



West Broadway Neighbourhood Safety Plan

Special thanks to:

Everyone who participated in the community consultation process

Your experience, understanding and creativity are the strengths of this document and reflect the capacity of this community to actively shape and define its own future.

The Safety Plan Advisory Committee

Nanagale Fagnan (area renter), Leah McCormick (local business owner), Darrell Horn (Broadway Neighbourhood Centre Board Chair), Const. Poul Thagard (Winnipeg Police Service), Katherine Karuthers (Westminster Co-op member), Mike Maunder (Westminster Housing Society), Laura Weins (area homeowner)

Thank you to our funders for this project

Neighbourhoods Alive! and the West Broadway BIZ



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The West Broadway Neighbourhood Safety Plan

Introduction

The West Broadway Safety Plan is a document built out of community involvement, reflecting the common goals and shared experiences of hundreds of people who live, work and volunteer in this neighbourhood. Its main objectives are to contextualize West Broadway's safety issues, offering analysis of the community's strengths and limitations, and providing recommendations for how best to build a safer neighbourhood.

The foundation for this plan is hundreds of personal stories shared publicly and privately between July 2009 and August of 2010 by community members who are actively working to make West Broadway safer. Two neighbourhood safety audits, six block safety meetings (Maryland, Balmoral North, Spence, Balmoral South, Langside, Alloway), two community-wide safety forums, one hundred and thirty-one on-line surveys, twenty-nine in-person survey interviews with low income renters, and personal interviews with the staff of dozens of area agencies and businesses provided the basis for this dialogue.

It is helpful to use the term 'Plan' to describe this document but we must recognize that this term is not exacting. 'Plans' suggest clear vision and specific strategies to get from one point to another, while this document makes allowances for the possibility that in a diverse community not all people will agree on where we should be going or how best to get there. The West Broadway Safety Plan is a rough snap shot of this community's current reality with suggestions made for what individuals and agencies could do to improve things. Particular focus is put on the mandate of WBDC and its capacity as a community building organization to make things safer in this neighbourhood. The Safety Plan is WBDC's initial contribution to local dialogue around addressing safety concerns and could ultimately serve as a touchstone for WBDC's own efforts to work with and on behalf of community members. Regardless of whether the perspective offered here is agreeable to all, it is our goal that this document, at very least, will spark further discussion and move things forward in a positive and inclusive manner.

Project Description

Let us agree as a starting point that it is every person's right to live in a community where they can participate in work, recreation and cultural activities without fear of exposure to crime, harassment or harm to themselves, their families, their neighbours or their property.

Safety is a fundamental aspect of our lives and a key determinant of our sense of health and wellbeing. That said, calculating just how safe we each are on a daily basis can be challenging. There are many of us who live with unstable accommodations, have neighbours we don't know, and potentially dangerous circumstances in our lives that make relative comparisons difficult. Understandably, those of us who have been victimized by crime or a witness to victimization tend to feel a heightened sense of our own safety or lack thereof. Likewise, it stands to reason that if we are seeing or hearing about criminal activity or conditions of disorder (public drunkenness, neglected children, boarded up buildings, poorly disposed of garbage, etc) on a regular basis, our overall perception of the potential for danger in our lives will be affected.

We will show that crime rates in West Broadway are slowly falling and that the relative safety of community members in West Broadway is improving. We will show that for a variety of reasons some community members face greater risks in their lives than others and need improved supports. We will also show that there is a great deal of anxiety and fear in the community, much of it based on perception rather than reality, and that this anxiety is a stumbling block for efforts to build a safer West Broadway.

Moving forward, this document is intended to mark a new beginning, a starting point on our collective path towards a safer neighbourhood. What follows is a made-in-West Broadway framework for interpreting local safety issues, measuring our personal and communal safety, and suggestions for what can be done to make things better.

Background

A relatively high crime rate in West Broadway has been a point of concern for many years. Community members have responded in a variety of ways, from creating support programs for those most 'at-risk', to organizing Citizens on Patrol groups and a wide variety of initiatives in between. Some efforts have taken root and become fixtures while others have come and gone. The West Broadway Development Corporation has been at the periphery of local crime prevention efforts for the better part of a decade, offering support for a variety of initiatives (lobbying for Schools Resource Officer programs, offering grants for improved exterior lighting, lobbying for an independent Police Commission, etc) but only recently establishing safety programming of its own.

As of June 2009, in response to community demand WBDC introduced a two year pilot program, funded by Neighbourhoods Alive! and The West Broadway BIZ to document local conditions, strategize ways of making the area safer, and help organize safety enhancing efforts in the community. Central to this pilot is the development of a neighbourhood Safety Plan to be used in efforts to reduce area crime and improve conditions of safety.

Methodology

The City of Winnipeg's Committee for Safety and the Manitoba government both offer frameworks for the development of Community Plans. The development of West Broadway's Safety Plan followed the direction of these frameworks closely.

The first step, undertaken in July of 2009, was the assembly of an Advisory Committee responsible for directing the planning process. Comprised of a wide cross section of community members; from renters to business owners, agency representatives to police officers, youth and homeowners, diversity of membership ensured that the multitude of perspectives in West Broadway would be represented. This committee met once per month from July until November to discuss the project and offer direction and feedback on its objectives and methodology.

