

2020 REPORT

DCSP CONNECT TEAM REPORT PREPARED FOR THE CITY OF WINNIPEG

Downtown Community Safety Partnership



THE DCSP

The Downtown Community Safety Partnership (DCSP) is a non-profit organization that was formed in 2019 to seek solutions to improve community health, wellbeing and safety. The DCSP provides an integrated and coordinated vision for 24/7 service delivery in downtown Winnipeg to support vulnerable and at-risk individuals, lessen victimization, and positively impact all individuals working, learning, residing, and visiting downtown Winnipeg.

Every individual deserves to feel safe and be safe. Our mission is to proactively enhance the health, safety and wellbeing of the downtown Winnipeg community through continual collaboration and innovation.

The DCSP has three different teams that assist and provide outreach services in the downtown community. The following is a report on DCSP CONNECT team's activity in 2020.

INTRODUCTION

DOWNTOWN WATCH AMBASSADORS

For over 20 years, the Downtown Watch Ambassadors have served our community providing assistance to downtown residents and visitors while working closely with the Winnipeg Police Service, Winnipeg Fire Paramedic Services and other key organizations to improve safety in our downtown.

TRANSITION

On September 28, 2020, the Watch program transitioned to the Downtown Community Safety Partnership (DCSP). Watch Ambassadors are now known as the CONNECT Team. Not only has the name changed, so have the uniforms. The red jackets worn by the Watch have been replaced with black, grey and green uniforms. This allows the CONNECT team to remain visible on the street while maintaining a friendly and approachable presence.

THE CONNECT TEAM

This frontline, grass roots team focuses on providing a friendly presence and outreach services in the downtown community. The goal is to improve the health, safety, and well-being of all people in the downtown. The teams engage and connect with people who require assistance and provide referrals to external support service agencies. They also address matters that require a response from crisis intervention resources, police, fire and paramedics.



Figure 1

CONNECTING DOWNTOWN WINNIPEG



COURTESY WALKS

To ensure all individuals in the downtown community feel safe walking to their vehicle, bus stop, shop or residence by having CONNECT members accompany them.



PRESENCE

CONNECT members patrol defined areas of downtown on foot to foster a sense of safety and identify issues that require a response.



OUTREACH

As a first point of contact with vulnerable and marginalized people, emphasis is on understanding their needs and connecting them to available resources.

EXPANSION

The CONNECT Team went through a whirlwind expansion in November 2020 with the hiring of six new team members for a total of fourteen full time members and six part time members.

COURTESY WALKS

The City of Winnipeg's funding helps provide the Courtesy Walk (formally known as a "Safe Walk") service. Downtown residents, workers and visitors all have access to a CONNECT Team member to accompany them while walking to their car, bus stop or office between the hours of 8:00am and Midnight. This service alleviates the concerns around walking through a neighborhood in the dark or alone. It gives the public piece of mind and confidence to venture outside of their normal paths of travel and explore downtown.

IMPROVING SAFETY

The CONNECT Team is a key piece of the puzzle towards improving safety for those living, working and visiting downtown. The program also aims to reduce requests for Winnipeg Police and Winnipeg Fire Paramedic Services by streamlining calls and helping assign the right resources at the right time.

The CONNECT Team continues to provide a constant sense of comfort for those travelling through downtown.

ONE STEP SAFER

A few of the many Success Stories from 2020:

DOWNTOWN WATCH AMBASSADORS

While on patrol, Watch Ambassadors recognized a male known in the community to have extreme mental health concerns, they immediately notified 911, as they were made aware of a possible Form 14 under the Mental Health Act. The members stayed on scene keeping an eye on the male until police arrived, ensuring the safety of the male and the public in the area.

Every individual deserves to feel safe and be safe.

CONNECT

Around 8:20 p.m. on October 21, 2020, CONNECT team members spoke with an upset female youth. The female youth started to take off articles of clothing, including her winter coat. She then ran out in front of a Winnipeg Transit bus which hit her. CONNECT team members restrained her from running in front of another bus. The female had an open fracture to her hand which CONNECT team members dressed and applied pressure to. Members waited with the female until Winnipeg Police and Winnipeg Fire Paramedics arrived on scene. These CONNECT team members most likely saved her life.

