Winnipeg Committee for Safety

Annual Report 2020

Report to the Community



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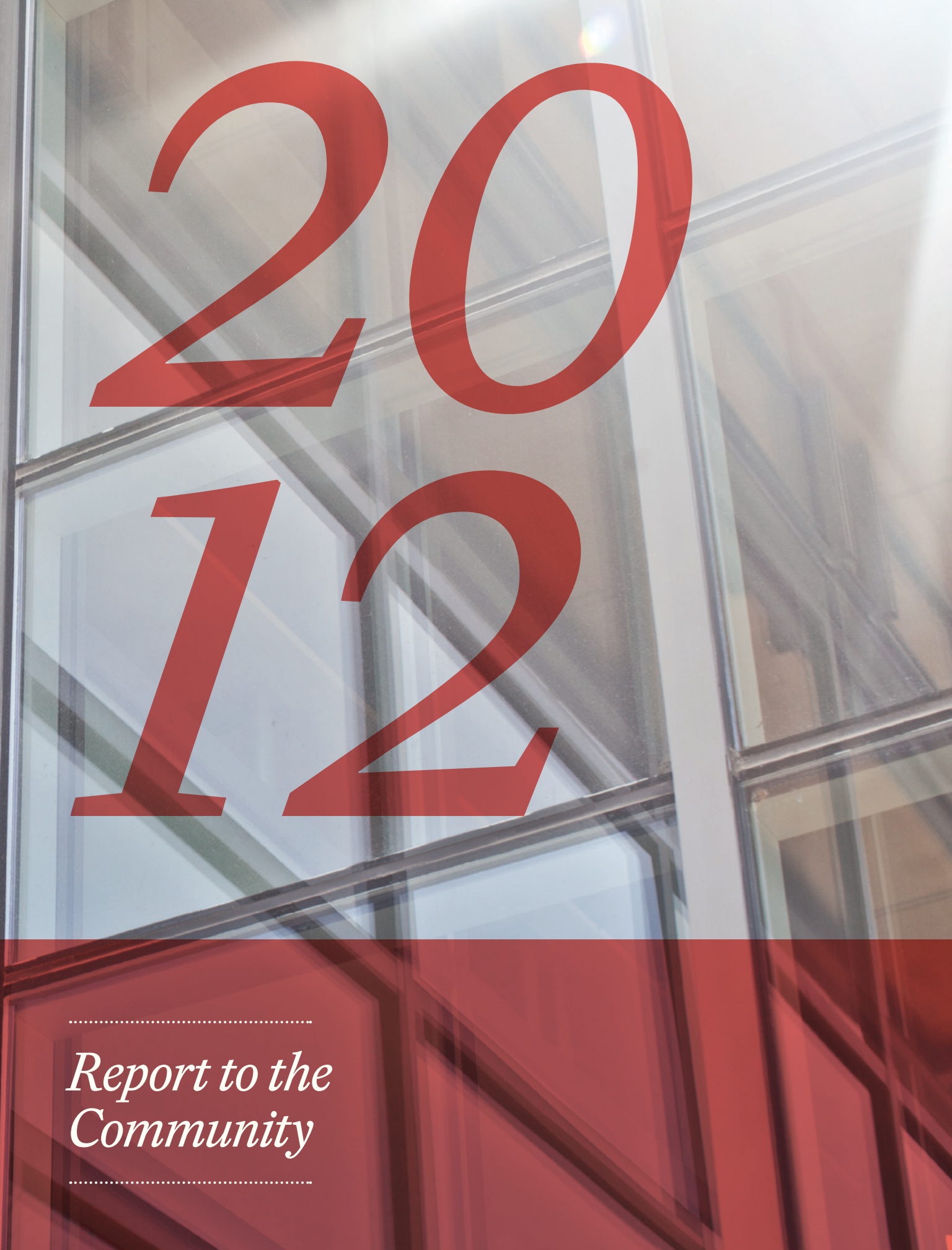
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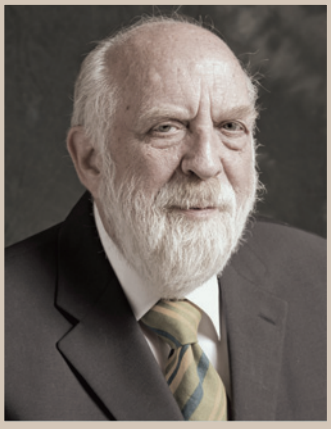
*Photography by Steven Ackerman

Since 1999, the Winnipeg Committee for Safety (WCFS) has supported, assisted, stimulated, and mobilized the community on safety concerns and crime prevention.