Building on a number of public consultations undertaken by WBDC in recent years the Safety Advisory Committee recommended the use of surveys, interviews, focus groups and safety auditing for documenting the experiences and perspectives of community members. It was thought that information gathering one-on-one and in small groups would allow for broader participation rates from those residents less likely to attend public gatherings. The intimate nature of survey interviewing also added a mechanism by which WBDC staff could respond directly to the safety needs of participants, if immediate issues were brought up during the exchange. In this way staff was able to begin addressing safety issues within WBDC's capacity while strengthening community relationships and collecting information critical to the Safety Plan.

Throughout the winter, the experiences and ideas of the broader community were documented. Reconvening in March and April of 2010, the Safety Advisory Committee reviewed the data collected during this process and offered direction on both the Safety Plan's recommendations and how best to present this information to the community.

A first draft of the Safety Plan was presented and distributed for comments and feedback at a neighbourhood Safety Forum on May 18th, 2010. Comments, suggestions and criticisms from that event were incorporated into the final draft, and reviewed by both the Advisory Committee and the WBDC Board of Directors before official release in Fall of 2010.

A note on the limits of our methodology

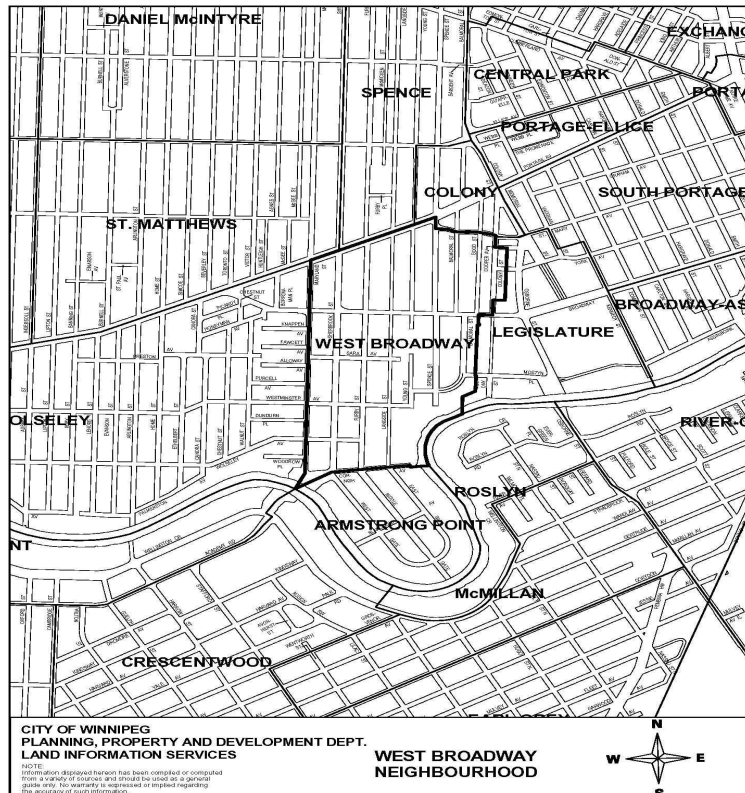
We all have our own way of looking at the world, a unique perspective that we depend on in order to make informed decisions for our survival and prosperity. In a community as diverse as West Broadway, personal perspectives can often be conflicting. As a researcher I must acknowledge my own biases, my working class, university educated, privileged perspective on the issues we are examining and the people whose stories I hope to transcribe. I pose that here, at the outset of this document, we agree that building a safer community starts with empathy, being generous as neighbours, and making a concerted effort to keep our own biases in check so that we can live together in harmony rather than dissonance.

As the author of this document I have endeavored to limit my own subjectivity and build openness and accountability into this process. As much as possible I have made decisions and focused on particular strategies by relying on the guidance of an Advisory Committee comprised of a diverse segment of this community. Likewise, great effort has been made to ensure that the ideas and perspectives illustrated in this document are those of community members themselves and not strictly my interpretations as a so called expert. Final decision making on the overall focus of this plan rested in the hands of the people who live, work and volunteer in West Broadway, whose feedback defined our final draft and whose energy and courage will determine the viability and long term success of these strategies.

A Snapshot of West Broadway

This neighbourhood is home for thousands of individuals and families, it is a destination for workers and customers, and a source of pride for residents, volunteers and Winnipeggers in general. Many people have lived their greatest moments, shared their fondest memories and felt their deepest emotions within these few city blocks. Our collective memories are good and bad, as they are in all places where people live. From the rooming house tenant on Balmoral who invites his brother over for a weekly game of Monopoly, to the elderly resident on Furby who says hello to everyone and smiles, this is a community in the best sense of the word. A meeting place for people of diverse interests and backgrounds, as inspiring as it is frustrating and as good an example of our culture's potential as it is its limitations.

Geographically, West Broadway is situated west of downtown Winnipeg and is one of the city's oldest neighbourhoods. The physical boundaries are Portage Avenue (North), Maryland Street (West), the Assiniboine River and Cornish Street (South), and Colony Street (East). This location offers walking access to many of the city's richest amenities: Osborne Village, Downtown, the Forks, Misericordia Health Centre, the Assiniboine River ice-paths, the Winnipeg Art Gallery, the University of Winnipeg and many restaurants and shops. Likewise, countless bus routes, regular taxi cab traffic and the fact that the Trans Canada Highway passes through the heart of West Broadway makes the neighbourhood extremely easy to travel to and from.



