers are less likely to invest in their communities (Coleman 1990). Frequent family mobility therefore undermines the development of community attachments by increasing the social distance between residents (Furstenberg and Hughes 1995). Some studies (Coleman 1988, 1990; Gunnarsson and Cochran 1990) have also suggested that social support networks provide resources to help with child rearing and parenting support, especially for single mothers who have fewer resources to use when coping with stress.

Larner (1990) studied a sample of movers in Sweden and the United States in order to assess how social networks are actually affected by local moves. This study found that African-American families tended to be the most mobile (56%), were most frequently headed by a single mother who was below 30 years old and were most often renting their homes. In addition, most African-American families moved locally within their neighborhood or they "shifted only from one address to another in the same building or

block, a move that would not even alter relationships with neighbors” (p. 209). Larner’s study found that white families in the United States were the least likely to move (31%) while the Swedish sample fell in between (41%). The study also found that the largest groups of moves were those made by choice, usually with the aim of improving housing conditions. The need to have more room for a family of growing children was commonly cited as reason for moving while many other families moved to find cheaper rent or lower utility bills. A large number of families moved unwillingly, propelled by negative experiences in their home or neighborhood. For example, the study found that concerns about neighborhood safety, fires, cockroaches and refusals of landlords to make repairs prompted families to move (p. 212). Larner describes mobility-related experiences of the families in these three cultural groups as reflecting policy environment and economic circumstances, i.e. rental markets, racial discrimination and employment situations in inner cities. According to Larner:

Swedes moved by choice hoping to upgrade their housing standard. The relatively few white Americans families who moved tended to shift from one rental unit to another, seeking more space and better neighborhoods but often not finding satisfaction ... the most frequent movers were the African-American families, ... most moved between apartments within the central city, kept there by joint influences of chronic disadvantage and continuing racial discrimination (p. 213).

Larner concluded that although moving does influence social ties, the changes brought by local moves are modest and are often seen as positive. Furthermore, moving was far from the only force disrupting social relationships and the social impacts of local moves often combined with many other changes in the lives of mobile families.

In their study of support networks for single parents in Sweden and the United States, Gunnarsson and Cochran (1990) hypothesize that single mothers are more vulnerable to stressful life events and common everyday strains mainly because they have fewer social and personal resources to cope with the effects of stress. Gunnarsson and Cochran found that neighbor support for blue-collar single mothers was much lower than that for single mothers of a higher class. They suggested that lessened support might be due to living in substandard housing areas where crime and fear are high. They suggest that certain kinds of community support can provide single parents with opportunities for expanding their social relations, and that such expansion is associated with improvement in their children's performance in school. In addition, they argue that it is environmental stability and variety provided by the expanded network that result in the change in school performance.

According to Bartlett (1997), new residents find minimal support among their neighbors in the first year after relocation, while those who are highly mobile have been found to show little personal involvement in their new neighborhoods and communities. As a result, households who change residences often are unlikely to have strong neighborhood ties and are less likely to participate in neighborhood improvement associations of any kind. The erosion of community social support is viewed as a key factor in inner city decay (Buerkle 1997).

Neighborhood ties and sentiments not only affect residential mobility but they also affect community participation and political action. Oropesa (1989) looked at how political action relates to mobility and found that in areas lacking in both social solidarity and community attachments a resident's political organization to solve neighborhood

problems is undermined. Oropesa further contends that membership in neighborhood associations significantly influences mobility even after socio-economic status, housing related reasons for moving and other types of problems are controlled (p. 437). Membership and participation in neighborhood improvement associations tend to reduce the likelihood that individuals will leave communities they are dissatisfied with, because neighborhood associations are a mechanism for defining problem solving strategies and coordinating the political action of members. Thus by being involved in neighborhood associations, members will not readily leave the neighborhood they are dissatisfied with.

2.4 Residential Mobility of the Urban Poor

Recent mobility literature often portrays single-parent poor families as most likely to move frequently because of poor housing conditions, evictions or family violence, whereas better off families move in search of better houses and better neighborhoods (Buerkle 1997; Kearns and Smith 1994; Lerner 1990). Buerkle (1997) suggests that “frequent mobility among poor families is often part of a forced coping style when affordable housing is not affordable, living conditions are sub-standard or support networks are transitional” (p. 42).

A number of studies (Bartlett 1997; Higgitt 1994; Kearns and Smith 1994; Keenan et al. 1999; Rivlin 1990) have investigated the processes underlying the mobility decisions of marginalised urban populations and found that residential mobility processes for the urban poor differs from Rossi’s (1955) classic analysis of *Why Families Move*. These studies have found evidence that marginalised urban populations tend to be significantly more mobile than mainstream populations, presumably because the kind of housing they

can afford is seriously inadequate for their housing needs. For instance, Bartlett (1997) has argued that for poor households, the decision to move is not a rational cost-benefit analysis, but “is often a case of weighing the untenable against the unknown” (p. 128). Specifically, minority and poor households are more likely than other families to move because of poor housing conditions, unpaid bills and evictions. Minority and poor families are also more likely to move from one poor neighborhood to another poor neighborhood (South and Crowder 1997, 1998a, 1998b). Furthermore, literature on residential segregation suggests that historical discrimination in housing markets can be related to contemporary residential mobility for certain minority populations. Similarly, discrimination based on race, gender and economic status influence minority preferences to live in same-race neighborhoods (Massey and Denton 1993).

Researchers who have studied homeless families and children point out that there is an association between frequent mobility and homelessness (Beavis et al. 1998; May 2000; Rivlin 1990). According to Rivlin (1990), moving creates a form of temporary homelessness that exists until roots are established in a new residence. Rivlin distinguishes between different forms of homelessness: the invisible, the hidden and the potentially homeless. Two of these types of homelessness bear association with highly mobile families: the hidden and the potentially homeless. Rivlin contends that many of the frequent movers can be likened to the invisible homeless because they are able to pass as people with homes. Rivlin likens other frequent movers to the hidden homeless in that they are able to find temporary, marginal shelter with a family or friends. Other frequent movers can be likened to the potentially homeless people because they are housed in housing of such poor quality that have deteriorated to the point where the residents are

forced to move (1990:44). Highly mobile families have similarities to the hidden and potentially homeless because they are both severely under-housed.

Rivlin (1990) contends that poor families are the fastest growing homeless group and that periodic and temporary homelessness occurs as result of multiple pressures that force people to leave their homes. Homeless families not only experience high rates of mobility, poverty, family break up and violence, but that their lives “have been almost entirely dominated by use of low quality often insecure private rented housing and long term unemployment” (May 2000, p. 615). Rivlin (1990) specifically points out that high mobility and the resulting form of persistent temporary homelessness is most threatening for families with children because it occurs at a time when children are developing a sense of themselves, of their identity, of what they are capable of doing and of their own self worth. In highly mobile families, the lack of a consistent home setting threatens the acquisition of personal identity for children and challenges the identity and strength of adults (p. 44).

In a recent review of Aboriginal homelessness in Canada, Beavis et al. (1997) point out that many Aboriginal people live in unaffordable, inadequate and unsuitable housing that falls well within the U.N definition of homelessness (p. 7). Beavis et al. outline a number of structural factors that are associated with both homelessness and frequent mobility. These include such factors as family problems such as divorce or domestic abuse; substance abuse; poor mental and physical health; and landlord tenant conflicts; unemployment and low income and shortage of affordable rental units. Indeed, poor housing conditions experienced by many Aboriginal households far exceeded those experienced by non-Aboriginal populations (CMHC 1996b). According to CMHC,

households experiencing poor housing and economic conditions often respond by moving in a bid to resolve their housing situation. However, despite their frequent moves, most of these households are unlikely to improve their housing conditions.

It is thus not surprising that a number of mobility studies (Bartlett 1997; Buerkle 1997; Higgitt 1994; Roistacher 1975; Short 1996) have found that disadvantaged groups tend to display erratic mobility patterns because of their weak social attachments, limited housing opportunities, susceptibility to involuntary moves and a generally reduced control over their circumstances. This is particularly the case for families on welfare who are more often confronted with short-notice involuntary moves and tend to be the most mobile group (Roistacher 1975). When these families move, they tend to move locally within their block or neighborhood or between neighborhoods of similar socio-economic status (Buerkle 1997; Kerbow 1996; Short 1996).

In a study of residential mobility in Bristol, Short (1996) found that residential mobility in the private market is generally related to factors surrounding the family cycle. He also identified a "significant proportion of households that have little option but to move" (p.305). This led him to point to the need to expand the analytical framework to consider the social and economic conditions within which decision-making takes place, to avoid interpreting observed patterns of housing outcomes solely in terms of individual preferences.

The Social Planning Council of Winnipeg (1990) examined the impact of rented housing conditions on the academic performance of elementary school children in the Dufferin and William Whyte School catchment areas of Winnipeg. The findings of the study identified key factors that caused the high rates of mobility for renter families living

in these two catchment areas: housing which the tenants perceived to be too small for their families, housing that was too highly priced, in poor repair and managed by landlords/ caretakers unwilling to maintain it (p. 21). The findings of the study also indicated that larger families experienced overcrowding while some families indicated that the price they paid was too high for the quality and amount of space they were getting. This led to dissatisfaction and the desire for the families to move in search of better housing. This study however did not examine the effects of such factors as education, income and gender on mobility.

In a similar study of a poor inner city neighborhood in Winnipeg, Higgitt (1994) identified factors that push people from current accommodation: changing family composition, poor quality housing and landlord trouble. Higgitt also found that few people were pulled by attractive housing alternatives. Most of the participants in Higgitt's study anticipated moving in the coming period, and were resigned to a life of moving. Overall, Higgitt concluded that highly mobile families were poorer than the general population and that prejudice and discrimination influenced the informants' perception of their neighborhoods (p. 45). However, Higgitt examined moves at two points in time and did not analyze the effects of perceived discrimination in the housing market on multiple moves.

Bartlett (1997) examined residential moves by poor families in Vermont and found that unavailability of affordable housing was an important for constant relocation. The only time that these families did not move was when they had stable housing. Bartlett also found that despite the movers' knowledge of the great costs of moving, such as uprooting the kids, losing the security deposit and leaving possessions behind, they still moved

constantly. Bartlett found that despite the chronic movers' knowledge that their housing situation could not improve at each move, they still changed residence frequently. Bartlett argued that moving was a temporary escape from problems, and allowed people to push everything to the back of their mind while they got on with the immediate task of moving. For the chronic movers, moving was a way of taking control, much as, someone else might repaint the kitchen or take a holiday. Finally, Bartlett pointed out that, for many, chronic moving was a way of life and a familiar solution to the housing problem since childhood.

Kearns and Smith (1994), point out that residential mobility decisions of marginalised populations are sharply limited by a lack of resources, discrimination or disability such that poor households may make-do with a series of 'down-ward' and presumably unsatisfactory moves. Furthermore, financial and social constraints may prevent relocation by low-income families intending to move, or displacement may force households intending to stay (Earhart and Weber 1996).

Keenan et al. (1999) investigated residential mobility patterns in a low-income neighborhood of Newcastle, England and found that low-income households tended to move to residences that they were not satisfied with, or remained in places that they were very dissatisfied with. Likewise, a number of moves among low-income families were involuntary, and were not motivated by favorable housing market conditions or benefits to be gained by moving to an alternative locale or residence - but are due to a combination of multiple pressures. According to Keenan et al., multiple residential moving among low-income households was not due to some newfound freedoms to move when housing market conditions were favorable, but was due to a number of other factors such as

relationship breakdown, running from debt, or from overbearing landlords and disruptive neighbors. The breakdown of family relationships tends to cause rapid mobility in the neighborhoods in which social stability has broken down, causing the community stability of decades of shared life.

The present study has sought to understand the mobility experience of marginalised urban populations so as to place their experiences within the current urban housing conditions in Winnipeg and similar Canadian cities. The study has considered family motivations for moving from one residence to another in light of the social and economic conditions that they face, and the housing and neighborhood environments in their residential neighborhoods.

2.5 Theoretical Framework

From the review of mobility literature, it is apparent that theoretical models of mobility are built around mobility decision processes that focus on the decision to move and the selection of an alternative destination that eventually leads to actual mobility. These studies have identified a set of personal and life-cycle factors that influence the decision to move either directly, or by indirectly affecting satisfaction with one's current residence. The bulk of the mobility studies have also emphasized that residential mobility is determined by demographic factors in combination with residential satisfaction (Speare 1974), institutional constraints (Landsdale and Guest 1985), housing characteristics (Deane 1990; McHugh, Gober and Reid 1990), and neighborhood characteristics (Lee et al. 1994; South and Deane 1993). These studies have mainly been based on Speare's (1974) residential satisfaction perspective and the extensions of that framework

(Landsdale and Guest 1985; Lee et al. 1994; Newman and Duncan 1979; Rossi 1955) and have been based on rational modeling processes of choice and constraint to determine mobility. However, few studies have focused on the residential mobility of marginalised populations and even fewer of the studies have focused on the pattern of relocation by identifying the neighborhood of origin or destination (Lee et al. 1994; Speare et al. 1975; South and Deane 1993). At the same time, few of the studies have considered all the circumstances under which different population groups make the decision to move.

A majority of the studies reviewed are predominantly quantitative in focus and are limited to the use of cross-sectional analyses that do not provide adequate contextualized knowledge on the nature of residential mobility among low-income households. Further, there is little empirical research on mobility in urban planning and education literature, especially as regards the actual mobility of marginalised populations and what this means for families and children in impoverished neighborhoods. Besides, few studies (Clathworthy 1983, 1996; Higgitt 1994) of residential mobility have directly examined factors that affect the mobility or housing choices of the disadvantaged in Canada. There is therefore no clear insight from previous studies into the mobility determinants and residential choices of individual marginalised groups, such as low-income Aboriginal families.

As a result of these limitations, a number of researchers have argued that residential mobility studies should focus on specific marginalised populations instead of taking off from the general behavioral mobility models. For example, Kearns and Smith (1994) called for “a renewed place for residential mobility research as an avenue towards a better understanding of the experiences of marginalised groups in society” and suggested

that future research should embrace “methodological transition from extensive to intensive approaches – from survey research to urban ethnography” (p. 127). A number of recent studies (Higgitt, 1994; Bartlett, 1997; Buerkle, 1997; May 2000) have found that people's experience of residential mobility differs from conventional norms of movement up or down a hierarchy delineated by tenure and housing form. These studies have deployed qualitative methods, usually by collecting information on people's experiences over time in an attempt to draw directly on the perspective of the mobile people themselves, in order to understand housing relocation.

The present study is not based on any one particular theory but leans towards the housing deficit and adjustment frameworks (Deane 1990, 1993; Morris and Winter 1978). The housing deficit and adjustment frameworks hypothesize housing and neighborhood satisfaction are influenced by a variety of subjective and objective characteristics of the housing unit, the neighborhood and individuals in the household. An important aspect of the housing adjustment model that relates to residential mobility is its conceptualization of the “factors that restrict the household's ability to engage in adjustment housing behavior” (Cook and Bruin 1997). According to Cook and Bruin these factors are grouped into six categories: resource, predispositional, organization, discrimination, market and culture. Resource constraints include income, while predispositional constraints reflect household members' personal characteristics, such as apathy or activism, while organizational constraints deal with the family's ability to solve problems and make decisions. Other factors that restrict a family's options for housing adjustment include discrimination due to race, gender, and socio-economic status, as well as market conditions and cultural norms.

Predisposition and organization constraints influence a household's identification of housing and neighborhood deficits.

The identification of deficits determines the satisfaction and leads to a decision to move or stay in a location. The decision to move or stay will in turn be determined by such factors as housing prices and vacancies, the racial mix, income level and crime rate in the destination neighborhood. This study considers the structures of "opportunity and constraint" (May 2000, p. 616) that frame a poor household's mobility decisions and behavior. By examining mobility in the opportunity or choice-constraint contexts, we obtain better insights into the complexity of mobility among families dealing with residential and school changes.

2.6 Chapter Summary

Theory, and prior mobility research drawn from the literature reviewed, suggests that:

- a) While current mobility theory provides a foundation for understanding residential mobility, it is inadequate in explaining fully the factors that determine actual mobility among different groups.
- b) The circumstances under which mobility is undertaken in mainstream populations are qualitatively different from those that trigger mobility among marginalised populations
- c) When assessing the role of housing conditions in the choice of residential environment, housing consumption should be assessed in relation to the other non-housing factors.

