THE
EXCHANGE
DISTRICT BIZ

OVERVIEW

The Exchange District BIZ's Community Safety Program has developed significantly over the last number of years. Building on our successful Foot Patrol Program, the Community Safety Program now includes more community outreach, safety-related communications, and CPTED oriented audits of the neighbourhood. With the City of Winnipeg's grant in late 2018, the Exchange District Community Safety Program was able to increase its foot patrol numbers from 6 to 8, allowing us to extend both our days and hours of operation. The loss of that funding puts the gains made from that additional coverage at risk. Renewing that funding for an additional year and adding to it with funding for two new positions will help us both maintain and improve our program in highly beneficial ways.



EXCHANGE PATROL

The Exchange Patrol creates a safe and welcoming atmosphere, contributing to the community feel of the neighbourhood that is the Exchange District. Trained in CPR/ First Aid, Mental Health First Aid, and Non-Violent Crisis Intervention, they act as the street-level ambassadors for the Exchange District BIZ and also conduct safe walks whenever people may feel uncomfortable walking alone. Businesses in the area call the Patrol when they are concerned about aggressive panhandling, public intoxication and other uncomfortable situations, and they, in turn communicate regularly with both the Winnipeg Police and Fire Paramedic Services.

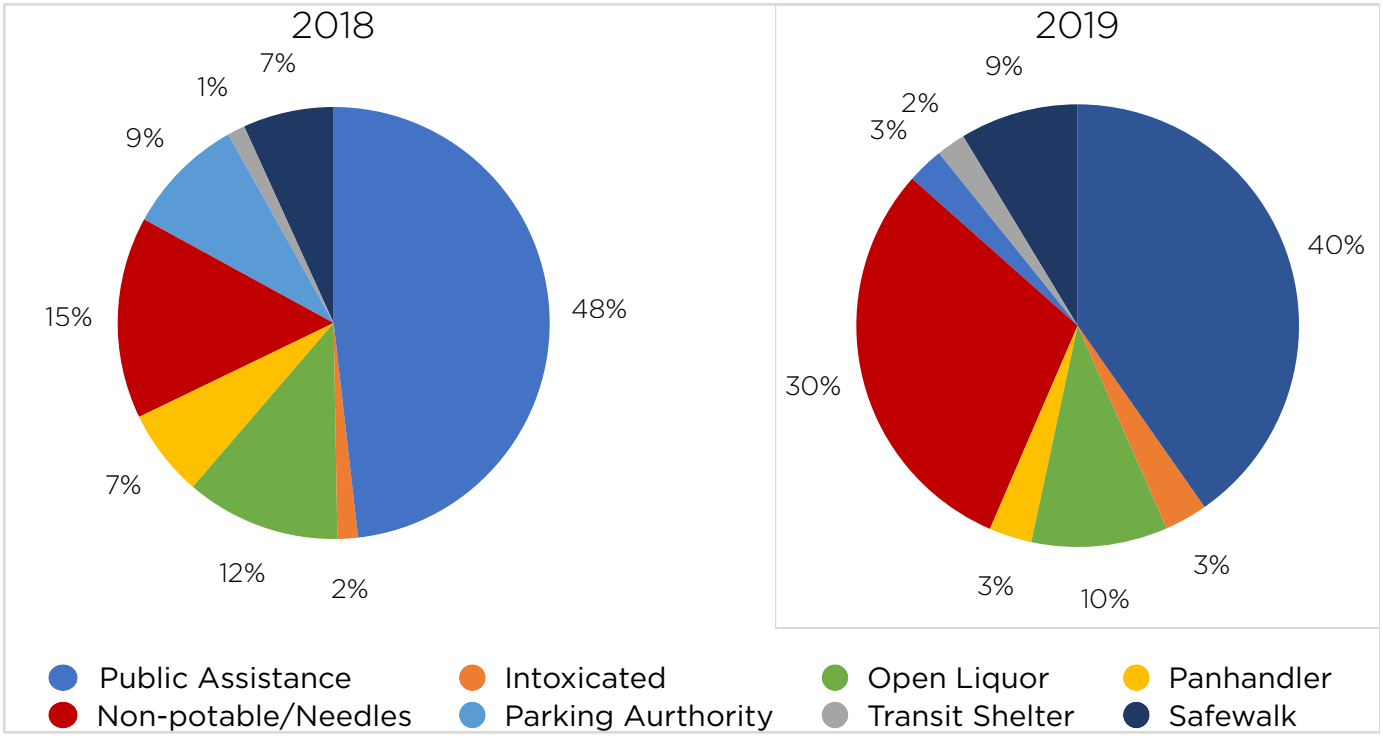
By being visible and out on the street, interacting with and creating relationships with everyone on the street, from concerned business members to the general public, the Exchange Patrol helps visitors to the area feel safe, allowing our members to conduct business and the BIZ and others host successful programming and events, drawing more people to the area and further discouraging crime.