Statistically, West Broadway is a very unique neighbourhood with several demographic characteristics that vary significantly from City averages. Population density, income levels, residential mobility and many other defining features paint a picture of the neighbourhood that is cause for both celebration and concern. We must be careful to look at West Broadway in broad terms and recognize that while certain characteristics suggest a potential for difficulty, they can just as easily be recognized as strengths. Perspective and analysis are extremely subjective and while the following observations of West Broadway's demographics relate well to our discussion of neighbourhood safety we should bear in mind the generalities and limitations inherent in statistical overviews. Statistics take no notice of the dreams of children and they see no difference between our many faces or potentials.

Population Density - According to the latest available neighbourhood-level census data, the 2006 Neighbourhood Profile, at 5,325 residents and a population density of 7,895.8 per square kilometer, West Broadway is one of the most populous areas in Winnipeg, almost six times as dense as the City average of 1,365.2 people per square kilometer (Winnipeg, 2006). Density levels play a significant role in area safety issues. More people per square kilometer translates to more eyes on the street, more opportunity for interaction and higher concentrations of both our society's strengths and weaknesses.

Residential Mobility - Of particular interest to discussions around the social determinants of safety is the notion of residential mobility. Higher mobility rates are often associated with higher crime rates, in that frequent movers are prone to exhibit reduced guardianship and less social involvement than more stationary residents (Fitzgerald Wisener Savoie, 2004), In West Broadway, 33% of residents reported having moved into, out of, or within the neighbourhood in the year prior to the 2006 Census. Coupled with the statistic that 71% had moved within the previous five years we can see a marked transiency in comparison to the city as a whole. City averages report that only 15% of Winnipeggers were mobile in 2005 and 41% in the 5 years before the Census (Winnipeg, 2006).

Income levels - Census information indicates that West Broadway has a much higher proportion of citizens living below Low Income Cut Off (LICO ¹) standards than the City as a whole: 60% of economic families and 67% of economic individuals compared to

¹ According to Statistics Canada , Low income cut-offs (LICOs) are based on family expenditure data. Families below the LICO will spend a larger share of income for food, shelter and clothing than the average family. For example 2008 LICO rates for a one person household in a city the size of Winnipeg were \$18,373/yr, two person household - \$22,361/yr, three person household - \$ 27,844, and so on.

15% and 43% respectively for greater Winnipeg.

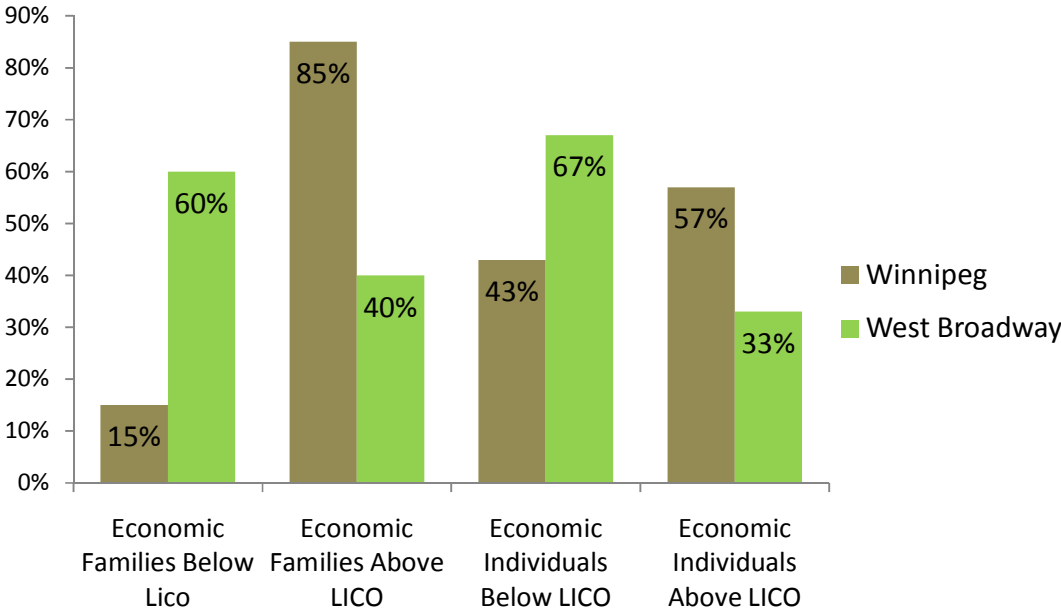


Figure 1: Comparison of Income Levels - Winnipeg to West Broadway

Household income can have a measurable impact on an individual’s capacity to maintain a foundation of safety (Fitzgerald Wisener Savoie, 2004). At \$24,468 per household, the community has the third lowest average household income by neighbourhood in Winnipeg, almost \$40,000/year less than the City average of \$63,023. We will explore the link between socio-economic disadvantage and safety in greater detail later in this document.