- d) Marginalised urban populations tend to be significantly more mobile than mainstream populations because the kind of housing they can afford is of poor quality and inadequate for their needs.
- e) The ability of poor and minority households to compete in the housing market is limited by their few economic resources and by discrimination. These families therefore tend to move within neighborhoods with similar characteristics, and their housing situation does not improve at each move.
- f) Although mobility negatively impacts community social networks, as well as academic achievement, this impact is mild in short distance moves.
- g) Mobility is motivated by a desire to change certain aspects of the housing unit or neighborhood. Social, economic, cultural and demographic factors together with characteristics of the local housing market determine the residential choices of movers.

In Chapter 3, I examine the socio-demographic characteristics of the neighborhood that is the focus for this study, and present the strategies and methods employed to explore residential moves among a sample of the neighborhood residents.

CHAPTER 3: THE STUDY AREA AND RESEARCH METHODS

3.0 THE STUDY AREA

In this chapter I present a detailed discussion on:

- a) The process used for selecting the study area.
- b) The social-economic context of the study area (population, labor force participation, unemployment, educational attainment, residential and school mobility, housing characteristics).
- c) The research methods (selection of participants, research tools, data collection procedures, interview instrument, interview process, and data analysis).

3.1. Selection of Study Area

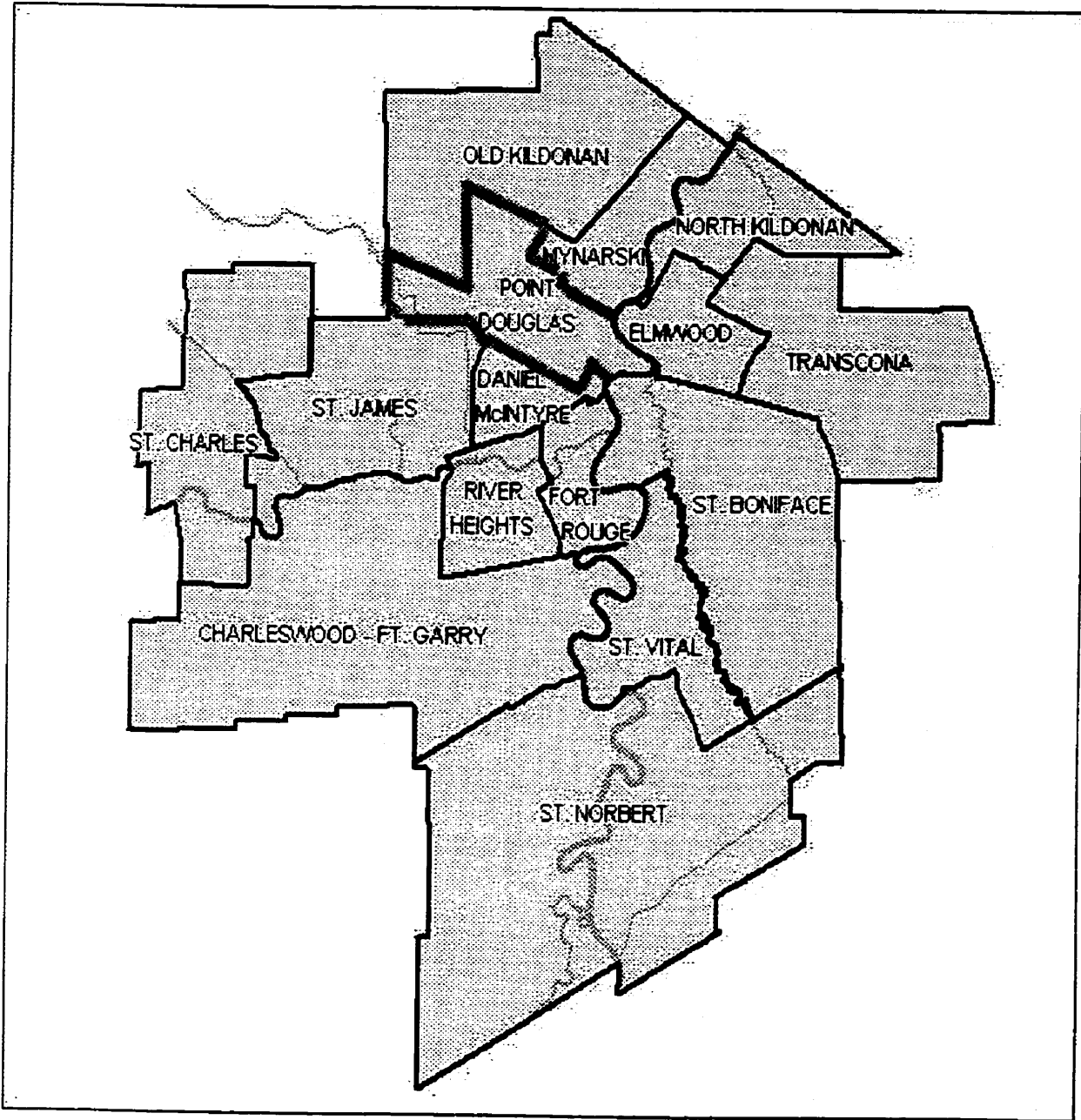
The purpose of this study has been to explore the pattern and causes of frequent household mobility among low-income families in one neighborhood in Winnipeg's inner city, namely the William Whyte neighborhood (See Maps 1, 2, and 3). William Whyte neighborhood was selected after examining the neighborhood indicators drawn from the 1996 Census Canada data and the City of Winnipeg *Neighborhood Indicator Summary* and *Neighborhood Profiles* (2000). The City of Winnipeg neighborhood profiles are drawn from the Canada census data and include such measures as racial and ethnic composition, the percentage of single parent families and level of education. Other measures include the percentage of households living below the poverty line, mobility rates, percentage of residents employed and those in and out of the labor force. Another set of neighborhood indicators, also drawn from the *Neighborhood Indicator Summary* and *Neighborhood Profiles* included housing characteristics such as percentage of owner-

occupied, median house value, number of placards and demolitions, age of dwelling and number of rooming houses.

Crime rates and incidence of fires were drawn using data from Winnipeg Police Services and the Office of the Fire Commissioner. School demographics data from Winnipeg School Division No. 1 for the years 1994-1998 were also examined in terms of student mobility and stability rates, incidence of poverty and employment characteristics of parents in each school. For each of these indicators William Whyte Community School was among the three worst-ranked schools in the Winnipeg School Division No. 1 (Hunter 2000).

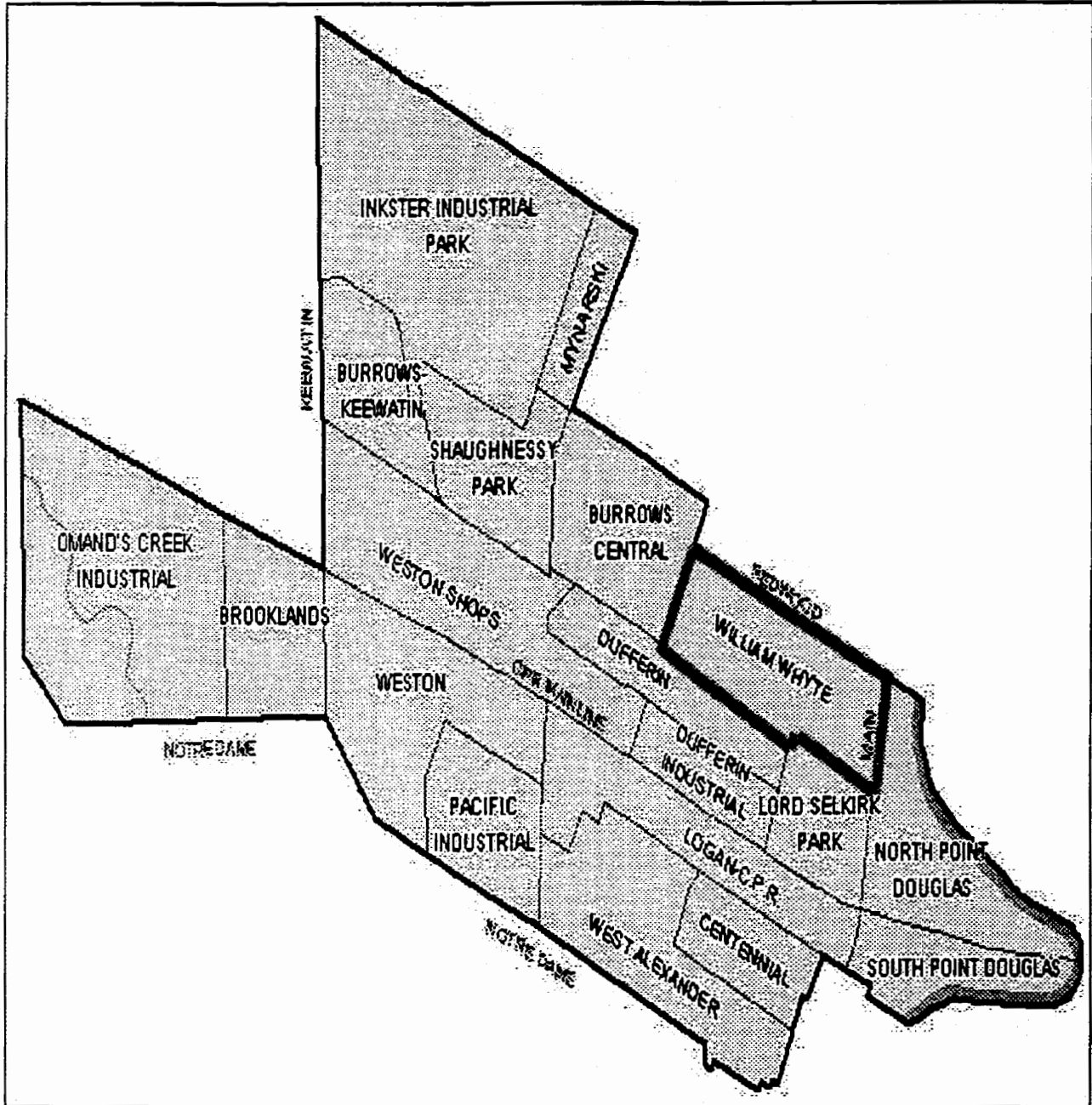
Since the study set out to explore residential mobility of low-income urban families, the characteristics of the William Whyte neighborhood seemed most appropriate for the objectives of this study. By selecting this neighborhood, key variables that have been hypothesized to influence high mobility come into play - family status, economic, race and socio-cultural forces. In the next sections, specific neighborhood measures are briefly discussed. A discussion of these measures is important for understanding the relationship between residential mobility and other neighborhood indicators, as they relate to William Whyte neighborhood.

Map 1: Location of Point Douglas within Winnipeg



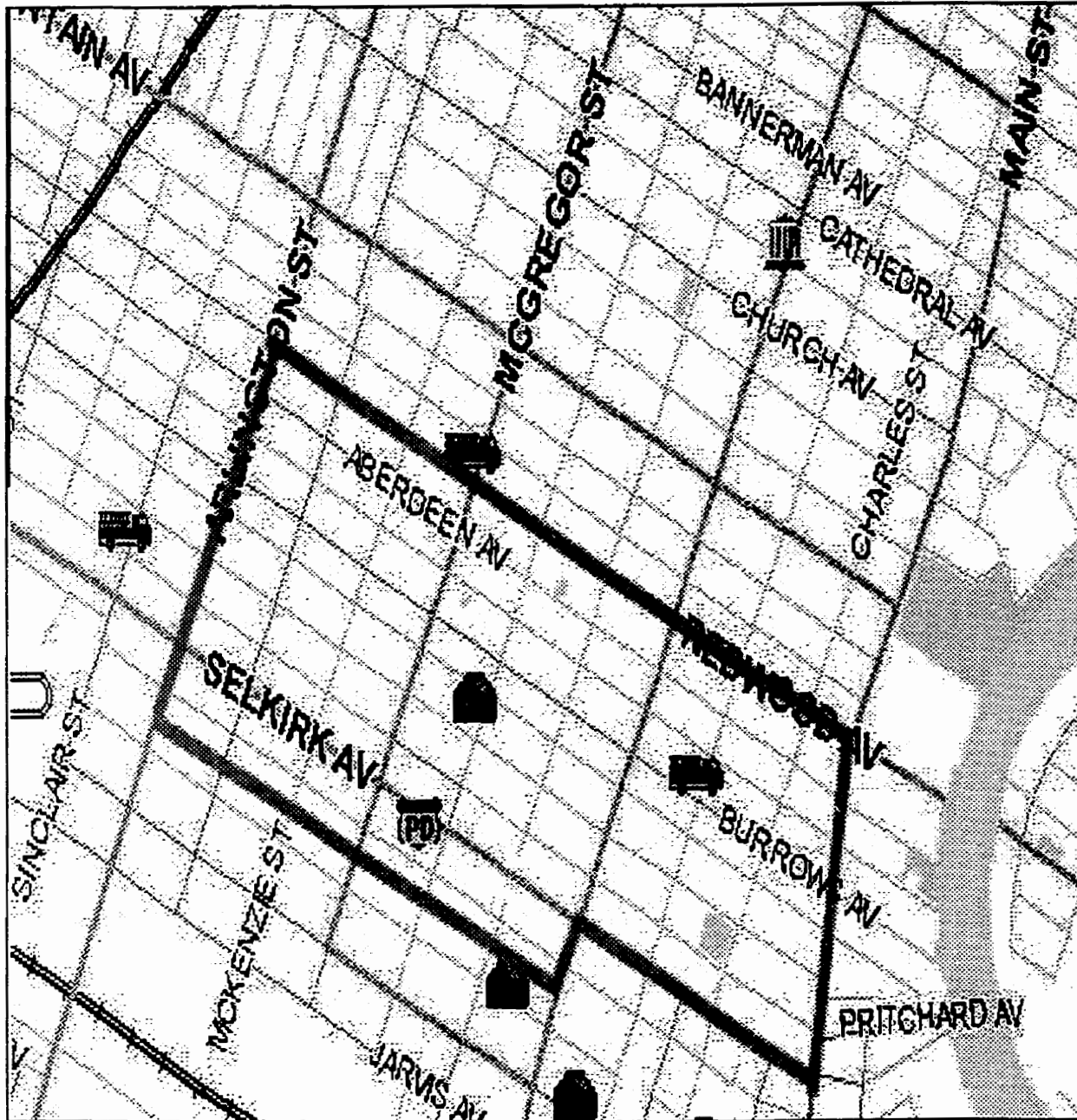
Source: City of Winnipeg, Winnipeg Map; <http://www.city.winnipeg.mb.ca/interhom/default.htm>

Map 2: Location of William Whyte Vis-A-Vis Point Douglas Ward



Source: City of Winnipeg: Neighborhood Profiles 2000: <http://www.city.winnipeg.mb.ca/interhom/default.htm>

Map 3: William White Neighborhood Vis-À-Vis the North End of Winnipeg



Source: City of Winnipeg: Neighborhood Profiles: <http://www.city.Winnipeg.mb.ca>

3.2 Socio-Economic Context of the Study Area

William Whyte is located in the Point Douglas ward in what is known as Winnipeg's North End (See Maps 1, 2, and 3). Adjacent to the Canadian Pacific Rail yards and adjoining industrial district, the North End started as a working poor neighborhood and remains so to this day. The North End is perceived by outsiders and residents as an unstable neighborhood with high crime, arson, youth gang violence and an area of poor-quality housing, low educational attainment, high unemployment and visible poverty (McIntyre 2000). However, the North End is also a rich multicultural area with people from different ethnic and racial backgrounds. People of Aboriginal origin represent the fastest growing community in the area.

The next subsections provide background characteristics of the William White neighborhood. In particular, the neighborhood indicators of the population and labor force characteristics, income levels, residential and school mobility and housing characteristics are identified and discussed.