On the night of November 5th during regular patrols along Portage Avenue, CONNECT team members came across two lost 13 year old females. Members engaged the youth in conversation and learned that the girls could not find their bus stop and did not know how to get home. After the girls supplied the team with their mom's phone number, the team called and let their mom know they were getting the girls safely on the bus. The mother was extremely grateful that the CONNECT team was there to assist her children.

On the night of November 9th, during regular patrols along Portage Avenue, CONNECT team members encountered a female acting erratically and possibly under the influence. The female was without proper clothing. Team members offered her clothing, which she declined. The female began running in and out of traffic and the team followed her to ensure her safety. A Winnipeg Police Unit was flagged down, and the female was brought to safety.

In December, CONNECT team members assessed whether an individual was living out of a car in the Smith Street Parkade. Members noted that the car was damaged and that there was a lot of food, clothing and medication on the ground. The CONNECT team contacted Winnipeg Police about the vehicle and medication and police informed members that the car and belongings were linked to a missing person's case.

2020 BY THE NUMBERS

DOWNTOWN WATCH AMBASSADORS

Statistics January 1, 2020 to September 27, 2020

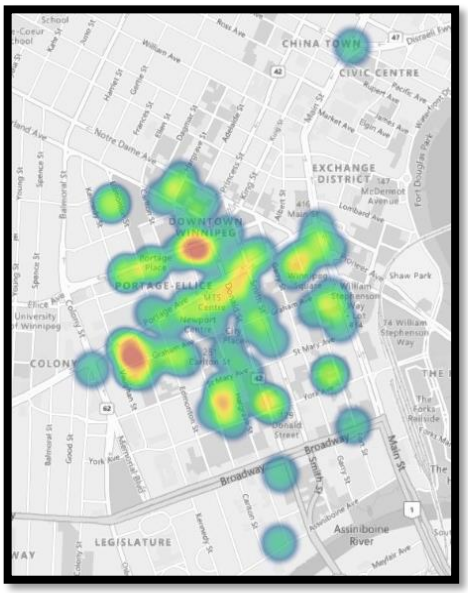
Type	Count	Average Per Day
Courtesy Walk calls	182	0.67
Special Attention/ Community Attention calls	1188	4.38
Wellbeing Checks	433	1.59
Total On View & Calls for Service	2524	9.31

CONNECT

Statistics September 28, 2020 to December 31, 2020*

Type	Count	Average Per Day
Courtesy Walk calls	63	0.67
Special Attention/ Community Attention calls	1631	17.35
Wellbeing Checks	118	1.26
Total On View & Calls for Service	2032	21.62

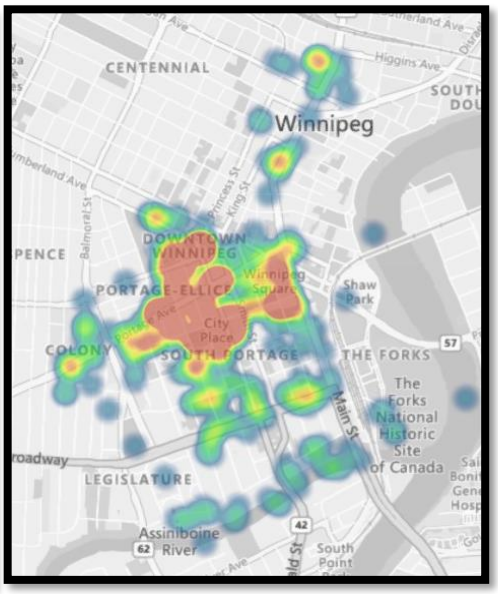
* These numbers were achieved during the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. In September 2020 there was a major surge in COVID-19 cases and on September 28th Winnipeg was placed under Orange alert, restricting gathering sizes. On October 19th new restrictions were instituted in Winnipeg that limited gatherings to 5 people and restricted capacity at all public facilities/stores. On October 30th, Winnipeg was placed under Code Red restrictions and remained there throughout 2020.



CONNECT ACTIVITY OCTOBER 2020



CONNECT ACTIVITY NOVEMBER 2020



CONNECT ACTIVITY DECEMBER 2020