Age of Residents - Recent studies indicate that, males aged 15-24 years represent the highest risk age group for criminal involvement in Canadian society (Gannon, 2005). A 2001 study of criminal activity in Winnipeg for example indicated that about 35% of all identified accused were males aged 15-24 years and that this age group was responsible for 26% of reported violent offences and 43% of property crimes (Fitzgerald Wisener Savoie, 2004). Census data provides that the number of West Broadway residents between the ages of 15 and 24 were significant in comparison to City averages. 20-24 year olds in particular made up 14% of the neighbourhood, double that of the 7% City average (Winnipeg, 2006). The presence of young people in West Broadway certainly does not translate directly to higher rates of criminal activity, but the proportion of residents within ‘high-risk’ age groups should be looked at with attention. As of 2006, 46% of West Broadway’s overall population was under the age of thirty, adding a distinctive flavour to the community with a great number of young people in various stages of personal and social development.

Lone-parent Households – Research has shown that decreased guardianship or supervision in neighbourhoods is often associated with higher crime rates and victimization amongst youth. As such, the percentage of lone-parent families present within a community should be considered a red flag for potential lapses in supervision of

neighbourhood children (Felson, 1994). 45% of West Broadway's families are headed by lone parents as compared to a City average of 19%. Many lone parent families are more than capable of providing stability and supervision for children, but high local proportions coupled with lack of economic stability create challenges for a community with many parents stressed by poverty.

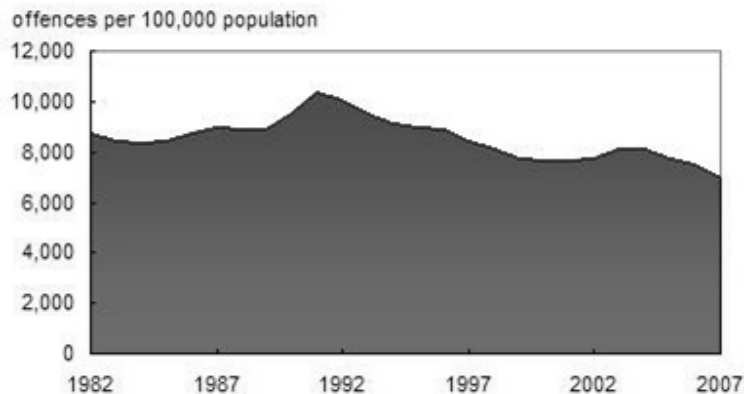
Housing Shortage - In recent years, comparatively low housing prices (Winnipeg, 2006) have made the neighbourhood popular amongst real-estate investors and home buyers seeking the best value for their money. Relatively low property taxes, the availability of large character homes, and the resurgent popularity of urban, pedestrian lifestyles have also encouraged the transformation of many rooming houses, duplexes and triplexes into single family units or higher-income rental suites. While this trend has meant a renewal of aging housing stock and the arrival of many caring and invested homeowners to the neighbourhood, it has also exacerbated the local impact of extremely low vacancy rates amongst rental units citywide (Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, 2009) Over the past 10 years more than 54% of housing units in area apartment buildings have been exempted from rent controls, resulting in rent increases of 10-15% on average. This has impacted residential mobility as people are forced to move when they cannot afford the new, higher rents. In short, many renters, particularly those in low income brackets have found it increasingly difficult to maintain stable accommodations in West Broadway.

Pedestrianism - One final statistic of particular note for safety purposes, 63% of neighbourhood workers report commuting to their work place by means other than private automobile (Winnipeg, 2006). Compared to the City average of 23% West Broadway boasts a tremendous level of active transportation and pedestrianism. With more community members walking there are more eyes on the street and more opportunities for interaction, both positive and negative.

Criminal Activity

Statistics Canada's most recent report on Canadian crime rates indicates that a 15 year long downward trend in criminal activity continued through the past few years and that national crime rates hit a 30 year low as of 2007 (Dauvergne, 2008).

Figure 2: Crime Rate in Canada 1982-2007 (Statistics Canada, 2008)



Note: All *Criminal Code* offences excluding traffic offences.











Winnipeg in particular saw a 13% drop in criminal activity in 2007, the last year reported. Manitoba as a whole reported the highest rates of decline in Canada for violent crime (-9% from 2007 to 2008) and our Crime Severity Index, while still very high, fell by a national best of 14%, meaning that both the volume of police-reported crime and its severity decreased throughout the province (Statistics Canada, 2009).

Figure 3: Police-reported Crime Severity Index values, Canada and the provinces

	2008	2007-2008	2008	2007-008
	<u>Total crime</u>		<u>Violent crime</u>	
	Crime Severity Index	% change	Violent Crime Severity Index	% change
NFLD and Labrador	71.2	-6	66.1	5
Prince Edward Island	68.2	7	43.2	8
Nova Scotia	83.6	-9	87.6	-5
New Brunswick	71.3	1	67.1	2
Quebec	82.5	-3	82.4	-2
Ontario	70.6	-5	81.5	-5
Manitoba	128.7	-14	158.2	-9
Saskatchewan	156.1	-5	155.6	-9
Alberta	110.1	-4	110.9	3
British Columbia	120.9	-8	115.0	-2
Canada	90.0	-5	94.6	-3

West Broadway's crime rate is more difficult to contextualize in the longer term as the availability of neighbourhood-specific crime statistics is limited. The City of Winnipeg's Crime Stat program, for example, offers information on local activity but only as far back as the beginning of 2008. Also problematic is the fact that only those crimes which were reported to police are accounted for. That said, it should certainly be taken as a positive indicator that as of May 13th, 2010 West Broadway had seen an 11% overall decrease in criminal activity from the same date in 2009.