3.2.1 Population Characteristics

Most inner city neighborhoods in Winnipeg have been experiencing a significant decline in population since 1971. According to Lezubski et al. (2000), the population of the city of Winnipeg increased from 540,265 in 1971 to 667,210 in 1996, representing an increase of 23.5 per cent (or one percent per year). In the same period, the population in Winnipeg's inner city dropped from 142,150 to 108,695, a decline of 23.5 per cent or 1 per cent per year. The North End has also been experiencing rapid population declines. Between 1941 and 1996, the population declined by 62 percent from approximately 47,000 to 17,800 people or 1.12 percent per year (McIntyre 2000). Following this trend,

the population of the William Whyte neighborhood has dropped from 10,005 in 1971 to 6,230 in 1996, representing a decline of 62.26 percent or 2.4 percent per year, as shown in Table 1. This rate of population decline is evidently higher than that of both the inner city and the North End area.

Table 1: Total Population and Percentage Change

TOTAL POPULATION	WILLIAM WHYTE		CITY OF WINNIPEG	
	Number	% change	Number	% change
1996 CENSUS	6,230	-5.9%	618,475	0.5%
1991 CENSUS	6,620	-4.0%	615,215	3.5%
1986 CENSUS (2)	6,895	1.7%	594,555	5.3%
1981 CENSUS (2)	6,780	-20.1%	564,475	0.6%
1976 CENSUS (2)	8,490	-15.1%	560,875	4.8%
1971 CENSUS (2)	10,005		535,100	

Source: Social Planning Council of Winnipeg: 1996 Census Data.

The William Whyte neighborhood has a large proportion of Aboriginal peoples and visible minorities. The percentage of visible minorities in 1996 was 15.6 percent compared to 11.9 percent in the city. In 1991, the neighborhood had the highest number of Aboriginal persons of any neighborhood in Winnipeg. In 1996, 37.8 percent of the residents in this neighborhood were Aboriginal as compared to 7.1 percent for city of Winnipeg. Additionally, this neighborhood has a high and rapidly growing population of younger people that is under 15 years of age. In 1996, 26.5 percent in the neighborhood population was under fifteen years of age and a big proportion of these were children under five years of age.

William Whyte neighborhood also has a high proportion of single parent households. Fifty two percent of families with children were listed as one-parent families as compared to 25.1 percent for the city of Winnipeg. Additionally, forty-two percent of these one-parent families in William White were female single parents while 9.9 percent

were male single parents (Lezubski et al. 2000). The 1996 census data also indicates that 24.4 percent of the families with children have three or more children. Thus, a very high number of families with children residing in this neighborhood have very low incomes and are likely to have larger and younger families than the mainstream population in the city of Winnipeg.

3.2.2 Labor Force Participation and Unemployment Rates

Statistics Canada defines the labor force participation rate as “the total labor force in the week prior to Census Day, expressed as a percentage of the population 15 years of age and over, excluding institutional residents” (City of Winnipeg, Neighborhood Profiles 2000). The unemployment rate and low rates labor force participation in the William Whyte neighborhood is much higher than that of Winnipeg’s inner city and the city of Winnipeg as a whole. Data from the Social Planning Council (SPC) of Winnipeg shows that in 1996, the participation rates were a low of 50.6 percent, as compared to 58.4 per cent for the inner city and 66.5 percent for the city of Winnipeg. The rates of unemployment were 26.5 percent as compared to 15 percent for the inner city and 8.2 percent for Winnipeg as a whole. The high rates of unemployment and low rates of labor force participation in the William Whyte neighborhood are particularly prevalent among single parents, among youth aged 15-24, and among Aboriginal youth aged 15-24 (Lezubski et al. 2000).

3.2.3 Income Levels

According to the Social Planning Council of Winnipeg, a much higher proportion of inner city households is concentrated at the lower income ranges. Almost one half of all

inner city residents had incomes that were below \$20,000 in 1996. The proportion of inner city households who had incomes below \$20,000 was almost twice as high as for all Winnipeg households i.e. 47.2 per cent in the inner city and 24.7 percent in Winnipeg as a whole (Lezubski et al. 2000). In the William Whyte neighborhood, the proportion of households with incomes below \$20,000 is 60 percent, a proportion much higher than that of both the inner city and the city of Winnipeg as a whole. The average family income for female and one-parent family was \$16,316, as compared to \$26,536 for the city of Winnipeg. The average annual employment income for residents in the William Whyte was a low of \$ 13,650 in 1996, as compared to \$25,677 for the city of Winnipeg. Over forty percent (40.1%) of the household income earned by the residents in the neighborhoods was from government transfer payments. This contrasts to 13.9 percent for the city as a whole. The low real household income, the high levels of unemployment, and low levels of labor force participation both are related to a very high and growing rates of poverty.

Statistics Canada uses the Low Income Cut-Off (L.I.C.O) to report on the level of poverty and to identify those who are “substantially worse off than the average”. A family at or below the L.I.C.O is one that spends more than 55% of its income on basic necessities of food, shelter and clothing. The L.I.C.O for economic families and non-family individuals for Winnipeg (1995) is given in Table 2.

Table 2: Low Income Cut-Offs (L.I.C.Os)

Family Size	L.I.C.O
1	\$16,874
2	\$21,092
3	\$26,232
4	\$31,753
5	\$35,494
6	\$37,236
7+	\$42,978

(Source: City of Winnipeg; Community Services Department (1995))

In 1996, the incidence of low income in the William Whyte neighborhood was a high of 65 percent, as compared to 38 percent for the city. The poverty rate was even higher than that shown for Winnipeg's inner city, as 69 percent of households in the William Whyte neighborhood had incomes below the Statistics Canada L.I.C.Os. This contrasts with 50.8 percent of all inner city households that had incomes below the Statistics Canada L.I.C.Os. In the same Census period, the weighted percentage of families with incomes below the L.I.C.Os in the William Whyte Community School was a high of 79 percent.

3.2.4 Educational Attainment

According to Lezubski et al. (2000), levels of educational attainment in the inner city continue to be consistently lower than those in the city of Winnipeg as a whole. In 1996, 44 percent of inner city residents, compared to 35.3 percent of city of Winnipeg residents, had not completed high school. In the same year, 15.2 percent of inner city residents compared to 9.1 percent of city residents had less than grade 9 education.

Levels of educational attainment for the William Whyte neighborhood are much lower than those of both the inner city and the city of Winnipeg as a whole, as shown in

Table 3. In 1996, 65.1 percent of the William Whyte residents had not completed high school. In the same year, 23.4 percent of the neighborhood residents had less than grade nine education. Levels of educational attainment correlate positively with employment status as those with less than grade twelve education are more likely to be unemployed.

Table 3: Education Attainment

EDUCATION	WILLIAM WHYTE		CITY OF WINNIPEG	
Education Attainment (15 Years Old and Over)				
Less than Grade 9	1,080	23.4%	44,420	9.1%
Grade 9 –12 without secondary certificate	1,930	41.7%	127,140	26.0%
Grade 9 –12 with secondary certificate	385	8.3%	56,680	11.6%
Non-University – without certificate of diploma	265	5.7%	27,065	5.5%
Non-University – with certificate of diploma	500	10.8%	93,450	19.1%
University without degree	310	6.7%	66,130	13.5%
University with degree	155	3.4%	73,590	15.1%
TOTAL (15 YEARS OLD AND OVER)	4,625	100.0%	488,475	100.0%

(Source: City of Winnipeg Statistical Profiles 1996)

3.2.5 Residential and School Mobility

The residential and school mobility rate is derived from the 1996 census data and the Winnipeg School Division No. 1 demographics reports (1994-1998). Census data tells us how many households moved and how many did not move between two census years (a five-year interval), while the school demographic reports tell us how many students enrolled and transferred from the schools in the division. The census identifies “movers” as those who changed address in the interval between two census periods, while “non-movers” are those who maintained the same address for both census periods.

The 1996 census data shows that approximately 58 percent of inner city families were movers as compared to approximately 43 percent in the city of Winnipeg as a whole. Residential mobility rates for Aboriginal families are even higher as four in every five Aboriginal families are identified in the 1996 census as movers (Lezubski et al. 2000). In 1996, the one-year mobility rate for William Whyte neighborhood was 31.8 percent, compared to 16.1 percent for the city of Winnipeg. The five-year mobility rate shows that 59.5 percent of the residents changed residence as compared to 43.9 percent for the city as a whole.

These high levels of residential mobility cause high pupil turnover in schools, particularly in public elementary classrooms. Student mobility rates for the inner city school district are very high compared to the Winnipeg as a whole. In the 1994/95 academic year, overall student mobility rates for the division was 30 percent, in 1996/97, elementary mobility rose to 30.9 percent and, in 1997/98, mobility declined to a record low of 26.3 percent (School Demographics Report 1997/98). However, when mobility rates are examined for individual inner city schools over the four-year period, it shows that the William Whyte Community School has consistently had very high mobility rates between 1994 and 1998. These measures are shown in Table 4.

Table 4: William Whyte Community School: Demographic Indicators 1994/1998

	1994/95	1995/96	1997/98	1997/98
Average Enrollment	261	275	253	243
Total Transfers	201	N/A	204	218
Mobility %	77	75.6	80.8	89.8
% single-parents	51.1	N/A	48.6	51.3
% unemployed parents	80.9	N/A	78.9	81.7

(Source: Winnipeg School Division, Demographic Reports 1994-1998)

The William Whyte Community School has one of the highest student turnover rate in Winnipeg School Division No.1 and a high concentration of Aboriginal students. In the 1997/1998 school year, the mobility rate (total student transfers as a percentage of average monthly enrollment) for William Whyte Community School was 89.8 percent. The average enrollment for the 1997-1998 academic year was 243, and yet there were 218 total transfers (Winnipeg School Division No.1 - School Demographics Report 1997-1998). This mobility rate and total transfers was one of the highest among inner city elementary schools.

3.2.6 Neighborhood Housing

The City of Winnipeg initiative that addresses the revitalization of housing in distressed neighborhoods has designated the William Whyte neighborhood as a major improvement area, particularly in housing improvement. The major improvement areas are defined as those "older areas that have experienced significant decline to the point where housing and neighborhood infrastructure require complete renewal" (City of Winnipeg: Community Services Department 1995). The housing stock in the William Whyte neighborhood is relatively old and largely consists of single detached and row houses with an average of 2.1 bedrooms per dwelling. As the number of bedrooms indicates, most of the houses are exceedingly small for families because larger houses have been divided into one or two bedroom rental units. As in the rest of the North End, the houses are in poor condition, have high vacancy rates and low market rents.

The 1996 Census shows that of the 2,250 total dwellings in the William Whyte neighborhood, 62.5 percent were constructed prior to 1946 and 21 percent were built

between 1946 and 1960. In the year 2000, the total residential dwellings had declined from 2,250 to 1,713. Housing stock is generally in poor condition with almost half of the houses in need of some repairs: 16.1 percent are in need of major repairs, 28.5 percent need minor repairs while 55 percent require regular maintenance. Home ownership is low and continues to decline. Only 39.2 percent of the units are owner-occupied while the bulk of these dwellings (60.8 percent) are rented.

At the same time that the housing stock is in generally poor condition, with low market rents, it remains unaffordable to most low-income people: 83.4 percent (22.1% for owners and 61.3% for renters) of both owners and renters in this neighborhood pay in excess of 30% of their income for housing expenses (City of Winnipeg 2000). The population that has the greatest housing cost burden of any group is that of the one-family household. This population, which includes single-parent households, represents the most vulnerable segment in this community.

In 1996, the average assessed value of houses in the William Whyte neighborhood was \$43,983. However, property tax assessments in the inner city are much higher than market values. According to the Winnipeg Real Estate Board, the average 1991 selling price in the area that includes William Whyte neighborhood was \$32,600. The market value of houses in this area has declined rapidly since 1993 so that by 1999 the median selling price was about \$17,500 (City of Winnipeg 2000). The housing situation is shown on Table 5.

Table 5: Housing Indicators: William Whyte Neighborhood

Total residential dwellings 2000	1,713
Effective age of dwelling 2000	1,914
Median selling price 1999	\$17,500
Rentals (residential dwellings) 1999	803
Building permits 1998	282
Demolitions 1998	8
Maintenance and occupancy orders 1999	252
Number of Placards 1999	27
Number of rooming houses 1999	88

(Source: City of Winnipeg, Community Services Department 2000)

3.2.7 Section Summary

This section has provided the background characteristics of the study area. The analysis presented here has shown that a high proportion of the neighborhood residents have low incomes and experience lower levels of labor force participation and much higher levels of unemployment and poverty, than is the case for the city as a whole. The high unemployment rates and low and declining labor force participation are factors that explain the high and growing incidence of poverty in this neighborhood.

Information presented so far has also shown that the quality of existing housing stock is of poor quality. Therefore, the households that choose to live here do so because the rents are lower than elsewhere in the city. For poor households renting or owning, adequate housing is inherently difficult because of their low and decreasing incomes. Affordability problems combined with poor quality housing stock would normally lead to frequent residential changes.

Nonetheless, the data represented in this section are also important in understanding the relationship between the neighborhood indicators and residential

mobility and would help to set policy directions for community/neighborhood planning and particularly in providing effective intervention programs for families that are highly mobile.

3.3 Research Methods

This section outlines the process used for selecting the participants, the research tools, data collection procedures, the interview instrument, interview process and data analysis.

3.3.1 Selection of Participants

The target participants for this study were residents who had a kindergarten to sixth grade child (children) and had moved (within Winnipeg) two or more times in the past four years. An open-ended question at the beginning of the interview process screened those who were caregivers of kindergarten to sixth grade children (child) and whether they had moved twice or more in the past four years. Participants were recruited using a combination of three strategies: a) Through door-to-door canvassing of the neighborhood; b) Snowball sampling by asking people who had already been interviewed to point the researcher to other potential individuals (friends or relatives) who had moved frequently. The researcher then contacted these individuals by phone or knocking on their doors and asked whether they would participate in the study; c) By contacting service providers who were asked to provide contacts or references for individuals that fitted the criteria of the target sample.

Several individuals were willing to be interviewed for this study when contacted. However, since the study was specifically examining short distance residential moves that had also involved a change in children's schools, it was difficult to find many people that

met fit these criteria. A number of people interviewed had moved many times within the area but had not moved their children from their schools. Others had moved into other parts of the city and therefore did not fit into the short-distance move criteria. The major challenge, therefore, was the process to find a large number of interviewees that met the residential and school change criteria within a short time. Overall, fifteen (15) participants were interviewed in their homes or at locations that were convenient for them. The demographic and economic characteristics of the selected participants are representative of the make-up of the residents in the neighborhood. To a large extent, information collected from these participants forms the basis of the discussion for the present study.

3.3.2 Research Tools

Data was collected in the following three ways: face-to-face in-depth interviews, observation and census/demographic records. The study specifically relied on qualitative interviewing as the primary method of data collection. Face-to-face in-depth interviews were conducted with fifteen adults who were primary caregivers of a school-aged (K-6) child. Fifteen participants were considered a sufficient and manageable number for the nature of research conducted – in-depth interviewing. Through in-depth interviews participants were asked to relate detailed mobility histories by providing reasons for moving, past and recent moving experiences, availability of housing choice, neighborhood and housing conditions, additional family demographics and social connections among residents.

The in-depth qualitative interviewing technique was chosen because it requires the interviewer to look beyond the surface of the conversation for implicit analytic questions,

alternative frames and content categories created and used by informants, and to actively ask probing questions (Arendell 1997; Holstein and Gubrium 1995). This kind of interviewing is more informal and complements participant observation. Thus, the data gathered in this kind of interviewing is as much from the elicited verbal responses as it is from participant observation (Rubin and Rubin 1995). This kind of interviewing attempts to understand the complex behavior of members of society (Fontana and Frey 1998) and the outcome produces highly descriptive data, expressive of the thoughts and values of the participants (Higgitt 1994). Data gathered using in-depth interviews was complimented with secondary data regarding the study area to provide greater opportunities for examining the effects of various mobility variables (Tashakori and Teddlie 1998:42).

3.3.3 Data Collection Procedure

In the initial stages of the study, I collected and reviewed secondary data from public agencies in order to understand the socio-demographic characteristics of the participants and particularly the residential environments of potential study participants. As discussed in sections 3.1 and 3.2, these data were also used to select the neighborhood of study. In order to obtain information on school mobility and stability rates of neighborhood schools, secondary data were obtained from Winnipeg School Division No. 1 office. Also, a number of tabulations from Statistics Canada 1991 and 1996 census data were obtained from the Social Planning Council of Winnipeg and the City of Winnipeg in order to provide the socio-demographic context of the neighborhood. The City of Winnipeg *Neighborhood Indicator Summary* and *Neighborhood Profiles* were also used to derive other socio-demographic data as discussed in section 3.1.