We are a leader in this respect, both locally and nationwide, with representation from citizens, City departments, the Winnipeg Police Service, business, community organizations, and other orders of government.

We aim to work proactively to maintain and improve the safety of each of our citizens.

Message from the Chairman



Councillor Harvey Smith

As you all well know, recent years have seen a push to revitalize our city's downtown, to see a resurgence of the activity, culture and commerce that Winnipeg knew in its time of greatest prominence. This ambition asks for many factors to work in tandem. New businesses entering the downtown area, new food and entertainment vendors in the city centre, and, perhaps most of all, an increased sense of security and safety in the city.

This is not a new objective. In concert with city government, the Winnipeg Police Service, and supporting crime prevention initiatives, we have been working to increase the city's safety for years. We pledge to continue to do so for years to come.

In late 2012, The Winnipeg Committee for Safety worked with The University of Winnipeg's Institute of Urban Studies to carry out a broad analysis of our city's crime prevention practices. Specifically, the study focused on crime prevention programs within the city, providing basic information of 42 organizations operating 76 crime-prevention programs within Winnipeg. With this information, and additional supplementary resources, we developed this report on the city's current climate with reference to crime, crime prevention, and citizen safety.

Throughout all the primary and secondary research conducted, there was one underpinning theme that we realized. Essentially every program works to solve a portion of the issue, relying on the existence of other programs to combat the entirety. Be it youth engagement programming, anti-gang programs, or community unifying initiatives, each program works in tandem with the others as a component of the singular push to make our city safer.

The fact of the matter is that no single program or initiative can fully prevent crime. As crime itself is a complex and many-layered issue, so must be crime prevention initiatives. From community involvement to increased police presence, youth engagement to neighbourhood watches, preventing crime relies on all of these initiatives working together to directly prevent crimes from occurring, provide alternatives for those at risk of falling into crime-driven lifestyles, and imbue communities with a sense of security and peace.

In this annual report we will analyze and discuss crime prevention initiatives in our city, and reflect on the year's activities to improve the safety of our citizens. But at the core of this report, we are sharing with the public our work to improve safety in our city. We believe wholeheartedly in Winnipeg, and love this city dearly, and we work so that every citizen can feel the same way.

Councillor Harvey Smith



This committee is concerned with one thing above all: increasing the safety of our city and each of our citizens. That is what we do.

– Harvey Smith



Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design

In May of 2013, our city will see Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) training sessions taking place. Organized through a joint effort involving the Winnipeg Police Service, OurWinnipeg and WCFS, CPTED is an initiative directed at anyone who has a hand in the protection, security and well-being of our city. These include law enforcement and community service officers, urban area and park planners, engineers, educators, city administrators, and even community and neighbourhood groups. CPTED is the active use of the physical environment to reduce the opportunity and incidence of crime. WCFS actively supports and aids this initiative, and has been working closely with the University of Manitoba conducting workshops and information sessions, and helping with assignments in Winnipeg communities.

The May training sessions will inform the attendees on how environmental design can work to greatly reduce the incidence of crime in the concerned area. They cover outdoor lighting, environment planning and zoning, and how to best utilize spaces to support crime prevention. Participants will also be instructed in the means to carry out and lobby for crime-preventing environmental design and assistance, by way of report writing, presentation skills, and plan review and modification. Further information can be located on the City of Winnipeg website.

Revitalizing Our Streets and City

One of the primary challenges facing Winnipeg, which has become increasingly prominent in recent years, is the public perception that our Downtown is unsafe. WCFS places distinct importance on this issue. The continued development and expansion, outward and upward, of any city depends greatly on the success and performance of its core. The city centre is a place where citizens convene to interact, shop, and share in the commerce, culture and entertainment that the city offers. If pedestrians feel uneasy downtown, and avoid visiting the area for this reason, it negatively effects the city at large. Business suffers, entrepreneurship declines, tourism lessens, and development and improvement stalls, all of which serve to worsen public perception of the area further. WCFS supports and encourages the City of Winnipeg's downtown revitalization initiatives and their work to reignite the lights of our city. We also support all like-minded organizations and people who share this goal.