Figure 4: City of Winnipeg Crime Stat Report - West Broadway - May 13, 2010

Crime Type	Year-to-Date Comparison			One Year Comparison		
	Jan 1, 2010 To May 13, 2010	Jan 1, 2009 To May 13, 2009	% Change	May 12, 2009 To May 12, 2010	May 12, 2008 To May 12, 2009	% Change
 Break & Enters – Commercial	3	10	-70%	10	22	-55%
 Break & Enters – Other	1	2	-50%	11	4	175%
 Break & Enters – Residential	20	23	-13%	52	47	11%
 Homicide	0	0	(NC)	0	1	-100%
 Robbery - Commercial/Financial	3	1	200%	4	2	100%
 Robbery - Non-Commercial/Financial	14	18	-22%	47	40	18%
 Sexual Assault	0	1	-100%	5	4	25%
 Shooting	2	1	100%	3	2	50%
 Theft Motor Vehicle – Actual	8	15	-47%	26	51	-49%
 Theft Motor Vehicle - Attempt Only	10	10	0%	31	39	-21%
Total	61	81	-25%	189	212	-11%

Of particular note, January 1st to May 13th of 2010 has seen a 25% decrease in overall criminal activity compared to the same 5.5 month period in 2009. This overall trend is perhaps indicative of a slow climb towards a safer neighbourhood. It should be pointed

out however that certain crimes, 'robberies' and 'break and enters' for example, showed an overall increase in 2009 over the previous year and are reminders of the all too recent traumas faced by many victimized individuals in this community.

In our analysis of crime rates in West Broadway we must also pay careful consideration to the fact that many crimes go unreported. Community members elect not to report incidents to police for a variety of reasons:

- The incident is relatively minor and deemed unworthy of the effort it takes to involve police
- High level of tolerance built up toward dangerous circumstances
- The victim is fearful of retribution from their perpetrator should it become known that police were called
- The victim is fearful of the police due to negative personal experience or impression
- The victim is fearful of the police due to cultural history. For example the victim could be a new immigrant from a country where police were corrupt or had been part of violent oppressive measures against citizenry
- The victim is fearful of police due to local historic issues. For example the victim could be Aboriginal and feel an aversion to the police as state representatives because of the negative legacy of colonialism²
- Domestic violence, assailant known to victim and for a variety of reasons the victim does not want to impact family dynamic by laying charges

We will revisit this local phenomenon in greater detail in the following section, including the examination of several firsthand explanations from residents who elected not to notify police of victimization.

² A political-economic phenomenon whereby various European nations explored, conquered, settled, and exploited large areas of the world.

The purposes of **colonialism** included economic exploitation of the colony's natural resources, creation of new markets for the colonizer, and extension of the colonizer's way of life beyond its national borders. In the years 1500–1900, Europe colonized all of North and South America and Australia, most of Africa, and much of Asia by sending settlers to populate the land or by taking control of governments.

Survey Results

As part of the development of this Safety Plan, WBDC engaged in an extensive consultation of community members. From November 2009 until April 2010 numerous survey interviews were undertaken to document the experiences, ideas and opinions of the people who live, work and volunteer in West Broadway.

Great effort was made to ensure that survey participation represented a broad and accurate sample of the community. Due to limited resources, online surveys were used. A disproportionate number of homeowners and community members of higher income levels took part online and those with limited access to computers had lower representation. To compensate for this, 26 in-person survey-interviews were undertaken, of which 24 respondents were renters. To ensure participation from West Broadway's most marginalized residents, in-person survey focused on respondents who are low-income and had limited or no access to computer or telephone. Rooming house tenants and low-income youth in particular were sought out to ensure representation.

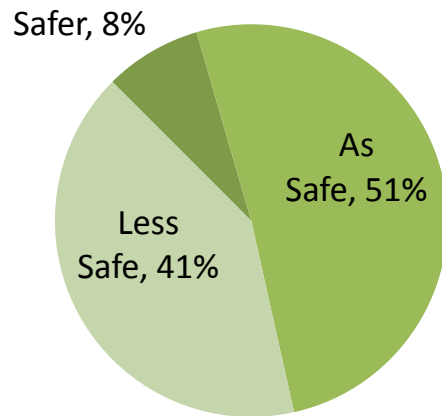
In general terms, our 157 survey respondents fell into the following categories:

- 31% were male, 1% were transgendered and 68% were female.
- 62% were renters, 38% were homeowners.
- The average age was 38 years old.
- 16% lived in West Broadway for one year or less
- 28% lived in West Broadway between 1-3 years
- 24% lived in West Broadway between 4-6 years
- 43% had lived in West Broadway 6 or more years

The following series of graphs illustrate a number of trends in West Broadway's perception of itself and the overall experience of community members.