In order to develop a clear understanding of the housing environments of the participants, the following neighborhood level data were collected and analyzed:

- Student enrollment and mobility rates in the inner city schools;
- Demographic data such as median household income, education, family status and composition, race, gender, education, employment status and mobility rates;
- Housing characteristics: vacancy rates and rents, house values, property ownership age of houses and housing quality.

To familiarize myself with the area of study and the concerns of its residents, I walked for several days through this and similar city neighborhoods and talked (informally) to several residents. The conversation with residents focused on topics such as how long they had lived in the area, where they had lived before, issues that concerned residents in the area, how they felt living in the particular area or neighborhood, and where their children went to school. The depth of these informal interviews depended on how receptive the respondents were to the kinds of issues I was exploring. These informal interviews gave me experience in talking to people in unstructured settings and enabled me to uncover some of their main concerns. The interviews not only familiarized me to the terminology specific to the participants' environment and culture but they enabled me with talk to diverse groups of people living in this inner city neighborhood. Face-to-face interaction with household members in this inner city neighborhood also enabled me to appreciate the meanings that individuals construct in their daily lives because "researchers must tap people's thoughts, feelings, values, beliefs, and assumptive worlds" (Marshall and Rossman 1999; Strauss and Corbin 1998). These informal conversations therefore

provide a unique dimension to this study that may not have been obtained from structured and formal household surveys, for instance.

From these initial interviews, the literature review and the secondary data examined, I was able to develop an open-ended interview questionnaire that I used to collect more data for the study on the reasons for frequent mobility in the neighborhood chosen for study. The questionnaire represented an extension of the questions asked in the informal interviews and included questions drawn from the review of mobility literature, particularly the questionnaire items adapted from Buerkle (1997), Higgitt (1994), Newman and Duncan (1979), Shafer and Primo (1985) and Varady (1983),

3.4 The Interview Instrument³

Data from the interviews were collected using a semi-structured interview questionnaire. This questionnaire was developed based on the literature review and the informal interviews. The interview instrument mainly included open-ended question, and a few yes/no and checklist questions. Before the questionnaire was administered to the participants, it was piloted with six adult heads of households in order to check for clarity of questions and language. The piloted questionnaire was then edited and the revised copy was administered to the larger sample.

The questionnaire focused on seven areas that sought to answer research questions in the following areas:

- a) Household information,
- b) Current housing status,
- c) Mobility history,
- d) Neighborhood perceptions,
- e) Social connections and,

³ see Appendix A

- f) Demographic information, and
- g) Economic resources.

Household information questions were developed to identify the number of people currently living in each household, the number and age of school-aged children in the household and other children who occasionally come into the care of the participant. Answers to these questions were used to determine the suitability of the current household accommodation by determining the amount of space family members had.

Questions on the current housing situation sought to identify the participants' current residential location, how long they had lived in their current home, reasons for moving to their present accommodation and whether they had any choice in moving to the current and previous locations. Participants were encouraged to describe the house they lived in at the time of the interview and to compare it to previous housing situations.

The participants' mobility history was charted by questions that asked the participants to state how many times they had moved in the past four years, and to list in reverse chronological order all the places they had lived in within those four years, how long they lived in each residence before moving out, and the reasons for moving from each residence. The reasons for moving from each residence were meant to elicit past mobility determinants, that were compared with reasons for most recent moves. The number of times children changed schools was compared to the number of times the family changed residence in order to determine whether or not frequent school transfers are dependent on family mobility.

In the present study, questions on neighborhood perceptions focused on such contextual attributes as perceived neighborhood safety, perceived neighborhood

deterioration and perceived public school quality. These questions were asked in order to determine the kinds of neighborhood concerns that were likely to significantly influence residential moves. For example, it has been suggested in the literature that perceived risk of victimization decreases neighborhood satisfaction and eventually leads to mobility (Harris 1995). Thus, in order to determine the effect of perceived and real crime rates on mobility, participants in the present study were asked about their experience or perception of certain aspects of crime (e.g. break-ins, muggings, drug peddling, etc.), and which of these aspects they perceived as prevalent problems in their neighborhood.

School quality has been hypothesized as a salient issue when families with children evaluate neighborhoods (Harris 1995). In the present study, participants were asked to describe their feelings about the quality of education in neighborhood public schools, to describe their children's experiences in these schools, and to indicate whether or not nearness to schools or perceived quality of schools influences their choice of residential location. Responses to these questions are used to examine the effects of perceived school quality on residential mobility and vice versa.

Asking participants to indicate whether or not they had friends and relatives living in their neighborhood and whether neighborhood residents did things together was used as means for collecting information on social connections in the neighborhood. Social connections among residents were used as a measure of participants' attachment to the neighborhood and community. In the present study, attachment to the neighborhood and community was assessed by asking questions that examined specific indicators of neighborhood and community connectivity. In particular, participants were asked questions regarding whether:

- They had any relatives and friends in the neighborhood.
- Neighbors helped each other out regularly.
- They were members of community and neighborhood associations.
- There were people in the neighborhood that could come together and solve serious neighborhood problems in case where there were such problems.

Last but not least, socio-demographic information, including gender and age of participant marital and employment status, income, race/ethnic status and education, were collected. The socio-demographic characteristics have been shown in the literature as being relevant to the families' disposition to move.

3.5 Interview Process

All the fifteen participants interviewed were adult family members who were primary caregivers and had a school-aged child. Two rounds of face-to-face in-depth interviews were held in the autumn of 2000. In the first round, semi-structured interviews were conducted with fifteen participants using the mobility interview instrument (Appendix A). Each interview lasted between 20-30 minutes depending on the nature of residential mobility for each participant. The second round of open-ended interviews involved five of the original fifteen participants with highest overall mobility. The purpose of the second interview was to clarify issues emerging in the first interview and also to obtain a more detailed description of the mobility histories for this group of participants. The length of the second interviews depended on the issues that needed clarification, but it was no longer than 45 minutes.

Once the interview appointments were set, an attempt was made to complete the interviews in one session. At the beginning of the interview, participants were informed of the nature of the study and their rights not to answer certain questions, or to be able to withdraw from the study at any time. The participants were assured that their responses would remain confidential and were asked to sign the consent form allowing the researcher to conduct the study (Appendix A).

Data collected from the interviews were recorded in the interview questionnaire form and field notebook by pen and paper. After each interview, the researcher verbally summarized (for each participant) the current housing situation, mobility history, and reasons for past and recent moves and highlighted any other issues mentioned during the interview or new issues that emerged. The participants were asked to comment on the summaries and were invited to provide further insights on the issues raised.

3.6 Data Analysis

Responses to all open-ended questions were analyzed on an on-going basis as follows:

- i) A summary description of each family interviewed was done after each interview. The main reasons for recent and past moves and the number of times moved were identified at the end of each interview.
- ii) Summarized responses from the interview questions were word-processed every few days.
- iii) After completion of the interviews, all field notes from the interviews were reviewed. Common themes from the open-ended questions were identified

and reasons for mobility were put into categories depending on the frequency at which they were cited in the interview responses. Text descriptions of the findings of the study were written following the seven sections of the questionnaire used.

- iv) Information on socio-demographic profiles from various secondary data sources (see section 3.1) were presented in tables, graphs and maps to supplement textual description of the findings presented in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 4: THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.0 Chapter Overview

As outlined in Chapter one, this study has investigated the following questions: a) what are the major reasons for moving among low-income families in the study area?, b) What is the pattern of family movement within the study area? (i.e. who moved, from where, to where?); and c) What is the relationship between residential mobility and housing conditions in the study area?

As outlined in Chapter 3, fifteen (15) participants were interviewed in their homes or at locations that were convenient for them using a questionnaire that was developed based on the literature reviewed and after a preliminary try-out. The specific findings are organized following the order of the themes and the sequence used in the questionnaire: socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents, their current living situation, reasons for moves, whether or not they have had a choice to move, mobility history, and their experiences with mobility.

4.1 Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Demographic and socio-economic characteristics have implications for participants' housing consumption in Winnipeg's inner city; hence the need to discuss them here. The following paragraphs therefore describe the socio-demographic characteristics of the fifteen respondents that were interviewed. All the fifteen respondents were women of Aboriginal descent who described themselves as "Aboriginal", "First Nation", "Ojibway", "Metis" or "Anishinaabe". Over two thirds were single parent women who had between two and seven school-aged children living with them. Their median age

was between 31-40 years and their average stay in their current residence was fourteen months. Over two thirds had lived in their current residence for less than a year.

Eight of the respondents had less than high school education, three had high school education, one had a college/technical diploma and three had some university education. Ten of the respondents reported that their main source of income was from government transfer payments (government or social assistance). Three of the respondents reported that their source of income was primarily from full-time employment while two indicated that their household income came from part-time or seasonal jobs. Those who were unemployed had never been in formal employment and had been on long-term social assistance. The median household income for the respondents was between \$11,000 - 20,000. One respondent reported an annual income of \$31,000 - 40,000; seven of the respondents reported an annual income of between \$11,000 - 20,000; three indicated an income of \$21,000 - 30,000 and four reported an annual income of less than \$10,000. However, some of these respondents could not specifically determine their household income and the researcher had to tabulate this median from the figures that some indicated as receiving from social assistance.

These socio-demographic characteristics compare with Statistics Canada 1996 Census data and City of Winnipeg Demographic Profiles, which indicate that the William Whyte neighborhood has very high rates of unemployment and low rates of labor force participation. Statistics Canada 1996 Census data shows residents in the neighborhood have very low levels of educational attainment and very low average family income. The average income for female and one-parent families in William Whyte neighborhood is

\$16,316 as compared to \$26,536 for the city of Winnipeg, with a large percentage (40.1 %) of the household incomes coming from government transfer payments.

4.2 Current Housing Situation

Thirteen of the respondents lived in smaller rental single family housing, row house or duplex units, and only two lived in apartments. Nine of the respondents lived in public housing while six lived in privately-rented housing. Those who lived in public housing had bigger units although those with four or more children would have preferred to live in large units, particularly four or five bedroom units. Those with larger families reported that they had trouble finding suitable and affordable accommodation in the private rental market because of their low incomes while there was a long waiting period for larger units in the public housing sector. One respondent who had seven children was living in a two-bedroom house but was also accommodating her sister and two children. She indicated that although there were many private-rental houses in the area to choose from, there were not many 3-4 or five bedroom units that were affordable. Other participants described the available housing as being of poor quality or being situated on “bad” streets. In addition to being crowded, most of the respondents lived in housing that required either major or minor repairs. Many had moved several times, but not to better housing or neighborhoods – more so to houses of similar quality. Two of the participants likened their changes of residence as “moving from one dump into another”.

Other participants reported that they could not find many houses to choose from when they wanted to relocate, and indicated that they had to take whatever was available at the time they needed to move, because their circumstances were such that they had to

move into whatever was available. Overall, all the respondents reported that the housing they could afford was of poor quality, was too expensive or too small, or was located on bad or unsafe streets or sections of the neighborhood.

4.3 Reasons for Moves

The participants were asked to indicate how long they lived in each residence before moving out, and to state the reasons for moving from each residence. Reasons for past moves were compared with reasons for the most recent move in order to determine the key factors that determine residential moves in this neighborhood. Although families described different moving contexts, similar reasons were given for both the past and most recent moves. The order of the frequency at which reasons for the most recent moves were cited is given in Table 6. The responses in the table represent the number of respondents that selected each reason as most significant.

Table 6: Reasons for Most Recent Move

Reason for moving from previous residence	Number of responses cited
Rent too high/could not afford rent	6
House too small/to move to bigger house	4
Safety: Kid's /neighborhood safety	3
Problems with neighbor (s)/neighborhood	1
To move closer to schools /amenities	1

When asked why they left their past places of residence, most of the participants frequently described housing as being too small, and not being affordable. These reasons were similar to reasons cited for the most recent move(s). Safety issues, neighbor and neighborhood problems and relationship problems with partners were also cited by some

of the respondents as reasons that precipitated past moves. Other reasons cited for past moves included:

- Landlord/caretaker problems
- Unsatisfied with housing management/maintenance
- Unattractive house (“ugly house/layout/carpets”)
- Tired of living in Manitoba Housing
- Apartment condemned
- Eviction
- Hookers/gangs on street
- House infested with mice and cockroaches
- Need to get away from drinking buddies
- To get away from abusive partner
- Divorce/trouble with partner
- Went up north to look for a job
- Need to be near friends/relatives (“too lonely”)
- Need to get away from family/relatives
- To go help a sick relative

Out of the fifteen families interviewed thirteen were looking to move again. Only two respondents indicated that they were not looking to move again because their current accommodation was big enough and the rent was “good”. Those intending to move again from their current housing gave the following reasons:

- Place too small/need for a bigger house/need for bigger space
- Rent too high
- Safety/neighborhood issues
- Drunk/ disruptive/ noisy/nosy neighbors

Overall, most respondents cited high rents and the shortage of dwelling space as the important reasons for moving from their previous residences. Neighborhood safety and problems with neighbors ranked as the next important reasons for recent and past moves. However, these ‘push factors’ (Higgitt 1994) intertwined with other bothersome things in their lives or neighborhood finally make them move out of their accommodation.

Familiarity with the current neighborhood and improved nearness to family and friends were the next most cited reasons for moving. Two of the respondents who lived in public housing indicated that they had no choice in moving into their present house or neighborhood but rather took what was available at the time. All the participants indicated their choice of house was largely dictated by their income.

The desire for cheaper rental accommodation and more dwelling space, as well as neighborhood safety, influenced the mobility and residential choices of the respondents. All the families who had moved three or more times in the last four years indicated that they were looking to move from their current accommodation. While the reasons they gave for wanting to move from their present accommodation were similar to the reasons they gave for their recent and past moves, other reasons cited include house break-ins, abusive partners, family break-up and racial prejudice. The problematic neighbors were described as those that drank too much, partied too much and those that constantly complained about noise from children. Two respondents, however, reported job-related moves away from and back to Winnipeg.

4.4 Mobility Histories

All the participants were asked to report their mobility histories by indicating how many times they had moved and all the places they had lived in within those four years, in reverse chronological order. Findings show that a majority of these families (13 out of 15) were highly mobile as they had moved three or more times. Over two-thirds had had moved six to nine times within the four years. The number of moves for each respondent is given in Table 7.

Table 7: Number of Times Moved

Participant	Number of moves in past four years
1	9
2	3
3	6
4	6
5	6
6	3
7	6
8	4
9	3
10	3
11	4
12	2
13	2
14	8
15	5

Some of the respondents had moved away from the neighborhood but they often returned to do laundry, grocery shopping and go to church in their old neighborhood. Because the participants were used to living in the William Whyte area, they did not move too far away from their former neighborhoods, insisting that they were used to living in the North End area. The next few paragraphs describe the mobility histories of four of the participants who were interviewed in more detail in the second round of interviews. These four participants have been selected to represent the main themes that emerged from the interviews. The names used are pseudonyms.

a) Yuki: Facilities and Relationship Problems

Yuki (not her real name) was a 25-year-old mother of five who had recently moved from the neighborhood but who continued to return to use the services in the old neighborhood such as laundry facilities and child-care. Her children were aged between nine and two years. Her children were not involved in any activities in the new place and they had not made any friends there. When I first met Yuki, she had come to her friend's house to do her family laundry because her new accommodation did not have a washing machine. Although her friend's house was quite a distance from her current residential neighborhood, she had not established any connections with anyone in the new neighborhood who would help her out when she did not have any money to pay at the Laundromat. She did not like her current neighborhood and described it as "terrible", with "very bad kids" and "many drunks". Although she was fairly satisfied with the new house and its management, she did not like the neighborhood at all. She did not like public housing and the kind of people who lived there. She did not like living in the inner city neighborhoods, but she realized that she could not afford accommodation elsewhere. She had applied for public housing in two locations in the suburbs but was allocated one in this inner city neighborhood that was not her preference.

This was the ninth place Yuki had moved into in the last two years and the first public housing accommodation. In a period of eight months, between December 1999 and July 2000, she had lived in three different places, a change of residence at an average of once every two-and-half months. She moved out of the last place because she broke up with her boyfriend and was not able to pay rent by herself. Her frequent moves had included some short stays with relatives and friends. However, Yuki did not describe or

view her frequent moves negatively. She described her frequent changes of residence positively and indicated that she was now used to it; moving did not bother her. She reported that, as a result of the moving, she and her children had learnt to make new friends.