Every city depends on its downtown to grow and progress, and if recent city initiatives improving downtown safety and increasing activity in the city centre are a signifier of a coming transition, things are looking good for Winnipeg in the future.

Spotlight on Crime

Crime prevention and public safety remain two of the main concerns for our citizens. As in any city, citizen safety is one of the principal factors in creating a healthy, flourishing and evolving community.

By adopting a leading role in pursuing layered, interconnected and community-focused approaches to citizen safety and security, the WCFS is an information hub and point of contact for City departments and initiatives, City Council, and related stakeholders.

Through our Safety Audits (measurements of safety and security issues across Winnipeg, using benchmarks from OurWinnipeg as a ruler) WCFS provides City Council with the information needed for making decisions that affect safety and security.

Effective crime prevention centers around one thing, proactivity. Acting, rather than reacting. It starts with meeting with the community, and speaking with them about their concerns, potential and existing crime issues, and the resources available to combat them. With the community we determine the priority issues that require attention in the community, and discuss these. We work with the community to brainstorm prevention ideas and options that will both combat instances and frequency of crime, and aid residents in feeling safe and secure in their homes and neighbourhoods.

In the event that these prevention ideas aren't something the community can carry out themselves, they can then appeal to city administration for assistance. Hearing from members of the public helps us learn how to best service the citizens of our city. We work with the Winnipeg Police Service to make our city safe, and knowing what specific neighbourhoods need to increase their sense of security allows us to create crime prevention plans that are as effective as possible.

Another major contributing factor to community safety is collaboration within the community. By working together to solve crime issues, we not only determine what the community members are most concerned about, but we also establish a working relationship between neighbourhoods. Then, if crimes do occur, the victims will have neighbours and friends they can contact for help, and safe places to stay until they receive police assistance.

We are in the process of developing a report for stakeholders and concerned community members that will educate, inform and motivate the public. It will also further OurWinnipeg's commitment to an integrated and community-focused approach and to continuing to shape WCFS into a salient information centre.

"There's more business, more people on the streets, and more safety patrols. There has been definite improvement of the streets, area and storefronts, improvement that gives businesses like ourselves a chance to prosper."

– Greg Tonn, Owner, Into The Music

Walking Without Worry

Steps In The Right Direction

To reduce the instance of fall-related injuries occurring in Winnipeg, Safe Communities Winnipeg is continuing the SureFoot and Playground Safety initiatives.

Preventing Slips and Spills

We all know how harsh Winnipeg winters can be. Each winter, we are forced to contend with frigid temperatures, snowstorms, and ice-laden streets and sidewalks, yielding treacherous walking and driving conditions. Last year, the Falls Sub-Committee developed a fall alert index designed to help citizens determine how to safely deal with road and sidewalk conditions in the city.

Multiple strategies were put forward to help reduce the number of injuries due to falls. These include:

- Analyzing Winnipeg's climate patterns and precipitation levels
- Developing a Fall Alert Notification System, SureFoot, similar to the Highway Road Conditions, UV index and Air Quality Reports
- Using the alert system to help notify the public when preventative measures are needed to ensure their safety in regards to the weather and road and sidewalk conditions

SureFoot Program

Early last year, Safe Communities Winnipeg launched the SureFoot Winter Walking Conditions Bulletin, a program that will provide the public and local media with free daily updates on general winter walking conditions in our city. Dubbed the "Falls Alert Index", SureFoot is the world's first program specifically intended to make aware the public about pedestrian travel conditions.

Each year, thousands of Winnipeggers are taken to hospitals because of falls due to winter walking conditions. In fact, sometimes elderly people cannot fully recover from bone abrasions and fractures, and are forced to move into long-term care facilities. In our province, fall-related injuries account for nearly $170 million in healthcare spending. With a total cost of $5,000 in grants, SureFoot doesn't need to spend on operating costs. The program uses publically-available information that is reported by a city communications officer.

The SureFoot program is an innovative and cost-efficient way to aid our city's pedestrians, leading to a reduced number of slip and fall injuries.