Note – It should also be recognized that domestic violence, though cited as a common concern for many community members is largely absent from the results of our survey. Domestic violence is notably harder to measure and is not captured as often in crime statistics because it is not reported as often. Crime Stat, Winnipeg's local source for statistics on criminal activity has been criticized in recent years for separating sexual assault statistics into "Known" and "Unknown" Offender Sexual Assaults. "Known-offender Sexual Assaults" must be viewed separately in crime stat, which potentially confuses the issue – clearly a sexual assault is the same whether the perpetrator is known or not. Also, having to go to a separate place online to find this information means it is not being viewed with regular statistics, suggesting there are less sexual assaults than in reality. For the record, from May of 2009 to May 2010 there were nine 'known offender' sexual assaults reported by Crime Stat for the West Broadway neighbourhood in addition to the five unknown offender sexual assaults reported in Figure 4 above.

Figure 5 – Survey results for question 1.1: Do you think West Broadway is SAFER, AS SAFE or LESS SAFE compared to other areas of Winnipeg? (Note - there were 155 total responses to this question)



Of the 41% who felt West Broadway was less safe compared to other neighbourhoods almost half also indicated they had not personally been victimized by crime within the previous year. Almost three quarters of these respondents did however indicate that they had *witnessed* some form of criminal activity within this period.

Similarly, of 27 respondents who indicated dissatisfaction with their personal safety in West Broadway (see Figure 6 below) all 18 female respondents were renters over the age of 30 and the remaining 9 respondents were male. Over 70% of the dissatisfied female respondents reported not having been victimized by crime during the 12 months prior to the survey but more than half had witnessed criminal activity in the same period. The majority of dissatisfied female respondents also reported high levels of dissatisfaction with their personal safety walking at night and below average feelings of safety when home alone after dark.

There was a distinct division in the group of dissatisfied males when it came to household income. Four of the males indicated household income rates below \$10,000/yr while the remaining five males had household incomes above LICO standards. 50% of the 'low-income' males identified as rooming house tenants and all but one had been a victim of crime within the 12 month period leading up to the survey. Four out of five of the males who identified as above LICO on the other hand were homeowners, none had been the victim of serious crime (robbery, assault, or break-in) but most had encountered some form of property crime or obnoxious behaviour within the same period.

It is noteworthy that of the respondents who expressed dissatisfaction with personal safety, both male and female felt equally unsafe walking alone after dark. Males on the other hand were much more likely than females to indicate positive feelings of safety when home alone after dark.

Figure 6 - Survey results for question 1.4: *On a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is VERY SATISFIED and 5 is VERY DISSATISFIED, how satisfied are you in general with your personal safety in West Broadway?* (Note - 155 total responses to this question)

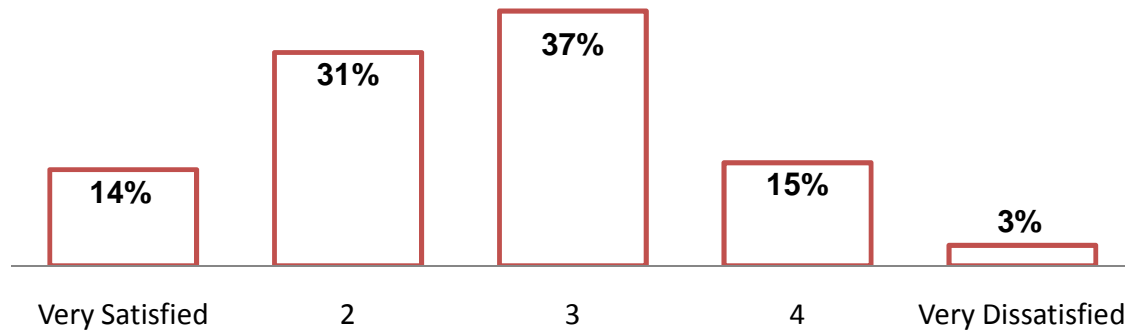
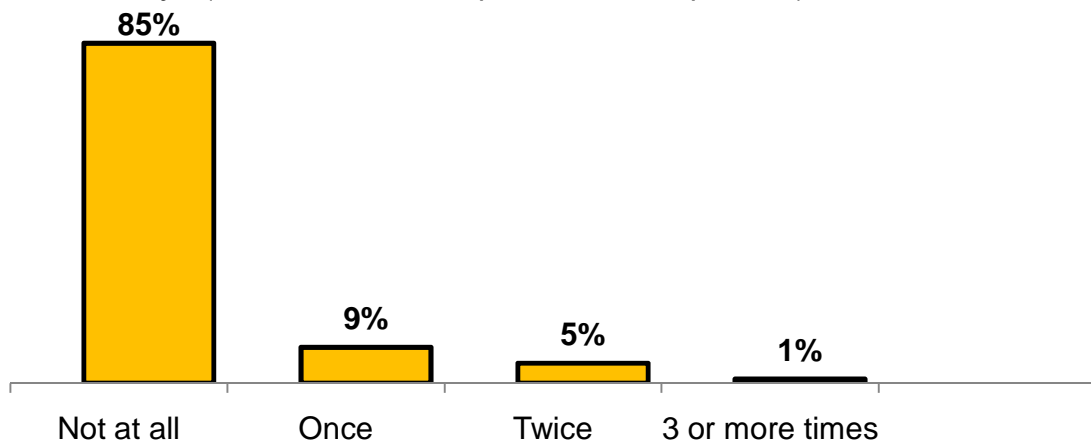
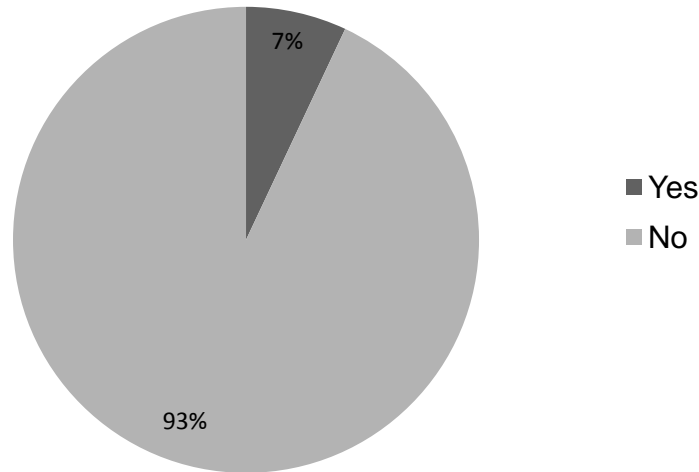