Yuki felt that she had moved a lot and likened herself to a "gypsy", as she did not feel any particular rootedness to a particular place now. She indicated that she did not have strong social ties in the current or previous neighborhood, and had no one in the neighborhood with whom she could talk to if she had any problems. She however did not move a lot during her childhood because her parents had a fairly stable home and income. Even as an adult, there was a time that she did not move a lot. That time she lived in a nice apartment in a safe neighborhood that was close to schools, parks and shopping. She had to move out of that apartment because her family grew and they needed more space that was within their price range.

She had moved several times since then but she had never found accommodation that was comparable to this "best" place. Subsequent moves had continued to be unsatisfactory on many counts because the main source of income for her household was her boyfriend's employment with a service company where he was paid minimum wage. Although he worked long hours (when there was work), his earnings were hardly enough for them to pay for their basic needs and afford to rent adequate, quality housing in the location of their choice. According to Yuki, their relationship had not been very stable lately. This had prompted her to take up public housing so that if they broke up again in the future she did not have to move out or be evicted because of inability to pay rent in a privately rented house.

Yuki indicated that most of the moves had been undertaken voluntarily in the hope of finding suitable, adequate and affordable housing and safer neighborhoods or streets. However, a few of the moves had not been voluntary. At one time she was evicted because of inability to pay rent, and another time she had been forced to relocate because the apartment building she lived in was condemned and closed down. Issues of housing and neighborhood safety had played a role in her frequent moves but she indicated that difficulty in paying rent and dissatisfaction with the size of the dwelling have been the principal reasons for her frequent changes of residence. She pointed out that as her children grow bigger, she would need more space and would inevitably have to move in search of spacious, safe and affordable housing. According to Yuki, the only thing that could guarantee that she did not move again could be to find a house that was spacious enough for her family and whose rent she would manage to pay from her meager resources. But she did not see this being realized in the near future.

b) Nokoni: Cost and Size of Housing

Nokoni's story represents respondents who expressed concerns about the cost and size of housing in William Whyte neighborhood. It is important to note that most of the respondents were long term residents of the North End neighborhoods that are predominantly Aboriginal descent.

Nokoni was a twenty-nine year old mother of five children. Nokoni had moved six times in the last three years. Nokoni did not always move frequently and was in fact fairly stable in her childhood and up until three years ago. Before her recent frequent moves she lived in public housing with her mother but "got tired" of living in public housing.

Although living in public housing provided her with stability, she “felt abused by a lot of mental games” by the public housing agency. At the time of the interview, Nokoni lived with her husband and children in a single detached home. She was in full time employment, while her husband was self-employed.

Although Nokoni had changed residence six times, she has tried to locate housing within the catchment area of her children’s schools. Thus her children had only changed schools three times. She reported that all the neighborhoods she had lived in were in the North End area. She indicated that she could not move away from the neighborhoods that were predominantly Aboriginal because she did not want her children to be “prejudiced against” in neighborhoods where they would be a minority.

The main reasons that she cited for moving were dissatisfaction with the size of the dwelling, and difficulty in paying rent that was always “too high”. She had to move from the last place not only because it was too small and costly, but also because “the yard was not fenced, the paint was falling apart, the yard had no grass and the landlord would not do the repairs” on the house. On two occasions she had to move because of employment-related reasons. One time she had to move to her reserve in the North to try and find work. This was after completing her college education. However, she did not find work and had to move back to the city after only three months. In the North, Nokoni’s family had to be accommodated by a relative and “were pretty crowded”.

Nokoni recognized that she had moved too many times in the last three years. Looking for a house had been stressful to her because of having to constantly sell and buy furniture. For example, when she moved to her reserve in the North to find work, she had to sell all her furniture because she intended to go and stay there permanently. When she

moved back to the city, she moved to live with her mother in a privately rented house. This was too small for her family but it was the only house she could afford given her limited financial resources at the time. She not only disliked the house but her mother was still “drinking too much”. She had to “move the children away from that environment”. She therefore decided to end the living arrangement with her mother and live alone. Nokoni had looked for housing for a long time before she finally moved across the street into her current housing because the “rent is good here. It is bigger, it has a washer and dryer and landlord takes good care of the building”. When she moved to her current place, she did not have much furniture - the family “had to sit and sleep on the floor for sometime.”

Although there were many vacant and boarded up houses on her street and prostitutes had occasionally worked on the street, Nokoni did not wish to move out soon again because she liked the house she lived in – “it is within walking distance to my place of work.” Finding bigger and more affordable accommodation and living near her place of work were two factors that would provide stability for her family. However, despite having lived in this neighborhood and street for over a year, she did not know any of her neighbors. But her mother lived across the street and she had friends who lived a few blocks away. She was not intending to move soon because she felt that she was used to the area and the current accommodation was big enough for her family and the rent was affordable.

c) Wappo: Safety Issues and Relationship Problems

Wappo's story represents neighborhood safety issues and relationship problems as reasons for residential mobility. Wappo had moved several times within the same neighborhood because of housing-related problems, "gang problem" and to seek refuge from an abusive partner. She had moved over seven times in the last two years and could not remember all the places she had lived in during the past four years.

Wappo described her frequent moving as "stressful", "hard" and "financially distressing". More often the moves were undertaken because of housing-related reasons. She cited the principal reasons for moving frequently as "rent too high" and "house too small." She has always moved by herself i.e., without any help from a government agency or anyone else and had to pay for the moves herself. Wappo had always lived in the North End area; so all her changes of residence had been within the neighborhoods in the North End. She liked the North End area and could never live anywhere else in the city "because most people who lived here were of Aboriginal descent."

During one of the moves when Wappo needed to escape from an abusive partner, she was accommodated in a women's shelter. When time came for her to move from the shelter, she went to live with and take care of a sick mother on the reserve. However, she could not stay on the reserve for long, because she was "pregnant and had to come back to the city to have the baby." She then got back together with her boyfriend and moved into a two-bedroom privately rented apartment. Soon after, her boyfriend fell into "problems with the law and was imprisoned for two years." Unable to afford the rent, she moved into the current two-bedroom subsidized house that is owned by a non-profit agency.

Wappo was a mother of seven who lived in two-bedroom single family house with her children and her sister. Her two oldest sons aged 15 and 14 lived with her parents and went to school on the reserve because she feared gangs in the neighborhoods would recruit them. Wappo was not personally bothered by the presence of gangs in the neighborhood but she was very concerned that the gangs would negatively influence her children. She had also given up her nine-year-old son to her sister because her partner "never really liked the boy" and had been very abusive to him. However, all the children lived with her during the summer and school holidays. During the first interview the children were home for the summer holidays, but her boyfriend was in jail for a gang-related crime. At the second interview, Wappo's sister and two children had moved to her apartment and her boyfriend's sister and one child were living with her. A total of 13 people were living in a two-bedroom house.

Wappo was not employed at the time and had never been employed before. Her main source of income was social assistance. She supplemented her income by occasionally boarding people who come to Winnipeg (for medical reasons) from her reserve for \$20 a night, and claimed this amount from a government agency. Because of her limited resources, getting a house that was affordable and spacious enough for her big family and relatives had always been a problem. Most of the houses she could afford have only two-bedrooms: "this is too small for my family and other relatives who live with me from time to time." Wappo indicated that she was planning to move again soon and was already looking for "a suitable house" at the time of the interview.

d) Peoria: Lifestyle Choice

Peoria represents mobile families that come to view moving as a lifestyle choice, something they like doing in order to cope with their lives and living environment. "Peoria" is one such respondent who reported that she enjoyed moving and did not describe her moving experiences negatively. If she did not like a place or neighbor or landlord, she moved out. All her residential moves had been within the same neighborhood. She had moved out of the neighborhood only once but she became "too lonely" and moved back to her former street after only four months. Peoria had moved over seven times in the last three years. In the past eight months of the year, she had moved three times with the last three moves having been within houses on the same street. She indicated that she would never again move out of the neighborhood. This was not a pattern of moving that she learned in her childhood because she was born and raised in this area of the city.

Peoria lived in a three-bedroom single family house with her three children. At the time of the interview, she was not employed and had never been employed before. Her main source of income was also social assistance. She indicated that whenever she wanted to move, she had no problem finding a house because she knew many landlords in that area and there were many "ugly" houses to choose from. In any case, Peoria did not move too far away from her previous residence(s). Similarly, she did not always move to bigger or better housing in the area. She described the houses in the entire inner city as "dumps" and "pit stops" and her frequent residential changes as "moving from one dump into another". She had previously moved from previous residences because of dissatisfaction with the size of the dwelling, the way the house looked ("ugly house"), and because of the

presence of gang members in the area. However, the main reason she moved frequently was that she easily “got tired of living in one house for long periods of time.”

4.4.1 Feelings about Frequent Mobility

Respondents were asked to talk about moving experiences or feelings about previous mobility. Over two-thirds (eleven) of the respondents reported that moving was stressful and expensive. They also indicated that it was difficult to settle down with constant moving, and that the children especially found it hard to establish roots and friendships in one place. When asked to describe their moving experiences, most indicated that they “don’t like it, there is nothing nice about moving; it is a lot of work especially with kids; kids don’t get to settle in one place”. Although these households would have liked to settle in one place, they were nonetheless resigned to constant moving because they would not find a suitable house that was big enough and affordable for them in their neighborhood or the part of a neighborhood that was desirable for them.

Two participants, however, reported that there were “many houses to choose from and move to whenever” they wanted. They described their moving experiences positively and indicated that moving did not bother them and that they actually enjoyed moving.

Here is what they had to say about constant moving:

“Moving does not bother me anymore because I am now used to it; children get learn and get to meet new friends and learn to make friends.”

“I don’t mind moving. I enjoy moving. There is no shortage of housing, so I have no problem with finding a house.”

“Knowing that I am moving out of the dump is the best thing about moving”.

Moving had become a lifestyle for this group of movers as they would 'get tired' living in one place for long periods of time. These lifestyle movers did not move too far away from their previous house or neighborhoods and thus did not cut any ties with the area. At least two frequent movers would not describe what their feelings were while some indicated their feelings concerning a move depended on whether or not they had a choice of moving during specific moves. Those who chose to move were resigned to constant moving and viewed the moves much more positively. Those who had moved because of eviction or family problems viewed the ensuing move negatively.

4.4.2 Choice of Housing and Neighborhood

Mobility literature often assumes that factors that initiate a move are often not the same as those that determine the selection of a destination (Owusu, 1999). In terms of choice of housing, respondents were asked to indicate why they preferred their current residence and to list factors that they considered important in the selection of a new residence. When asked whether they had a choice as to whether or not they should move into their current residence, over sixty percent (or nine) of the respondents indicated that they had no particular preference for their current accommodation. They had taken whatever accommodation was available or was allocated to them when they needed housing. Most of these respondents lived in public housing or non-profit housing.

The respondents who had chosen to move into their current residence indicated that the most important reason for choosing their current residence was the relatively low rent and bigger living space. They also cited other reasons such as nearness to schools and amenities, friendly neighbors, familiarity with the area and nearness to family/relatives.

Participants who had a choice as to whether and where to move also indicated that they did not find any difficulties in finding a new place when it came to choosing another place to move to. However, they also indicated that since affordable rent and adequate living space determined their choice of next residence, there was limited availability of suitable and affordable accommodation in the area.

Residential mobility decisions are not always made voluntarily, but can be influenced by external factors such as eviction, or forced moves due to a condemned building or discrimination in the housing market. Since most of these families (two thirds or ten) depended on government assistance for their income, they could not afford to move into suitable and decent housing in the neighborhoods that they desired. Thus, their choice of residential destination was dictated by income. Although some of them chose to move, their choice of residence always ended up being unsatisfactory because they could not afford more decent homes within or out of the neighborhood.

When participants were asked to describe the kind of things they took into consideration when they chose to move, the following things were the most frequently cited considerations:

- Suitable housing
- Affordability
- Type of neighborhood
- Safety; and
- Nearness to schools, family and friends.

Low rental cost and adequate dwelling space emerged again as significant 'pull' factors to a new residence. Many of the participants also indicated that they would avoid moving to a place where they perceived racial prejudice, disruptive, drunken and noisy neighbors, unsafe streets and bad landlords.

The housing choices for many of the households interviewed were subject to personal constraints and specific neighborhood biases. These affected their residential search patterns and ultimately the choice of neighborhood and type of residence (Owusu 1999). Most (14 out of 15) of the participants that reported housing affordability and space problems, they also indicated that most of the readily available rental housing was often of very poor quality. Because of the poor quality of housing, and problems with neighborhood safety, families moved persistently in search of quality affordable accommodation. Thus when asked to compare their current home with the last one, most of these participants could only indicate very minor differences in quality, space or rent rates.

Thirteen of the fifteen respondents limited their housing search to the inner city and in areas with a high concentration of Aboriginal people. At least three of these respondents indicated that they looked for housing in primarily Aboriginal neighborhoods because they were trying to avoid being discriminated against in other parts of Winnipeg's housing market. One respondent put it this way: "You don't want to live with people who are prejudiced against your children". Thus, most respondents looked for housing in neighbourhoods where they thought chances of prejudice would be lower. Although a some indicated preferences for ethnically-mixed neighbourhoods, some indicated that they preferred to live near members of their own cultural group/race so that their children would learn their culture.

4.4.3 Number of Times Children Changed Schools

Residential moving has been associated with dropping out of school (Coleman 1988) because important social ties that are important for children's cognitive and social development are often damaged and sometimes completely severed each time a child changes schools. In neighborhoods with a highly mobile population, schools are unstable because the insecurity and transience experienced by mobile families weakens the social ties necessary to bind neighborhoods together. This often extends to the interactions of neighborhoods with their social institutions including schools. This has implications for policies and programs needed to stabilize children and families, hence the need to discuss the number of times a child changed schools because the family moved.

Respondents were asked to indicate the number of times each of their children had changed schools as a result of the residential changes and to describe whether the change of schools had affected the children's academic performance in any way. Reports from the respondents show that most of the children in these families had changed schools two or more times. Table 8 shows the number of times a child/children changed schools as the family changed residence, for those participants who reported school changes for their children.

Table 8: Number of Times Child Changed Schools

Participant	Number of moves in past four years	No. of times K-6 child changed schools
1	9	4
2	3	2
3	6	• 4-Gr.6 3-Gr.1
4	6	2
5	6	3
6	3	3
7	6	2
8	4	2
9	3	1
11	4	2
13	2	1

One grade three child, whose mother had changed residence nine times in three years, had changed schools four times. In one year alone, this child had changed schools three times. Another grade one child had changed schools three times in the past year while another had changed schools twice in his first grade. All the parents whose children had changed schools indicated that the reason for the children's change in schools was change in residence.

When asked to specifically indicate whether frequent change in schools had affected their children's academic performance, fourteen of the participants were not able to determine whether or not there had been any change in the children's academic performance. Only one participant was able to describe what she discerned as a negative effect of the change of schools on her daughter's academic performance. The rest of the parents indicated that their children were happy in their current schools.

Those parents who said that the children were happy in their current schools attributed this to "open and friendly teachers" or "teachers who did not yell" a lot at the

children. When asked about the quality of education in their children's and neighborhood schools, thirteen rated the schools favorably while two said that the curriculum in the schools was "poor". A few of the participants pointed out that some of the schools that were good in teaching Aboriginal culture to their children had "poor curriculum". They indicated that although teaching and involving the children in their own culture, was good, they felt that this should also be backed up by a strong academic curriculum too.

Overall, when the number of times children changed schools is compared to the number of times the family changed residence, it becomes apparent that most children did not change schools as often as the families changed residence. This has implications for programs that are developed to curb high student mobility and the improvement of academic performance.

4.4.4 Pattern of Mobility

Residential destination decisions have widespread impacts on urban areas. A discussion of where participants move to or from is warranted as a contribution to policy interventions aimed at revitalizing inner city neighbourhoods in Winnipeg. Participants were asked to name all the places they had lived in the last four years and the reasons for moving from each place. Those who had moved a lot could not remember all the places they had lived in, others would only remember the street names, while others were able to remember most of the places. However, the origin and destination neighborhoods that they reported moving to and from show a distinct pattern.

