West End BIZ
BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT ZONE

Safety Program Enhancement

Funding Report

The City of Winnipeg's contribution to improve safety in the West End has been applied to our safety program to great effect. Our organization is extremely appreciative of the city's support and our business members have expressed satisfaction with the services we are able to provide as a direct result of this funding.

Through the funding from the city, we were able to increase the number of patrols on the street and have been able to maintain a higher presence than ever before. Our ability to respond to a diversity of safety issues and our speed of response across the West End has increased greatly. Our data tracking has enabled us to tackle safety issues more effectively and leverage private dollars to invest in safety measures.



Our safety program consists of the following features.

- Safety patrols
- Safety ambassadors (since 2019)
- Safety Liaison (since 2018)
- Levy-funded safety grants

The West End BIZ takes a multi-pronged approach to safety and without funding from the city, this approach would be significantly scaled back.

Safety Patrols

Our safety patrols are the traditional safety presence in the neighbourhood that responds rapidly to calls. They also assist at events and festivals both as a reassuring presence and to take a lead role assessing safety issues that may emerge. In 2019 this presence increased, moving from two part time positions to two full time and four additional full time seasonal positions. In 2020 and moving into 2021 we have maintained six patrols, including one patrol supervisor who both patrols and coordinates other patrol staff. Evening shifts began in the summer of 2020 and will remain in 2021. The overall increased patrol hours have allowed us to maintain more consistent visibility in more areas of the West End, respond to calls faster, and form more positive relationships with community members and businesses. The number of streets and parks patrolled have increased and more concerns are regularly addressed, including bulky waste and needle pick-ups (See Charts – Pg. 6).

Safety Liaison

The safety liaison position, created at the end of 2018, is a former Winnipeg Police Service Officer that meets with business owners to assist them with improving their safety and adds an additional level of ongoing training and support to our patrol team. The liaison is trained in Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design and is able to share safety strategies with business owners. Safety concerns for businesses varied significantly in 2020 as seasons and the COVID-19 pandemic have created some expected and some unusual patterns of unsafe activities and challenges. Offering businesses the experience and knowledge of our safety liaison, who has been able to continue meeting in person or virtually, has been an asset to the neighbourhood through a difficult year. The liaison creates additional value by empowering businesses themselves to take safety measures even when the BIZ isn't present. Steps taken by businesses extend to the community as they reduce vandalism, introduce lighting into shadowy areas and create an overall level of deterrence.



Safety Ambassadors

The safety ambassador program began in 2019 and consists of two specialized patrols oriented toward making connections with businesses, providing safety audits, and relaying information to the patrol supervisor and other BIZ staff to help coordinate our programming. Safety ambassadors also provide follow up meetings to businesses visited by the safety liaison to ensure their needs are being met. The ambassadors play a key role as a reassuring presence that is more than just walking by, but actually visiting and forming relationships with businesses and their employees. We learn about safety experiences by taking the initiative of building trust with businesses and the community. The ambassadors remind businesses that the BIZ and the city are taking safety issues seriously – especially when we proactively meet with them before they need to call us. Given the unique circumstances of 2020, the ambassadors were able to shift focus for periods of time to call and check in on almost all our businesses. Based on previously built connections, they were able to gather important and more openly shared information from a majority of the business community about safety and general business concerns unique to 2020.



Safety Grants (Exclusively BIZ levy funded)

The BIZ-funded safety grant program has existed for many years and is used to incentivize private investment in safety infrastructure including lighting, cameras and other improvements. In the last three years, use has increased substantially. The new safety liaison and ambassadors have been instrumental in raising awareness of the BIZ dollars available to support safety improvements in and around their business. Without their effort in building relationships and seeking solutions to equip businesses, the grant would be less understood and used. The grant supports installation of security systems, lighting, lock systems and other safety measures that benefit the applicant and the surrounding area. In the last two years, the BIZ has given $23,048 in safety grants towards $118,790 in private investment ($11,524 and $59,395 per year respectively). This more than doubles the previous five-year average in both grants and investment ($5,556 in grants

towards $26,878 in investment per year). Our grants mobilize private resources and act as a multiplier for levy resources put toward our safety program. More cameras, lighting and locks are a benefit to the community overall as they reduce criminal behaviour in the area and provide WPS with resources to address such behaviour when it happens.

The West End BIZ appreciates the support from the City of Winnipeg and is using this funding to deliver a multi-pronged approach to addressing safety issues in the neighbourhood. Through our patrols we maintain a presence on the street, build a safer community and improve perceptions of safety. We respond more rapidly to business concerns and are able to promote our levy-funded grants which leverage private dollars for futher safety enhancements. We pride ourselves on the comprehensive approach we take and are pleased to have the financial support of the city to execute this critical set of programs.

"Kudos to the West End BIZ and the patrol team! Thank you for continuing to build a safe and clean environment in our community. Keep on delivering that value to our neighbourhood!" Rey Jazmin, RH Variety

Positive Impact Stories of 2020

SARGENT AVENUE
A longtime West End business reported an armed robbery at their shop on Sargent Avenue. Along with a call to the WPS, they reported the incident to the West End BIZ and shared a photograph of the individual. Our safety liaison contacted the business immediately to get more information, then spoke with the WPS about the incident. Following the incident, the BIZ's patrols witnessed the individual in the neighbourhood and provided the report to WPS. Several days later, the BIZ safety team received a second report at a nearby business and liaised with police on this issue as well. A connection between the incidents was made and subsequently WPS issued an arrest warrant.