Figure 7 - Survey results for question 2.1: *How many times in the past twelve months has someone taken or tried to take something from you by force or threat of force, while in West Broadway?* (Note - 149 total responses to this question)



In total, 15% (22 individuals) of respondents said that someone had taken or tried to take something from them by force or threat of force within the 12 months prior to the survey. This is an alarming number that correlates with the Crime Stat 'robbery' figures above and indicates that personal theft is a serious problem in the neighbourhood. More particularly of the 22 individuals who indicated victimization in this way, 17 were female and 4 of the 5 male respondents indicated a household income under \$10,000/yr. In this way it can be suggested that while robbery is a prominent concern for the neighbourhood it is much more of a concern statistically for women and impoverished men than others.

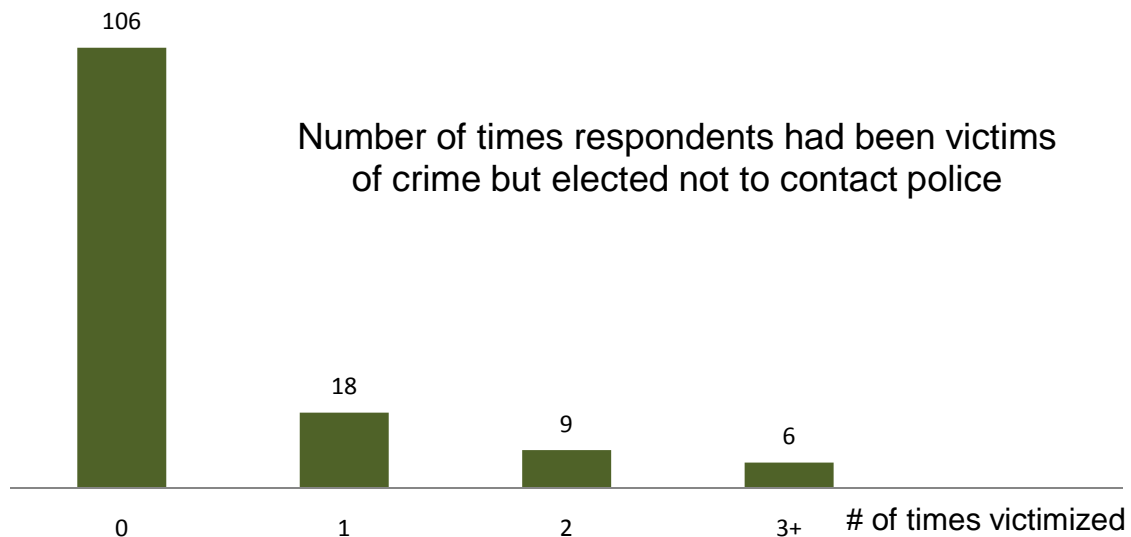
Figure 7 – Survey results to question 2.2: *In the past 12 months have you been the victim of assault (physical or sexual) while in West Broadway?* (Note – 150 total responses to this question)



It should be noted that of the respondents who answered yes to being victims of assault in the year previous to the survey, more than half later qualified their response suggesting that in actual fact no physical or sexual assault took place. These respondents cited having experienced fear or irritation as the result of interaction with or proximity to obnoxious/potentially dangerous individuals but they themselves were not physically harmed in any way. Similarly, in over 50% of the cases in which respondents answered yes to being victims of assault, the incident was considered minor and not 'worth the hassle' of calling police. Of those who answered yes to being victims of assault, two listed themselves as currently being homeless, 60% were renters and 77% were female.

Many of the assault incidents that respondents felt strongly about were those they had witnessed and not experienced personally. Many also submitted comments describing children and youth engaged in violent attacks on one another and congregating in what appeared to be gangs. For legal reasons it was decided that this survey should be focused on community members above 18 years of age, unfortunately therefore, we are left with little or no firsthand information from underage residents. Based on the comments of adult respondents however we can say with confidence that youth under 18 are amongst those most likely to be the victims and perpetrators of crime in this neighbourhood. In this way it can be suggested that while physical and sexual assaults are a wide reaching concern for the neighbourhood they are much more of a concern statistically for women in general, men with unstable housing, and youth.