Most of the respondents had moved within the same neighborhood while others had moved within the same street. Some reported that they would never move from the

neighborhood, while others indicated that they disliked the neighborhood and would have liked to live elsewhere if they had adequate resources. Many of those living in public housing took it as an alternative of last resort and did not like living there. Since most of the participants had low incomes, they found affordable accommodation in public housing or low-rent non-profit housing.

An important finding however was that most highly mobile families moved between and within neighborhoods with a similar racial mix and economic characteristics. As reported earlier in the discussion of housing and neighborhood choice, participants tended to move within and between neighborhoods with a high Aboriginal population.

About two thirds of the respondents relied on agency help to find housing while a few others relied on friends and relatives for information about current housing vacancies. Only one reported using the newspaper to locate current housing while another found her current accommodation through a window advertisement at her current house. Availability of public and non-profit housing in this area, and reliance on friends/relatives for information about current housing vacancies, combined to steer the participants into this neighborhood and area. This limited housing choices that would be available for them elsewhere.

4.5 Neighborhood Effects

A series of open-ended questions asked the respondents to describe their residential neighborhoods in terms of people, safety, services, appearance and neighborhood schools. In this study, neighborhood safety was frequently mentioned as a reason for moving from previous neighborhoods or particular streets or sections in the

same neighborhood. Most respondents reported that their current residential neighborhoods were unsafe, or they that they were “bad” neighborhoods. Perceptions of safety depended on whether the respondents had experienced a break-in into their residence, whether there were run-down or boarded-up buildings in the neighborhood, whether there were people who drunk a lot, and whether there were gangs and prostitutes. Findings from this study indicate that neighborhood perception plays a major part in the residents’ decisions to move in and out of certain neighborhoods.

Those respondents who described the neighborhood as bad had experienced a break-in or at least knew someone in the neighborhood whose house had been broken into in the recent past. Some of these respondents indicated that they had moved away from certain sections or streets that they perceived as unsafe, but relocated to another part of the same neighborhood. Many of those who described the neighborhood as very bad were planning to move again shortly. Even those who were not planning to move again in the immediate future were not doing so because they were constrained by their personal, financial and family circumstances.

The findings also reveal that the perceived unsafe character of the neighborhood does not always prompt households to move. Three respondents indicated that although there were break-ins, gangs, hookers or drunks in their neighborhood, they were not looking to move because “they don’t bother me”. Some of those who described their residential neighborhoods negatively but did not want to move out indicated that they either liked the house they were living in or had friends and family in these neighborhoods. Some had learned to cope with and live with the neighborhood problems. Those who lived in public housing were especially constrained because the housing authority would not

move them to an alternate location just because of their negative perceptions concerning their residential neighborhood.

4.6 Social Connections among Residents

4.6.1 Presence of Friends/Relatives in their Neighborhoods

Participants were asked questions regarding their attachment to the neighborhood and community. They were asked to indicate whether they had any relatives and friends in the neighborhood, whether neighbors helped each other out regularly, whether they were members in community and neighborhood associations and whether residents would come together and solve serious neighborhood problems if they arose.

Findings indicate that most participants had friends or relatives living in their current and previous residential neighborhood. When asked whether they helped each other out sometimes, the responses were mixed. Some had moved in to their current neighborhoods in order to be close to friends or relatives but indicated that they rarely did things together. However, others indicated that they helped each other out regularly by baby sitting for one another and driving (those who don't have a car) for grocery shopping. Some did not have any friends or relatives in their current neighborhoods and indicated that all their friends were living in previous neighborhoods of residence.

Overall, the ties between neighborhood residents did not seem strong as some respondents indicated that they kept to themselves, and did not want to bother or be bothered by anyone. When asked if there was anyone in the neighborhood, who would give them a hand when they needed help, more than half of the participants did not mention any of their neighbors. In fact, most of them did not know the next door

neighbors by name because they never did any activities together. In addition, all the participants indicated that they did not have any attachments to their particular neighborhood and did not participate in any neighborhood social activities. They, however, strongly identified with the predominantly Aboriginal identity and culture in the general area of the North End.

4.6.2 Membership in Neighborhood Improvement Associations

Some scholars contend that individuals who are involved in neighborhood associations are unlikely to leave communities they are dissatisfied with because these associations empower residents to take greater control over the situations that affect their lives (Oropesa 1989: 437). Respondents were asked whether they knew of or belonged to any social group, club or neighborhood improvement organization. If participants were members of any group, they were asked to describe the type of activities their group or organization engaged in. If they knew of organizations in their neighborhood but did not belong to them, they were asked to describe the reasons they did not want to join these groups.

Findings in this study however indicate that most respondents in the study did not belong to any neighborhood improvement association and did not know if there was one in their neighborhood. Thus when they had problems in their communities, they opted to move out of the neighborhood or learned to live with the problems. None of the respondents knew that they belonged to their children's schools parent-teacher associations and none of them participated in volunteer activities in their children's

schools. Only two of the respondents occasionally used the programs and services offered in the neighborhood drop in center.

4.7 Chapter Summary

The study was carried out to examine the pattern and reasons for high residential mobility among low-income households with school-age children. Through in-depth interviewing techniques, the findings indicate that a number of personal, social, economic, housing and neighborhood factors have a significant effect on residential moving. The desire for cheap and spacious rental accommodation was cited as one of the most important reason for moving from their previous residences. High rents and the need for more dwelling space were also cited as important reasons for wanting to move from the current residence. Other factors that were found to have a strong effect on residential moving were poor housing conditions, problems with neighbors, relationship breakdown (problems with abusive, drunk partners) and lifestyle factors.

Overall, factors found to have the largest effect on mobility were size of housing, high rents and issues of neighborhood safety. High rents and dissatisfaction with the size of dwelling were the most consistently-cited push factor for all respondents. Because most of the respondents interviewed had large families, they reported the difficulty of finding accommodation that was spacious enough, in good condition, within their price range, safe and available when they needed it. Although most reported no difficulty in finding their current accommodation, the main problem was in locating quality housing that was adequate for their large families. When they found housing that was affordable and adequate, it was deficient in many other aspects.

This led to dissatisfaction and the desire to move once again in the relentless search for housing that satisfied their affordability and space needs (Morris and Winter 1976).

Just as high rents and inadequate living space emerged as important 'push' factors, lower rents and adequate living space were cited as 'pull' factors to a new residence. Although over sixty percent of the participants reported having no particular preference for their current housing, they nonetheless took what was available or was allocated to them because of its low rent or bigger space. Thus, over seventy percent of the respondents indicated that a combination of low rent and sufficient living space was important in their selection of current residence.

The need for low rental accommodation can be attributed to the participants' low incomes. As already noted, the average annual employment income for residents in the William Whyte was a low of \$13,650 in 1996, as compared to \$25,677 for the city of Winnipeg. The average family income for female and one-parent families was \$16,316, as compared to \$26,536 for the City of Winnipeg. The proportion of households with incomes below \$20,000 is 60 percent, a proportion much higher than that of both the inner city and the city of Winnipeg as a whole. This may be due to a number of factors such as low levels of schooling, low labor force participation and dependence on social assistance.

Another noteworthy finding is that the residential relocation decisions were also influenced by the perceived racial discrimination in the housing market. This perception of discrimination served to limit the participants' housing search to and within neighbourhoods with a high Aboriginal population, where chances of discrimination were perceived to be lower. Reliance on public agencies and networks of friends and

relatives for current accommodation information has tended to channel and confine participants' residential mobility into this and similar North End neighborhoods.

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

5.1 Summary of the Findings

The purpose of this study was to describe the pattern and causes of residential mobility among poor families living in a poor inner city neighborhood in Winnipeg. This is to enhance our understanding of the relationship between housing conditions and frequent mobility among low-income households. The findings of this study, though largely exploratory and descriptive in nature, have a bearing on the development of policies and programs meant to address problems of residential mobility and neighborhood revitalization in the inner city.

Based on in-depth face-to-face interviews of a selected sample of fifteen serial movers, a number of important may be made, as summarized below:

1. Frequent residential changes in the William Whyte neighborhood take place in the same neighborhoods or across the street. That is, this study found that serial movers in the William Whyte neighborhood tend to move within the same neighborhood or between neighborhoods with similar characteristics.
2. Frequent residential changes particularly affects Aboriginal single mothers with low levels of education and low household incomes. These lone-parent women have relatively large families and lived in housing with multiple housing deficiencies.
3. These Aboriginal single parent women moved locally within their neighborhood or shifted only from one address to another on the same street or block in the North End area of Winnipeg.

4. While many of the women interviewed were long-term residents of the North End area of Winnipeg, and indicated that they liked living in this predominantly Aboriginal area, a few expressed preferences for housing in other neighborhoods not in the North End area and the inner city.
5. Residential destination decisions were also influenced by the perceived racial discrimination in the housing market; this perception of discrimination served to limit the participants' housing search to and within neighbourhoods with a high Aboriginal population where chances of discrimination were perceived to be lower.
6. Reliance on public agencies and networks of friends and relatives for current accommodation information tended to channel and confine participants' residential mobility into this and similar North End neighborhoods.
7. Since these households mainly moved within the general area of the North End, the negative effect on community social ties was modest.
8. The need to find more room for a family of growing children, and the need to find cheaper accommodation was commonly cited as one of the main reasons for moving while other families moved to find safer living environments.
9. A number of family moves were propelled by other negative experiences. These included concerns about gangs and hookers on the street, fires, evictions, cockroaches and refusals of landlords to make needed repairs.
10. Although a majority of the families interviewed indicated that they moved for reasons of coping with substandard housing, unaffordable rent and unsafe

neighborhoods/streets, none of the moves had resulted in the resolution or significant improvement of their housing and neighborhood conditions.

11. Despite the existence of many houses to choose from when they decided to move, these houses offered them no real choices because their conditions were often similar to the ones that they wanted to move from – too small, in very bad shape and too expensive.
12. The act of moving was seen as a given as respondents seemed to expect that frequent mobility would continue as long as the circumstances that necessitated frequent moves did not change.
13. Although the persistent movers portrayed a sense of helplessness about never having the financial resources necessary to escape the cycle of mobility, a some of the families nonetheless described their mobility experiences positively. Skills in adapting to change were identified as positive outcomes of frequent moving.
14. Those respondents who had moved more frequently as a result of an eviction or family problems often viewed mobility most negatively. Families in these situations described moving as hard and stressful.

Overall, it is apparent that housing problems play a critical role in causing and perpetuating a pattern of frequent residential changes experienced by the sample of lone-parent women who participated in the present study. Findings for this study suggest that there is a close relationship between residential mobility, family size and availability of adequate affordable housing, especially for larger families. Because of limited affordable housing that is suitable for larger families, these families often moved to houses that they

consistently found inadequate. The difficulty of finding quality affordable housing that was large enough to meet their space requirements, and in the neighborhoods of their choice, was related to the participants' low household income, long-term unemployment and dependence on social assistance (as their major source of household income). Low incomes (due to long-term unemployment and dependency on social assistance) limited these families to accommodation that is at the lower end of rental housing market.

Because of the movers' low incomes, when their families moved they experienced very little improvement in their housing and neighborhood quality. The frequency of family moves is thus increased by families moving into deficient housing with the hope that they would be able to find something suitable in the next and subsequent moves. In the next section, the specific variables that were found to influence residential mobility, and how these variables are linked to the literature reviewed in Chapter Two are presented.

5.2 Factors Influencing Frequent Residential Mobility in the Study Area

Literature reviewed in Chapter Two, suggests that residential mobility is determined by various factors that work together or in combination to influence mobility. Factors such as age, family size and structure, socio-economic status (Cook and Bruin 1997; South and Crowder 1997), housing tenure, housing characteristics (McHugh et al. 1990), neighborhood and public school quality (Lee et al. 1994; Harris 1995) are some of the factors that affect mobility in and out of neighborhoods. Often these factors are interrelated and interdependent. How some of these factors affected mobility in the William Whyte neighborhood is discussed next.

5.2.1 Housing Tenure and Length of Residence in a Neighborhood

The results of this study are consistent with previous research that has found that renters are more likely to move when they become dissatisfied with their housing (McHugh, Gober and Reid 1990). All the householders interviewed were renters who reported experiencing problems with the housing or neighborhood they moved to. Most of the householders interviewed had not lived in their houses for long. However they had lived in the area for a long time and were used to living in the area. Even when they were very dissatisfied with the housing in the area and had many neighborhood problems, they said that they would not live anywhere else. This finding is line with previous research that suggests that in addition to housing tenure, time spent in a neighborhood significantly reduce the likelihood of mobility out of the neighborhood (Earhart and Weber 1996; Bolan 1997).

5.2.2 Age of Households

In Chapter 2, it was indicated that young households are more mobile than older households and that the propensity to move is highest during the family formation, child-bearing and child-launching phases of the life cycle (Varady 1983; Rossi 1955; South and Deane 1993; Earhart and Weber 1996). The findings of this study support this view in that most of the participants who moved frequently were in their child-bearing and child-launching years (between the age of 25 and 40 years). This finding is also consistent with other studies that have found that chronic mobility is pronounced among Aboriginal families with pre-school and school-aged children (Chu 1991; Clathworthy 1996; CMHC 1996b). The respondents indicated that they moved frequently in order to try to get

housing that was big enough for growing children and an environment that was safe for the children as further discussed in 5.2.3 below.

5.2.3 Family Size and Household Composition.

This study also supports the view that residential mobility increases with family size and that households with large families tend to experience frequent moves because they are always trying to find a place to live that is safe, adequate and affordable (Rossi 1980; Speare 1974; Buerkle 1997). Most of the respondents interviewed had between three and seven children while some households had more than one family living with them. Given their limited resources, larger families particularly reported that finding adequate housing for their families in neighborhoods of their choice was extremely difficult. A number of families with five or more persons indicated that they experienced overcrowding, whether they lived in public housing or private-market housing. They further pointed out that it was difficult to locate spacious accommodation that was within their price range in their preferred area of residence. These families therefore had a repeated pattern of mobility that was characterized by inadequate and substandard housing. Although frequent moving became a means of alleviating the stress of inadequate housing and high rents (Kearns and Smith 1994), it did not seem to resolve their housing situation.

The findings for this study also resonate with mobility studies that have found that: a) race determines the kind of neighborhood people tend to move to (Harris 1995; St. John et al. 1995), and b) economically vulnerable populations such as female-headed and racial minority households tend to move within particular urban settings because they have

limited neighborhood and housing options (Cook and Bruin 1997; South and Crowder 1998b; St. John and Edwards 1995). Although most of the participants interviewed were Aboriginal lone parent women with low levels of education and income, these respondents tended to move within the same neighborhoods or between neighborhoods with similar racial and economic characteristics. Most indicated that they were more comfortable living with other Aboriginal people and cited fear of racial prejudice as reasons why they would not want to move to neighborhoods without a similar racial composition. Although some expressed preferences for racially mixed neighborhoods, they did wish to move into areas where their children would likely encounter racial prejudice. These fears were not unfounded, as one participant narrated how she had once moved into a house in the Maples but had to move back to the downtown because her children were continually called "savages" by her neighbors.

The single-parent women (13 out of 15 participants) remained outside the labor force in order to raise young children, a factor that translates into long-term dependence on social assistance. Two of the women who worked were employed in low service clerical and service jobs. Thus, dependence on social assistance and employment in low-level paying jobs translated into limited financial resources that would not afford them quality suitable housing in better quality neighborhoods. Because their low incomes could not enable them to get into decent housing, each house they went into fell short of their expectations and needs. They were always dissatisfied with many of the houses they moved into and thus constantly moved to try and locate adequate housing that they could afford. The interplay of such factors as family size, race, gender, employment, education

and income placed these households at a disadvantage in the housing market and influenced the chronic mobility among this population.

5.3 Housing and Neighborhood Characteristics

Fourteen of the participants were dissatisfied with their current accommodation and neighborhood environment. The respondents' level of satisfaction with their housing was strongly influenced by the quality of housing, the living space, and amount of rent paid for the unit. This study challenges those studies that have suggested that there is no relationship between house size, quality of the dwelling and mobility (McHugh et al. 1990) because the findings here indicate that these factors do influence mobility behavior (Speare 1974; Rossi 1980). The number of bedrooms in a house and the number of children in a household determined the level of housing satisfaction and thus determined whether families sought alternative accommodation. Their dissatisfaction related for the most part to one or more of the following housing consumption standards: affordability, accessibility, suitability and adequacy (CMHC 1996a, 1996b), as further discussed below.