In addition to these steps, the safety team provided information to the affected businesses about the BIZ's safety grant program to reduce the likelihood of future incidents. The safety of the business and area was made top priority across the full scope of the BIZ's safety program and the active presence and capability of having staff ready and trained in response allowed for a swift response.

PORTAGE AVENUE
Several reports of unsafe activity were sent to us from a business on Portage Avenue near Omand's Creek. We had also received reports of a possible encampment establishing along the creek. One of the reports from the business involved arson and created a dangerous situation for a stretch of a few neighbouring businesses. Our liaison spoke

with the first reporting business and information was relayed across BIZ departments to deal with issues for this specific stretch of businesses.

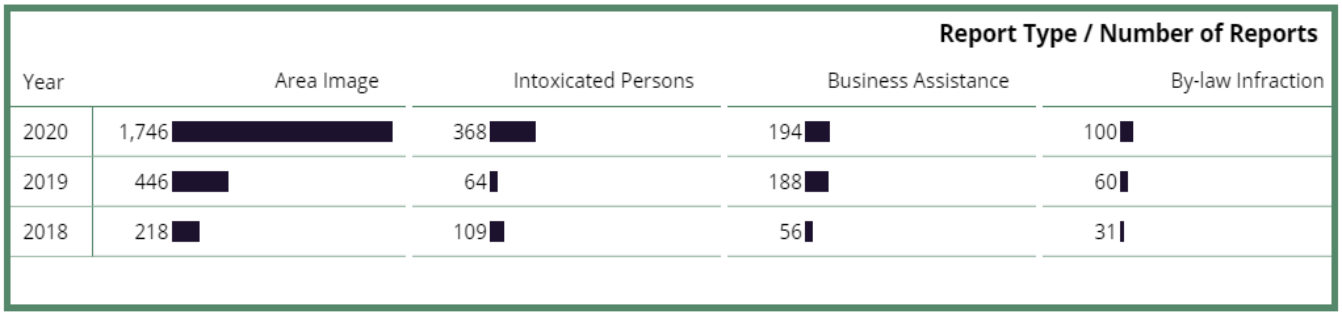
Firstly, our patrols were able to make their presence regular in this particular area, speak to people on the streets nearby, diffuse situations if needed and discover what was going on. The BIZ's planning, maintenance and safety departments then worked together to spearhead a new bulky waste pick up service for members introduced with the support of the local city councillor. This area remains a targeted area for the patrols to walk and ambassadors to visit in order to stay ahead of any permanent encampments or ongoing unsafe conditions.

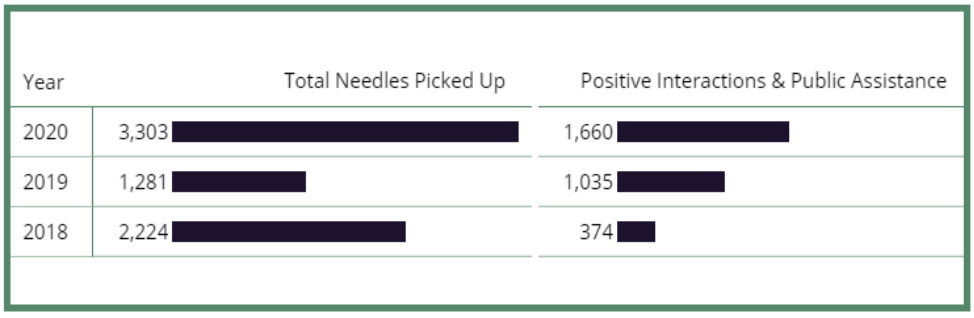
STAFFING SUMMARY

Pre funding	With funding
2 Full time, summer/part-time, year-round	2 full time, year-round
	4 Full time, summer/part-time, year-round
	1 Safety Liaison, contract, year-round

MAJOR PATROL STATS

	2018	2019	2020
Patrol Shifts on the streets	174	281	337
Patrol Shifts to parks	157	257	319





MAJOR AMBASSADOR STATS

	2020
Business Visits	431
Businesses with reported safety concerns	45
New businesses welcomed to the neighbourhood	51

*2020 is the first full year of statistics as program began in 2019

SAFETY LIAISON STATS

	2019	2020
Business Visits	23	25

BIZ LEVY-FUNDED GRANTS*

	Amount
Annual safety grant applications - average per year (2014-2018)	8.6
Safety grant application - average per year (2019-2020)	14
Private safety investment supported by grants – average per year (2019-2020)	$59,395
BIZ financial support – average per year (2019-2020)	$11,524

*Grants are funded exclusively through BIZ levy dollars. These stats included because our patrols, ambassadors and liaison promote our grants to generate private investment in neighbourhood safety.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to connect with Joe Kornelsen, Executive Director of the West End BIZ.

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WEST END BIZ

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