Playground Safety

Research indicates that falls are the leading cause of emergency room visits for children. Due to this, the Falls Sub-Committee has been directed toward individuals responsible for caring for and supervising children, and are involved in the safe maintenance and operation of playground equipment. This includes, but is not limited to, parents, playground owners and operators, childcare workers, parent councils, and playground inspectors.

The strategies we've endorsed to help reduce the number of playground injuries include:

- Testing playgrounds to measure the resiliency of the playground surface using a TRIAX machine
- Developing a Playground Inspection Course so more front line people have the knowledge to identify and correct problems
- Creating public awareness while reaching those parents who are responsible for playground supervision

Downtown revitalization is on a roll with the tens of thousands of students, office workers, residents, and tourists frequenting this bustling part of the city daily...together, we are closing in on our shining vision for the heart of our city.

– Stefano Grande, Executive Director, Downtown Winnipeg BIZ

Committee Members

The Winnipeg Committee for Safety is composed of one member of City Council, eight members of the community and one representative of crime prevention from the Province of Manitoba.



2012 Committee Members

Councillor Harvey Smith, *Chairperson* • His Worship Mayor Sam Katz, *ex officio* • Rick Joyal • Bradley McKay • Corinne Pierce • Eleanore McMahon • Kerry LeBlanc • Jacquie Habing • Ray Ali • Steven Hennessey • Wendy Koening, *Citizens for Crime Awareness (non-voting member)*

City of Winnipeg Administration

Paul Berke, *Patrol Sergeant, Winnipeg Police Service* • Garnie McIntyre, *Constable, Winnipeg Police Service* • Karen Beaudin, *Community Resource Coordinator* • Jennifer Ridge, *City Clerk's Department*



Financial Report

Revenues	
Council Funding	$ 69,000.00
Expenditures	
Contract Fee	$ 40,000.00
Communications/ Community Outreach	$ 24,561.53
Education and Training	$ 926.15
Meeting Costs	$ 1,225.00
Office Expenditures	$ 1,067.07
Total	**$ 67,779.75**

Merchants Progress ***Project Report***

For years, the Merchants Hotel has stood on the corner of Selkirk and Andrews Street. The hotel has long been considered a blight upon the street, and the wider city, and has been a magnet for criminal activity.

Championed by the North End Community Renewal Corporation (NECRC), over 20 North End organizations joined forces to restore and revitalize the historic building and surrounding neighbourhood. These include the Selkirk Avenue BIZ, Andrews Street Family Centre, Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre, University of Winnipeg, Red River College and SEED Winnipeg.

Selkirk Avenue was a major artery of North End culture and commerce for decades. Up until the mid 1970s the street was a prominent and fundamental hub of activity with active stores, bakeries, restaurants, and services. Local community groups are adamant that removing a major liquor vendor in the densely-packed residential neighbourhood and replacing it with a vibrant mix of retail outlets, educational space, and housing, will result in reduced crime rates and an increase in community-unifying activity.

WCFS continues to support the Merchants Hotel restoration project and all others like it. These initiatives are superb examples of community-focused organizations working collaboratively to take decisive action against the factors which contribute to and cause crime and violence in our city.




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Together Taking Action

The Citizen's Action Network (CAN) was a network formed collaboratively by the Winnipeg Police Service and the City of Winnipeg Community Services Department as a method for the public to offer information to city administration and crime prevention organizations. WCFS worked with both services in the development of the program.

A CAN Coordinator is designated by members of the community to stand and speak for an area in the city and voice the neighbourhoods' comments and concerns. These issues include everything from abandoned and derelict vehicles and houses, overflowing garbage containers, and other issues in the community. The CAN Coordinator then extends this information to WPS. This information isn't meant to be of an emergency nature, in progress, or meant to bypass any current crime reporting procedures. CAN is the single community information network initiative that is endorsed and supported by the Winnipeg Police Service.

Beyond the initial program development, WCFS also aided in the instruction and training of community coordinators for CAN, and has been working with community organizations since the programs onset. WCFS continually encourages residents to participate in the program.

> *[Downtown] is where our city's culture is most focused and strong, and I'm proud to be a part of it.*
>
> *– Donavan Robinson, Owner, Vantage Studios & Print Shop*







Winnipeg

Winnipeg Committee for Safety

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winnipegcommitteeforsafety.org | winnipegsafety.ca

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