5.3.1 Affordability and Accessibility

The Canada Housing and Mortgage Corporation (CMHC) defines affordability as the ratio of housing cost to household income. In Canada, the generally-accepted affordability standard for housing suggests that households should not pay more than 30% of their gross income for housing. From this perspective, households that spend more than 30% of their gross household income for housing are deemed to be experiencing housing affordability problems. While this study did not compute the gross household income that each family spent on housing, twelve of those interviewed reported an annual

household income of \$11,000 - 20,000 and two reported an income of between \$21,000 - 26,000. The twelve also indicated that social assistance was their major source of income. Since social assistance was the major source of income for a majority the interviewees, the problem of housing affordability ties in with the inadequacy of the housing allowance for social assistance recipients (CMHC 1996a, 1996b; Clathworthy 1983, 1996). Although housing in the North End is characterized by low rents, the rental allowances provided by the provincial rental assistance are much lower than market rents. By the year 2000, the provincial government was still using rental allowances first established in 1993, as shown in Table 9.

Table 9: Provincial Social Assistance: Monthly Rental Allowance Schedule, 1993

Family Size	Basic Rent*	All Inclusive Rent
2	\$285	\$387
3	\$310	\$430
4	\$351	\$471
5	\$371	\$488
6	\$387	\$513

Source: McIntyre 2000

Many houses in the area have rent levels much higher than the provincial expectations. Most of the interviewees paid an average monthly rent of \$452. The social assistance transfer payments were simply not sufficient for most households to obtain adequate housing in the current rental market. As a result there were not many quality suitable houses in the area that were accessible to many of the families on social assistance. Unless the social rental allowance is increased to reflect current market rents, many of the highly mobile families cannot begin to improve their housing situation.

* Social assistance benefits pay for hydro, gas and water

5.3.2 Housing Suitability and Adequacy

Housing suitability refers to the relationship between the living space requirements of the household and the nature and amount of space available in the dwelling unit (CMHC 1996a). The most frequently employed indicators of suitability are density or crowding indices, for example, persons per room and floor area per person. Households with more than one-person per room or more than two persons per bedroom are defined as “crowded”. Another measurement for crowding is the sharing of a dwelling by two or more families (Clathworthy 1983:50).

Findings in this study indicate that when families viewed their housing as not meeting their needs and expectations for quality and size, the household became dissatisfied with their housing and made attempts to reduce the dissatisfaction by moving “so as to bring their housing in conformity with their needs” (Morris and Winter 1976). This ‘housing deficit’ concept can be applicable to larger households in the William Whyte area, who were relentlessly moving in search of more spacious accommodation. Units appropriate for large families (i.e. 4+ bedrooms) are few and most are available at rent levels that are unaffordable by families in this study.

These findings also re-affirms Clathworthy’s (1996) conclusion that crowding tends to be higher among Aboriginal family households and that these Aboriginal families experienced household density levels that exceed the crowding threshold, as shown in Table 10.

Table 10: Crowding Threshold by Household Size

Household size	Minimum no. of bedrooms	Maximum density ratio (Persons per bedroom)
1	1	1.0
2	1	2.0
3	2	1.5
4	3	1.3
5	3	1.7
6	3	2.0
7	5	1.4
8+	5	1.6

(Source: Clathworthy 1983)

The unusually high incidence of overcrowding among Aboriginal families appears to result from the much larger size of families and the scarcity of larger (four or more bedroom) low-cost rental housing units in the neighborhood. Housing conditions in their residential environments are grossly inadequate while current social assistance/shelter allowances are fixed at such low levels that it makes it very difficult for households to acquire adequate quality housing in other neighborhoods. The problem of inadequacy for neighborhood residents is a combination of poverty, limited choices and old housing stock (Beavis et al. 1997; Chu, 1991; CMHC 1996a, 1996b).

Housing adequacy refers to the physical quality of the housing unit such as structural soundness and state of repair. In the study area housing adequacy is associated with the fact that 62.5% of the housing stock was constructed before 1946 (Statistics Canada special tabulation of the 1996 census data). As is characteristic of the housing stock in Winnipeg's inner city, there is a high proportion of dwelling units that are boarded up, abandoned or in need of major repairs. Since the concentration of poor quality housing is fairly high in this neighborhood, the consumption of poor quality housing tends to be

higher among single-parent women-headed families with young to school age children (Clathworthy, 1996).

This study's findings not only confirm earlier mobility findings that most Aboriginal households experience a high incidence of housing consumption deficiencies, but that most Aboriginal moves result in less improvement in their housing situation (Clathworthy 1996). In the current study, the housing circumstances of the residents, at each move, failed to meet their needs and expectations for size, quality and rent levels. Because moving did not resolve the housing needs of most of these poor families, the persistent search for a better and more affordable accommodation further accentuates the problem of chronic mobility.

5.3.3 Neighborhood Perceptions

Consistent with previous research, this study found that over half of the respondents moved within neighborhoods with high poverty rates. These families reported that this and other neighborhoods in the North End were poor and unsafe. Concerns with neighborhood safety, fires and poor housing influenced their feelings of insecurity and dissatisfaction with the neighborhood environment. However, when residents' dissatisfaction with the neighborhood environment was weighed against the social ties, racial mix and income level, the decision for many was to move between the neighborhoods and/or North End.

While the findings of this study suggests that although neighborhoods play an important role as predictors of housing satisfaction and mobility (Cook and Bruin 1993; Harris 1995; Oropesa, 1989; Lee et. al., 1994) participants in the study could not move

out solely because they were dissatisfied with the neighborhood. They moved only when they were dissatisfied with their housing, but most relocated within the neighborhood or adjacent neighborhoods. Similarly, residents' perception of such neighborhood characteristics as neighborhood crime, neighborhood deterioration, neighborhood socio-economic status, social ties and the quality of public schools did not determine their movement out of the neighborhood. The existence of problems in the neighborhood influenced participants to move from one part of the neighborhood to another or from one block to another on the same street. Most of these households did not move from the neighborhood despite being dissatisfied by this residential environment. They recognized that given their meagre economic resources, they had very few housing and neighborhood options (Spain 1990). These households, thus, learned to live in housing environments that they were dissatisfied with by developing what Bruin and Cook (1997) refer to as "unconventional" housing preferences.

5.4 Community Ties

Mobility literature has suggested that social relations are important sources of social support for families (Coleman 1988; Pribesh and Downey 1999). Some have argued that close ties to family can hinder geographic and social relocation of low-income people. Yet others argue that residential mobility breaks ties between residents in a community. This disruption of social ties in turn negatively affects children's academic attainment (Coleman 1988,1990). The erosion of children's experience of geographic community in highly mobile contexts leads to negative consequences for the long-term well-being of children of highly mobile households.

However, when the pattern of mobility was examined for respondents in this study, it was found that most moved locally within their neighborhood or local area. As in Lerner's (1990) study, findings from the present study suggest that local moves did not adversely affect residents' social ties and were even viewed positively by some respondents. In this connection, a significant finding however was that these single mothers had fewer and weaker social ties to start with, and very low neighbor support and interaction. In addition, most of the respondents did not have strong attachments to their community and did not participate in any neighborhood social activities. For example, the participants who reported that they had moved into this and previous neighborhoods because they had a friend or relatives there, also reported that they rarely did things together. Other respondents reported that they kept to themselves. This is in line with Gunnarsson and Cochran's (1990) hypothesis that single mothers who have fewer social and personal ties have much lower neighbor support than that of single mothers of a higher class, and that this lessened support might be due to living in substandard housing areas where crime and fear are high.

Active participation in neighborhood activities and events enable local residents to develop social connections and mutual self-help, and they begin to identify more closely with the neighborhood and community in which they live in (Oropesa 1989). However, none of the respondents in the study belonged to a neighborhood improvement association, and did not know if there was one in their neighborhood. Thus when they had problems in their communities, they opted to move out of the neighborhood or learned to live with the problems. It is this kind of weak social ties that is viewed as one of the key

factors that contributes to inner city decay and is the cause of children's problems in impoverished neighborhoods.

5.5 Housing Choice versus Constraints

In the literature on residential mobility, moving is seen as a process through which households adjust their consumption to suit their needs or preferences. Moves are viewed as rational decisions that are voluntarily undertaken by households either up or down the housing hierarchy. Mobility modeling processes suggest that mobility is a rational choice where individuals count the benefits and costs of moving before deciding to move. Thus, a key issue in determining mobility seems to be if people can choose whether and where to move to and if they have enough resources to cope with the move (Stokols and Shumaker, 1982; Lerner 1990). However, choice is inextricably related to constraints. All the actors' judgments about possible courses of action and choices occur within a wider social structure, affecting division of both resources at the disposal of actors and opportunities (Mandic 2001). Housing and neighborhood choice therefore depends on the individual preferences as well as circumstances and the given range of options.

Some of the participants in this study found it difficult to determine between voluntary and forced moves as circumstances in their lives were such that a voluntary move could turn out to be forced and vice versa. Although they also reported that there were plenty of houses to choose from, these houses were of very poor condition and most did not have enough space for their families. Besides, they could not afford those that were big enough for them or those that were located in neighborhoods that were out of the inner city. Even those who had previously lived in public housing had not lived in their

preferred locations, because the housing agency assigns available housing using criteria that does not take into consideration most of the applicant's feelings concerning certain locations.

The findings here indicate that residential mobility for the poor families in this study is a constrained choice that does not resolve housing needs or preferences. These low-income households do not move "upwards" in the housing hierarchy to better houses and neighborhoods. Instead, they tend to move "laterally" or horizontally between houses of similar marginal quality and inadequate space requirements, because this is the only kind of housing that is accessible, given their meager economic resources.

Another significant finding in this study is that what appear to be "erratic" and "short-notice" decisions to move (Roistacher 1975; Short 1996) have in fact been carefully considered and well thought out. What would appear as personal preferences for constant relocation are usually dictated by the socio-economic circumstances of the movers and the housing market in which they operate. Further, the findings of this study indicate that despite a reduced locus of control, chronic movers still have their own sense of agency to act when housing conditions become unbearable. Even with little resources for moving, they still take charge and move their children out of bad housing and neighborhood conditions. Consequently, the reasons that one would expect might compel them to stay in one location are the same reasons that motivate them to keep moving. As in Bartlett's (1997) research, the participants in the current study moved even when they knew that it would be no better in the new housing or neighborhood. Given that their meager resources limited their ability to compete in the housing market, this also limited

their housing choices to what Spain (1990) calls “neighborhoods of last resort”, with the most deteriorated, albeit least expensive, housing.

Thus, for the low-income single mothers, the decisions to move or stay in a given residential environment was influenced by both family structure and constrained resources. Because their choices are confined to the most deteriorated and least expensive housing (Spain 1990), they move frequently in an attempt to reduce housing costs. However, with each move their housing affordability declines and housing quality does not improve. Thus, what the female householders experience at each move is horizontal or downward mobility. Even when they had “developed ‘unconventional’ housing preferences” (Bruin and Cook (1997), these female-headed households could not totally ‘avoid’ dissatisfaction with their housing environments. Instead, as housing affordability declined and housing quality failed to improve at each moved, they became more and more dissatisfied and move frequently as a way of dealing with the unsatisfactory housing conditions.

5.6 Residential Mobility and Inadequate Housing Conditions

The preceding discussion has identified several dimensions of the housing problems experienced by low-income families. The housing deficiencies cited by the respondents in this study as the reasons for frequent residential moving are interrelated and interdependent. Housing affordability and suitability were the most frequently cited reasons for recent and past moves. As indicated earlier, the problem of housing affordability is a manifestation of an extreme level of poverty among Aboriginal single-parent women and leads to the problems of housing suitability and adequacy. Since these

poor single-parent households could not afford to live in better houses, they moved frequently as a way of coping with substandard housing environments.

This finding confirms Spain's (1990) contention that female householders' meager economic resources limit their ability to compete in the housing market, and are thus disproportionately located in central city neighborhoods with the oldest most deteriorated housing and lowest rents. This interpretation resonates well with Cook and Bruin's (1997) assertion that female-headed and racial minority households tend to have the fewest housing and neighborhood options because their mobility is restricted within a particular urban setting due to housing market discrimination and limited financial resources. According to Clathworthy (1996) and Beavis et al. (1998), chronic mobility among Aboriginal households in major Canadian cities is due to a combination of the 'factors of multiple disadvantage' such as race, gender, education and income. Consequently, the urban Aboriginals continue to experience extremely poor housing conditions because they have lower incomes than the general population. Aboriginal single parent families, large families and women-headed families were found to be worst hit by adverse economic conditions and very poor housing conditions (Beavis et al. 1998). Aboriginal female headed household in this study also tended to have larger families. Because of their experience of multiple disadvantages, Aboriginal female-headed households moved frequently in a bid to resolve their housing situation.

For participants in this study, housing problems reflect their low household income and reduced levels of purchasing power in the housing market. Lower incomes are attributed to lower levels of educational attainment, employment status and dependence on welfare. Many of these low-income households were therefore forced to trade off

quality and/or housing space in order to acquire housing that they could afford. Moreover, many of the households paid rents that were too high for accommodation that was inadequate in terms of quality, and/or unsuitable in light of the household's space needs.

5.7 Implications for Planning Policy

This study suggests that for a majority of highly mobile families, constant moving can be explained by a combination of multiple factors: low levels of education, low labor force participation, low household incomes and a housing market that pushes them into occupying poorly maintained housing stock at the lowest end of the private rental sector. Despite moving frequently, serial movers continue to live in low quality and often-unsuitable private rented housing.

The reasons for mobility warrant the consideration of more effective policies and programs to directly address the housing conditions as experienced by the highly mobile families, especially those families with young and school-aged children and headed by single low-income Aboriginal women who depend on social assistance. Most of these families need low cost rental units that are large enough to accommodate their families. However, there are no such units that are currently available in sufficient numbers and at affordable rates to accommodate these low-income families. For community planning to be effective in the neighborhood the input of these women should be sought and accommodated by planners and agencies working to revitalize neighborhoods like William Whyte area.

Our findings indicate that most frequent movers have very low incomes and have been unemployed for a long time, such that initiatives to resolve the problem of housing in

the inner city should have a 'housing plus' solution. This means that initiatives attempting to increase the supply of adequate, suitable and affordable housing for low-income families must also take into account the need for: a) appropriate training and employment and b) child care, for low-income single mothers. Appropriate training and employment would provide income stability for families and individuals in this neighborhood. Income stability for households will play a significant part in improving the quality of life for these households and enable them to make better and informed housing and neighborhood choices. Neighborhood revitalization programs should, consider providing more economic opportunities for the poor in this neighborhoods so that families can earn a steady income that could enable them to move upwards in the social and housing hierarchy.

Present initiatives do not seem sufficiently stress attention to the pressing needs of most of the households headed by the low-income single mothers on social assistance. Programs that have attempted to provide adequate, accessible and affordable housing for low-income people and Aboriginal people in general have mainly been geared towards home ownership. While these innovative approaches have assisted many Aboriginal people to access home ownership, they have not addressed the housing needs of the most vulnerable Aboriginal population i.e. the single parent women with larger households and on social assistance. Thus, community development organizations should develop more innovative approaches that can reach, and cater for, those who are most marginalised.

For many of the low-income single mothers, home ownership is not a viable or realistic option. If the housing needs of these women are to be catered for, the development of affordable quality rental properties should be considered. As well, the concerns of low-income renters should be identified and incorporated into neighborhood

improvement programs. Community building initiatives should also take more gender considerations into their program planning and implementation.

Like earlier studies (Clathworthy 1983; 1996), these findings suggest that present housing programs especially for low-income Aboriginal single mothers, are clearly not operating at the scale necessary to cope with the housing needs of this population. Current community development and planning initiatives do not seem to have either identified the factors that affect housing consumption among low-income single mothers nor have taken into account their viewpoints concerning housing deficiencies in formulation of housing programs. As such, all the service providers should seriously reconsider present approaches to dealing with housing in the inner city and specifically the issue of persistent residential mobility among Aboriginal low-income single mothers.

