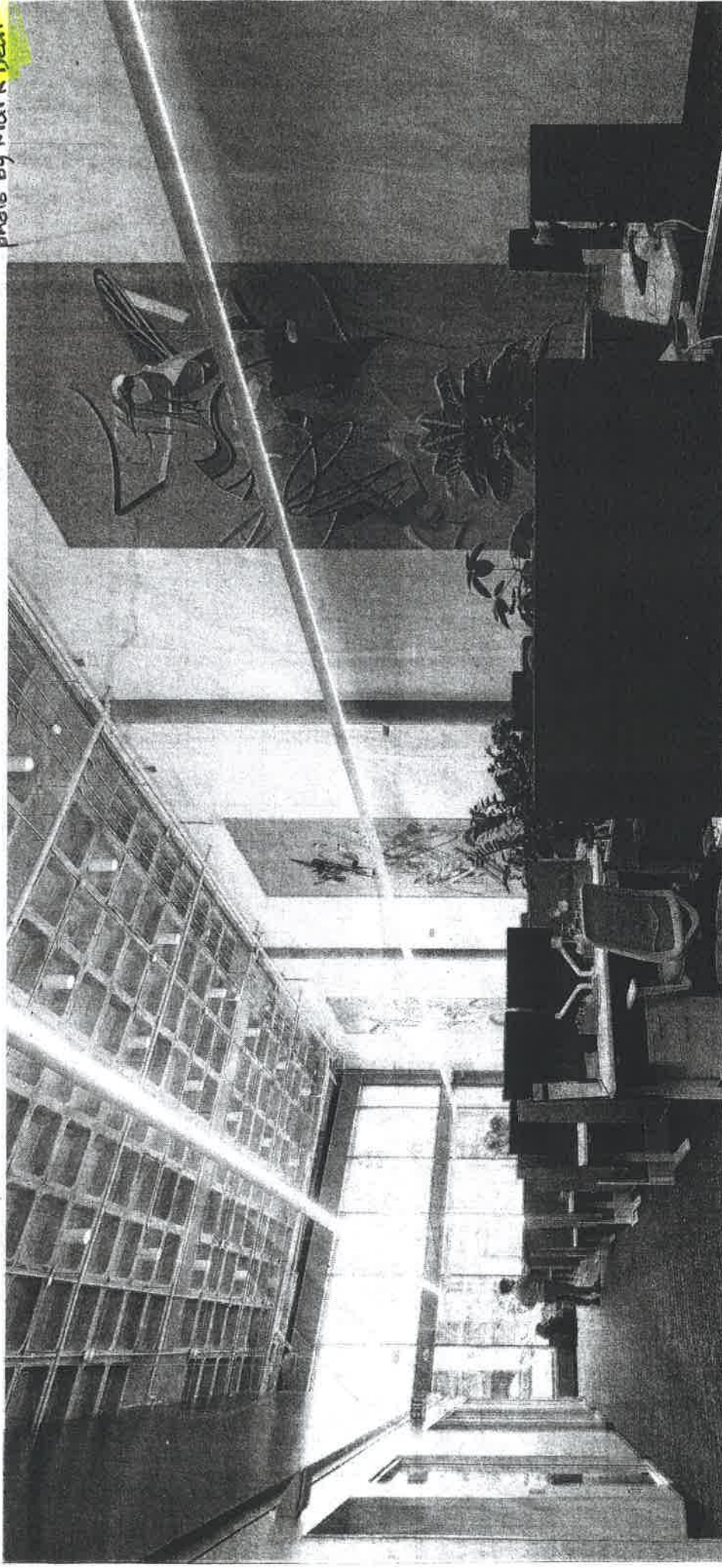


Winnipeg Chamber moves home to Portage and Main

*Felice Mose
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by Martin Cash
photo by Mark Deal



PHOTOS BY M

The Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce, along with CentrePort, World Trade Centre Winnipeg and the Manitoba Environmental Industries Association, moved into new offices at 200 Portage Ave. that overlook Portage and Main.