CPTED

In the summer of 2019, we deployed one of our summer staff to monitor and audit the neighbourhood's physical condition from a CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) perspective in order to supplement work our patrols were doing identifying broken or burnt-out lighting. That audit identified over 250 issues in the district focusing on garbage bin maintenance, street lighting, signage and sidewalk safety. These issues were then brought to the attention of different departments in the City of Winnipeg. As a result of this audit, over 100 issues were resolved throughout the summer term. Combined with the two additional patrols we were able to keep the area cleaner and safer by alerting maintenance to areas that needed attention, employing CPTED principles such as Natural Surveillance, Maintenance and Activity Support.

RESULTS

Stat	2019	2018	Difference	Percent
Public Assistance	1121	2543	-1422	-56%
Intoxicated	87	81	6	7%
Open liquor	277	611	-334	-55%
Panhandling	87	345	-258	-75%
Non-Potable/Needles	837	798	39	5%
Parking Authority	74	471	-397	-84%
Transit Shelters	59	69	-10	-14%
Safe Walks	241	359	-118	-33%
Total incidents	2783	5277	8.92	



In 2019, as a result of the funding provided by the City of Winnipeg, the Exchange District BIZ Patrol was able to increase from 6 to 8 full time Foot Patrols to cover our 30-block area (see map of Exchange District BIZ boundaries). This allows for coverage that extends six days a week, Monday through Saturday from 0800 to midnight. Four patrols walk the area during the day shift, and four patrols walk the area during the evening shift.

With more patrols, we were able to interact with more individuals in the area and respond much more quickly to incidents and areas brought to our attention.

As can be seen from the statistical overview provided, the Exchange Patrol program has a direct impact on preventing crime in the area (in addition to the important services they provide as ambassadors to the public). With the increase of two patrols, incidents have decreased significantly. For example, open liquor incidents are down 55%, and panhandling in the area is down 75%.

REQUEST

In 2020, the Exchange District BIZ would like to maintain the current complement of full-time foot patrols, and ideally add two more positions, including a CPTED Liaison to further increase safety and services in the Exchange District community.

The Exchange District BIZ requests a continuation of funding provided to cover two full-time foot patrols, and one supervisor position, $135,000 in total. We feel a supervisor is required as an extra position to better manage the safety program and maintain safety in the Exchange District.

An increase of funding to $180,000 would maintain the additional two foot patrol positions, one supervisor, and one CPTED Liaison position. A CPTED Liaison would be able to continue to audit the district throughout the entire year, utilizing CPTED principles to routinely follow up on these issues, contributing to the cleanliness and safety of the district.

This would increase the safety of the area by maintaining a strong connection between the Exchange District BIZ safety and maintenance programs, maintain communication with relevant City of Winnipeg departments, and help to prevent crime before it happens by keeping the Exchange District neighbourhood impeccably clean and improving the safety of the physical environment. Using maintenance to prevent crime is a program that is incredibly effective according to proven CPTED principles, and confirmed by our very modest trail over the summer. When efforts are intentionally coordinated between infrastructure maintenance, cleanliness and safety, we can effectively implement CPTED principles such as Natural Surveillance, Maintenance and Activity Support, which are important aspects of crime prevention and aiding in the overall feeling of safety in the Exchange District.

The maintaining of these positions, as well as the addition of a CPTED Liaison would raise the overall image of the area, increase the feeling of safety, and prevent crime in the Exchange District, providing an atmosphere where a vibrant community of businesses, residents, workers and visitors in the Exchange District can thrive.