It is acknowledged that frequent residential changes may lead to frequent school changes for children. But the study findings challenge assumptions by the school authorities that suggest that parents change housing (and therefore transfer children from their schools) because of difficulty in locating safe and affordable housing within the boundaries of their children's schools, or lack of knowledge with rental markets in their neighborhoods. A number of respondents interviewed indicated that they did not find any difficulty in locating accommodation once they decided to move and that there were many houses to choose from. Their main problem was not their inability to locate rental housing, but their inability to pay for decent housing.

This study also suggests that since most of the movers relocated within the same neighborhood or neighborhoods in close proximity, their children did not change schools as often as they changed residence. In fact, the change of schools was minimal, as

compared to changes in residence. The finding that a majority of the children of chronic residential movers did not change schools as often as they changed residence suggests that poor academic performance for highly mobile children may be explained by such factors as poor housing conditions or neighborhood environments, rather than frequent changes of residence.

The current study was conducted with only those who had moved two or more times in the past four years. The study did not examine the views of those who had used policy interventions programs such as community development workers and housing registries. While it is possible that such programs might have some impact on frequent movers, it is clear from chronic movers in this study that such interventions have not stopped them from constant moving. For respondents in this study, it is evident that situations in their lives are such that they have to move as a way of coping with their poor housing conditions, or trying to find a resolution to their housing problems.

While not wishing to detract from particular successes of various initiatives to curb high student mobility, this study calls for a further re-evaluation of these initiatives with a view to render them more culturally appropriate. It is likely that housing programs that provide residents with a sense of control over their environment should result in residential and neighborhood satisfaction for participants, and thus lead to family stability in the neighborhood. Programs that support an internal locus of control would positively influence both housing and neighborhood satisfaction.

Given the role that poor quality housing plays in frequent mobility, this study supports those who see a solution to chronic mobility in improved access both to employment and secure affordable housing. Since the study indicates that a number of

factors come together to cause persistent relocation, community planning for this neighborhood should incorporate more non-physical planning goals for it to be more holistic. Neighborhood revitalization strategies for this neighborhood should strive to make physical development more of a vehicle for achieving social and economic equity for Aboriginal lone parent women.

5.8 Contributions of this Study

Most residential mobility research has been done using census data showing comparisons of place of residence at two points in time – five years apart. This provides a misleading picture of mobility because such data does not include a record of all other changes of residence within those two points in time. Moves that occur when people live in a residence for only a short time are under-reported or missed altogether. Because the bulk of mobility research has tended to examine residential locations only at one or two points in time, it has been difficult to say anything conclusive about the residential mobility patterns and changes in housing and neighborhood quality resulting from the moves. This study records residential mobility histories for the study period in order to capture all the moves that occur during this period, and the origin and destination neighborhood for each move. These mobility records determine the pattern of mobility and factors, at each move, that have initiated the decision to change residence.

One of the main limitations of most mobility studies is that they are predominantly quantitative and have mainly depended on the use of aggregate population data and general behavioral mobility models. These strategies do not provide adequate contextualized knowledge on the nature of residential mobility between different

population groups or within individual groups. To overcome these limitations, the present study collected qualitative data through in-depth interviews with families in order to obtain a clearer insight into the issues of housing and residential mobility within a sample of low-income individuals in Winnipeg. The face-to-face in-depth interviews provided opportunities for the highly mobile population to share their histories, and perceptions of housing issues, with the interviewer. The mobility histories gave the frequent movers an identity and agency beyond their position as marginalised groups. This enables us to better understand how different life experiences have combined to place them in a position of constant mobility.

The main merit of this study therefore lies in its examination of the pattern and reasons for frequent mobility among low-income families in an impoverished neighborhood using qualitative interviewing. As discussed earlier, mobility studies have often been conducted with mainstream population samples using quantitative data. The present study advances previous knowledge about the residential mobility of the urban poor, particularly poor Aboriginal lone-parent women in Winnipeg. In Canada, this study goes along way to highlight the plight of poor Aboriginal lone parent women, an area of investigation that has been neglected for a long time - especially for Winnipeg, a city with the largest Aboriginal population in Canada.

5.9 Implications for Future Research

The findings in this study open a number of avenues for future research. First they support a call for a long-term study of a larger sample of respondents and their children. It is important to identify if and how persistent relocation influences long-term behavioral outcomes for children from highly mobile families. The relationship between mobility and

academic performance can be clarified by investigating other factors that cause families to move like poverty, family status and the kinds of neighborhoods that mobile students and families live in.

Multiple factors impact academic achievement for children. It would be beneficial to investigate other factors associated with residential mobility, such as race, income and family structure, so as to determine the connection between these factors and poor academic performance. This would guide the development of individualized programs that address the specific areas of concern for highly mobile students and families.

Findings in this study, based on the in-depth face-to-face interviewing of highly mobile Aboriginal single parent women of William Whyte neighborhood, indicate that both personal and structural factors influence their chronic mobility. Research that compares the pattern and causes of moving for Aboriginal and other disadvantaged non-Aboriginal groups would provide additional insight into the factors that influence the residential mobility of different groups.

Although the need for affordable housing has been shown to lead to a high concentrations of poor Aboriginals in the inner city, racial discrimination in other parts of Winnipeg's housing market was also cited as a factor that limited people's housing search to areas and neighborhoods with (perceived) lower chances of discrimination. There is therefore, a need to investigate how discrimination due to race, gender and socio-economic status influences Aboriginal households as well as non-Aboriginal households that reside in impoverished neighborhoods in Winnipeg.

Planners, researchers and community organizations who want to better understand the effects of frequent residential changes on student achievement and neighborhood

instability in Winnipeg should collaborate to examine the relationship between mobility and race, gender, socio-economic levels, and family status and housing conditions. Both quantitative and qualitative analyses of the relationships between these factors should be carried out in order to guide formulation of policies intended to build stable schools and communities.

Literature has suggested that female householders' "move into certain 'neighborhoods of last resort' tends to mark the beginning of the eventual abandonment of that housing" (Spain 1990, p. 90). Given such an assertion, and given the high rates of housing abandonment in Winnipeg's inner core, it would be worthwhile to investigate the relationship between the concentration of Aboriginal female householders and housing abandonment in parts of Winnipeg's inner city.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Appendix A1: Introduction/Greetings

Hello, we are conducting a study on the residential mobility among families living in downtown Winnipeg. We want to talk to families with school age children. Do you have children living here? Are they of school age? (Yes/No).

If No... (End of interview). Thank You.

If Yes... proceed: Could I speak to a parent (caregiver) or the head of the household?

This interview has some questions about where you are living now and where you have lived in the past. There are also a few questions about yourself and your household. May I ask you some questions? (If Yes, have the respondent read and sign *statement of informed consent form*).

Appendix A2: Statement of Informed Consent

This research is being conducted as part of the requirements for the Master of City Planning at the University of Manitoba. The research is being conducted among families with children living in the inner city of Winnipeg. The purpose of the research is to understand why families move frequently and how frequent moves impact communities and schools in the inner city. An understanding of the context and causes of frequent family moves can help schools to put in place more effective interventions to reduce the number of pupil transfers in the inner city schools. This will also help planners and all the agencies working with the community to design strategies that assist families to access decent, affordable housing in the neighborhood and locations of their choice. The interview questions will include cost and condition of housing, how residents feel about their neighborhoods and how often they have moved in the last four years and why.

Your Rights as a Participant

Your signature on the Informed Consent Form indicates that you have understood, to your satisfaction, the information regarding participation in the research project and agree to participate as a participant. In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the researcher, or involved institution, from their legal and professional responsibilities. You should feel free to ask for clarification or new information during the course of the interview. You are also free not to answer any of the questions during the interview or can stop the interview at anytime. If you have any questions concerning your participation in this project, you may contact the Department of City Planning, University of Manitoba, and ask for Rae Bridgman (advisor) Phone 474-7532.

Informed Consent Form

I give permission for the researcher to ask questions about my housing history and related issues. I understand that my answers are confidential. I will not be identified by name in the reports that are written from the research. I further understand that I can refuse to answer some questions/sections or can stop the interview at any time.

Signature of participant _____

Signature of researcher _____

Date of interview _____

Appendix A3: Interview Instrument⁴

A. General Household Information

1. Including you, how many people live here? _____

What are the ages of children living with you and how many are attending school? (The table below was used to record the information for each child.)

First Name	Age (Years)	Sex (M, F)	Relationship to respondent	Current school (1999/00)	Grade	Previous school(s)

(More space was used where needed)

2. Are there other people who occasionally stay with you? Yes/No _____

3. If yes... please what is their relationship to you? _____

4. When do they stay with you and for how long? _____

B. Current Housing Situation

1. Tell me more about your current home.

Location (street name only) _____

⁴ Various parts adapted from the following:

- Newman, S. J. and Duncan, G. J. (1979). Residential problems, dissatisfaction and mobility. Journal of American Planning Association, 45:154-166.
- Varady, D. P. (1983). Determinants of residential mobility decisions: The role of government services in relation to other factors. Journal of the American Planning Association, 49(2): 184-99.
- Shafer, D. and Primo, N. (1985). The determinants of household migration in and out of distressed neighborhoods. Urban Studies, 22, 339-347
- Higgitt, N. C. (1994). Factors influencing residential mobility among families with children living in a low-income area of Winnipeg, Manitoba. Funded project by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC). Ottawa, CR File 6585/H061-2.
- Buerkle, Karla. (1997). Mobile Children And Families: Qualitative and Quantitative Explorations on the Meaning and Impact of Residential Mobility and School Changes. Ph.D Thesis, University of Minnesota

- How long have you lived here? (years/months) _____
- What is your housing situation (owner/renting/staying with family or friends/staying in shelter) _____
- Reasons for moving here _____
- How did you find this place? _____
(Probe: newspaper, friend, school or agency help)
- Did you have any difficulties finding this place? _____
- Were there very many places to choose from? (Yes/No) _____

2. What type of dwelling do you live in? (Researcher to observe the kind of dwelling and indicate whether it was one of the following. If participant was not being interviewed at home, researcher asked the participant to identify and describe the dwelling).

- Single family detached house
- Room(s) in a single family house _____
- Duplex _____
- Townhouse _____
- Apartment building _____
- Mobile home _____
- Other _____

3. Briefly describe the condition of the dwelling? (If the participant was interviewed at home, the researcher took notes on the description of the dwelling; if participant was interviewed away from their residence, participants were asked them to provide the description).

- Exterior _____
- Interior _____

4. Were you able to choose where to move? (Yes/No) _____

If yes, why did you choose to move this place? (Probed in terms of following reasons)

- Amount rent paid _____
- Layout and amenities _____
- Location, _____
- Neighborhood, _____
- Near friends/family _____
- Familiar with building/area _____
- Other _____

5. Does the current accommodation have enough space for your family? _____

6. If renting, how much do you pay for this place per month?

How much rent do you pay per month?	\$
How much do you pay for utilities?	\$
How much do you pay for parking?	\$
TOTAL MONTHLY HOUSING COSTS	\$

7. How would you describe the rent for this unit? (Probed whether Fair/Unfair) _____

8. Do you have any housing problems in your present home? (Probed in terms of the following)

- Problems with cracks in walls/sagging floors/ crumbling ceilings _____
- Problems with drains/hot water/toilets/sinks and tubs not working _____
- Problems with rats, cockroaches and other vermin _____
- Whether the house is warm enough _____

9. Can you tell me if you have any problems in your current home related to the landlord or caretaker? Probed such aspects as:

- Not prompt in fixing things when requested _____
- Does not keep building/surroundings clean _____
- No problems _____
- Other comments on the management of the building _____

10. How would you compare this place with the one you last moved from? Probed whether

- It is the same _____
- This place is better than ... _____
- The other place was better _____
- I don't know, or difficult to tell _____

11. Do you intend to move again? (Yes/No) _____

12. When you are deciding about whether to move or not, what kinds of things do you consider? Probed on the following factors:

- Effects on children _____
- Need to get closer to family/friends _____
- Type of neighborhood _____
- Adequacy of housing _____
- Affordability _____
- Condition of dwelling _____
- Availability of laundry facilities or play space for children _____

Others _____

C. Mobility History

1. How many times have you moved since January 1997 (last four years). _____
2. Tell me more about all the places that you have lived from January 1997 to the present, starting with the current residence.

Location (Address)	Length of stay (From ---To--)	Housing type	Tenure (Ownership)	Reason for moving out

Did your children have to change schools? Yes/No _____

3. If yes, how many times has each child had to change schools in the last four years? (Probed for each child using the table below)

Child's Name or position in family	Number of times child changed schools	Reason (s) for moving from each school

4. Tell me how moving makes you feel? For example, what was good about moving? What was bad when moving?

5. What effect has moving had on your children's academic performance? _____

6. Tell me how you feel about the school(s) and your child's school performance. _____

D. Neighborhood Information/Perceptions

1. How would you describe this neighborhood? Participants were asked to comment on any or all of the following aspects:

- The people: (Friendly/Noisy/Etc.....) _____
- The kids (Well behaved/Noisy....) _____
- The streets/yards/grounds and houses (Clean and well kept?) _____
- Playing spaces (Availability/Adequacy) _____
- Adequacy of street lighting _____
- Any other aspect/comment _____
- How does this neighborhood compare to the one(s) you lived in previously? _____

4. What kinds of problems are present in this neighborhood? Probed in terms of the following issues:

- People breaking into homes to try and steal something _____
- Sale and use of illegal drugs _____
- People being robbed, mugged or robbed on the streets _____
- Existence of gangs or hookers _____
- Other (Please specify) _____

5. Do landlords or residents take proper care of their property? E.g., are yards, houses, and grounds well kept? _____

6. Are there abandoned or boarded up or run down buildings in your neighborhood? (Yes/No) _____

Please explain whether this is a big or small problem _____

7. Have you personally or other people you know personally experienced any specific problems in this neighborhood? Yes/No _____

If Yes, what kinds of problems? _____

8. How do you feel about this neighborhood as a place to live? Probed whether they like it or not, whether they feel safe or unsafe? _____

9. Out of the locations that you have lived, which could you rate as the best one? _____
Why do you rate it that way? _____

10. Which one could you rate as the worst place you ever lived and why? _____

E. Social Connections

1. Do you have any friends or relatives living in this neighborhood? Yes/ No _____
2. If you have relatives/friends living in your neighborhood, how helpful are they in helping you out with kids and other things? (Probed the extent of help e.g. do they sometimes help, are not helpful at all, generally helpful or very helpful?) _____

3. How well do you know your neighbors? (Probed whether knows them very well, they are acquaintances, friends or they help each other out sometimes) _____

4. What kinds of things do you do (if any) with your neighbors and other neighborhood residents? _____

5. Do you know of any social groups, clubs, or organizations in this neighborhood? (Probe whether they know of neighborhood improvement, tenant or parent-teacher associations, etc.) _____

If Yes... Do you belong to any of these groups? (Yes/No) _____

If Yes... What kinds of activities does your group engage in? _____

If does not belong to any club ... Why not? _____

F. Demographic Information

1. Gender of the respondent (indicated by researcher) _____
2. What race do you consider yourself? _____
3. What is your marital status? _____
 - Single/ separated
 - Married
 - Divorced
 - Widowed
4. What is your age group? _____
 - 15-20
 - 21-25
 - 26-30
 - 31-35
 - 36-40
 - 41-45
 - 46-50
 - Over 51
6. What is the highest education you have completed?
 - Less than high school (what grade) _____
 - High school graduate _____
 - College/technical school (# of years) _____
 - Some university _____
 - University graduate _____
 - Other education, elaborate: _____
7. Are you employed now? (Yes/No) _____
8. If No... Have you ever been employed? (Yes/No) _____
9. If currently employed, tell me more about that employment:
 - Occupation _____
 - Full time/ part time/ occasional _____
 - Number of hours a week _____

G. Economic Resources

1. What are your sources of income for your household?

- Employment _____
- Government /social assistance _____
- Business _____
- Family/friends _____
- Unemployment Insurance _____
- Child Support... _____
- Other, please indicate _____

2. Approximately how much did your household earn in the year 1999?

- Under \$5,000
- \$10,000 – 15,000
- \$16,00 - 20,000
- \$21,000 and 25,000
- \$26,000 - 30,000
- \$31,000 - 35,000
- \$36,000 – 40,000
- \$41,000 –5,0000
- Over 50,000

3. How well does your household income meet your family needs?

- Enough to get on by _____
- Not enough _____
- More than enough _____

Thank you so much for taking the time to participate in this study and for sharing this information with me.

End: Date/Time of Interview: _____

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