Fresh chambers for commerce

MARTIN CASH

THE Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce has been in existence for 151 years and all that time it's

face City Hall on Prover
vard said, "There was lot
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Rail relocation study plans gather steam

CHRIS KITCHING

PREMIER Wab Kinew and former federal cabinet minister Lloyd Axworthy want Manitobans to think big when it comes to the decades-old discussion about moving rail lines out of Winnipeg.

While launching a rail relocation feasibility study Tuesday, the pair pointed out that initial plans for The Forks — a former rail site in the heart of the city — and the Red River Floodway were met with naysaying or concerns about high costs.

"It just shows what you can do with some imagination and some creativity and some real courage by governments themselves," Axworthy said about The Forks.

Converted rail land could be used for housing or open spaces, while rationalization could create advantages for rail companies and strengthen Manitoba's position as a major transport hub, he said at a news conference next to the Canadian Pacific Kansas City rail yards, which are beneath the Slaw Rebchuk Bridge that connects Salter and Isabel streets.

Axworthy was Canada's transport minister in the 1980s when a federal Liberal government negotiated the transfer of the former Canadian National Rail yards to become what is now The Forks.

Kinew has tapped him to lead a study that will look at the feasibility of rail relocation in the capital

region. The Manitoba government set aside \$200,000 for the study in April's budget.

Expected to take two years, the study will determine which lines or yards can realistically be relocated and at what estimated cost, while exploring the potential social and economic effect, said Kinew.

Axworthy said he is "fairly optimistic" the study will produce "good conversations" with rail company executives. The study will include public consultations.

Canadian Pacific Kansas City Ltd. spokeswoman Rebecca Stephen said any study must be comprehensive and involve railroads, shippers and industries, all levels of government and federal regulators.

The company's rail network through Winnipeg is an essential part of integrated supply chains in North America, she said.

"Evaluating the feasibility of relocating railway infrastructure is an enormously complex matter and the magnitude of the challenges should never be underestimated," Stephen wrote in an email.

"A comprehensive study that considers all factors would be required to evaluate the feasibility of relocating rail infrastructure without compromising safety, essential rail service to customers, capacity for future growth and also capture the full costs, which will be significant."

● RAIL LINES, CONTINUED ON A2

Gates foundation adds US\$12.5M to U of M research

KEVIN ROLLASON

THE University of Manitoba has been the beneficiary of almost half-a-billion dollars in grants — the most of any post-secondary institution in the country — from the foundation headed by software billionaire Bill Gates and his ex-wife.

On Tuesday, the university announced the latest US\$12.5-million grant from The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation had brought in more than \$450 million in research dollars since the foundation's first grant to it 22 years ago.

"We've had a lot of different projects with the Gates foundation," said Dr. James Blanchard, director of the Institute for Global Public Health and the Canada Research Chair in epidemic

ology and global health.

"In India at first, it was a big HIV project and since then we have continued to expand with HIV and other projects. It has now been a long partnership with the Gates foundation and we are privileged to work with (it)."

Other grants include \$22 million in 2004 to expand the university's HIV prevention work in India, \$5.1 million in 2014 to reduce mortality caused by pneumonia and diarrhea in children under five years of age in India's Uttar Pradesh state and \$87 million in 2022 to help drop the maternal and neonatal mortality rates in that same region.

Blanchard said while some of the grants from the foundation have gone to other faculties at the university, the bulk have been tied to projects headed by the institute.



Software billionaire Bill Gates

Mario Pinto, the university's

vice-president research and international, said the institution has developed a strong level of trust with the foundation.

"We've proven beyond a shadow of a doubt that we can deliver," Pinto said.

"That's what sets us apart."

Pinto said the foundation is helping the university establish itself as a leader in global health research. He's proud to see new projects, including one that studies the effect of breastfeeding on a baby's microbiome, by researcher Meghan Azad, receive grant funding.

"It's extremely important work,"

Pinto said.

In the latest project, the institute will work with the governments of Senegal, Cote d'Ivoire, three states in Nigeria and the Sindh province of Pakistan, as well as several non-government organizations, to bolster the availability and quality of family planning services, as well as maternal, new and child health services and supplies.

Blanchard said during the year-long