Figure 8 – Survey results to question 2.8: *In the past 12 months how many times have you been a victim of crime but NOT REPORTED the incident to police?* (Note - 139 total responses to this question)



A majority of community members indicated that they had either not been victimized or had called police to report incidents of victimization. Still, an alarming 23% indicated that they had been victimized but had not reported the incident. The following statements are quotes taken directly from the survey respondents, explaining their individual logic behind electing not to call police:

- *“My car window was smashed, there was nothing valuable inside.”*
- *“Petty theft, didn't seem worth the call.”*
- *“Some boys threatened me once but nothing actually happened so I didn't worry about it.”*
- *“My car was broken into, no damage so I didn't bother reporting it”*
- *“A friend with severe mental health issues slapped me but I didn't call police because the help he needs has nothing to do with criminal justice.”*
- *“I'm homeless. Gang members assaulted me and I was afraid to call the cops.”*
- *“I'd have been more harassed by the police if I called them”*
- *“Cops aren't a useful strategy; they can't do anything for people like me.”*

It is of particular interest that the final three statements were made by youth who had been living in unstable accommodations in the 12 months prior to the survey. Significantly, the vast majority of those who said they had not reported their personal victimization fell largely into two groups: those who had stable accommodations and

those who did not. The first group was made up primarily of rooming house tenants, homeless youth, or renters in accommodations with poor exterior door locks and lighting issues. All members of this group had reported some experience with serious criminal victimization (assault, robbery, home break-in, etc) during the 12 months prior to the survey. The vast majority of the second group on the other hand reported knowing their neighbours, having properly functioning exterior door locks and lights, and having been victimized by minor property crimes or non-violent personal incidents.

This is a curious distinction, one that points to some general themes in the results of this survey and the overall experiences of community members. We will look in greater detail at these themes in the 'Conclusions' section below, in the mean time let's examine West Broadway's safety issues through the eyes of its residents and paint a firsthand portrait of our strengths and our challenges.

Community Members: Personal Statements

Many questions within the safety survey offered respondents extra space and opportunity to share their thoughts and experiences on a variety of safety issues. Of particular significance to our discussion are the following larger questions, the answers to which illustrate how community members are feeling and what their ideas are for moving forward. It was felt that printing all 157 of these responses would be excessive so I elected to highlight only those comments which went into greatest detail.

What in your opinion are the most significant safety issues currently facing West Broadway?

- *“I feel most of the difficulties that trouble me in West Broadway lie around the more decrepit homes along streets such as Sherbrook, Furby, Langside, etc. Besides the visual discomfort boarded up windows and graffiti-tagged fronts of houses provide, the ones that do provide habitation are the ones that seem to be the centre's of obnoxious, and sometimes criminal or gang-related behaviour. Also, as the weather warms, I will note that the corner of Furby and Broadway tends to be a prostitution hot-spot, with one, sometimes, two women walking in the same one block radius for hours, and days on end. Having such visual illegal activity in one's neighbourhood is troubling, especially to those who wish to visit and enjoy West Broadway.”*
- *“Lack of street lights! On some streets the lights are too far apart! Also there are a lot of people moving in and out of the neighbourhood, so sometimes you don't know who your neighbours are.”*
- *“I continuously have my guard up while walking in the neighbourhood because of perceived safety threats, i.e. suspicious looking individuals, drunks or gang members. I should qualify this by saying that I have never had my personal safety violated. However, I do consciously and continuously do my best to avoid "trouble" I think in general you can avoid safety threats in West Broadway. But I do know of one case of break and enter while people were still at home as well as gang activity around people's homes.”*
- *“Since many people have cell phones now, several payphones are out of service. I don't have a cell phone for various reasons and often people who do are out of minutes or battery power. It is essential to have accessible, working public phones for safety.”*

- *“I feel uncomfortable during the night, especially being female. A poorer neighbourhood elicits greater rates of crime, and the stories I've heard in the years of living here create a sense of fear, especially after dark. During the day, I feel uncertain about my safety because I am surrounded by many miserable people (it's also about where you place your focus, but I feel sensitive to this energy). I feel uncomfortable coming into contact with them; concerned that any wrong move could elicit a harsh/aggressive response.*
- *Night-time safety. Why is a woman afraid to go out just because of her sex? I'm concerned about the efficacy of cops in the neighbourhood. I once had a police car approach me around midnight as I was coming back home from walking my friend to the bus stop. They stopped beside me, did not introduce themselves or their reason for zoning in on me. Instead, they simply asked what I was doing, to which I replied "going home". They instructed me to make sure I went straight home..."ok?" they questioned, like I was a child, and waited for an answer. I felt livid at their ignorant, authoritarian behaviour, but simply replied "I will". They drove off. To this day I have no idea why they approached me; the only reasonable ideas I can come up with is that they either thought I was a sex-trade worker and were trying to keep the streets "clean", or were looking out for my safety, albeit in a degrading manner. Who are the cops out to serve?*
- *“The boarding houses and the constant turnover of residents within those houses is a barrier to developing a sense of community. The drug activity within those houses or what I assume is when you see people coming and going quickly at all hours of the day/night.”*
- *“Unfortunately, it seems to me that the most urgent safety issues may be the ones that are more ‘invisible,’ i.e., there are sometimes more risk factors within family and social groups, like domestic violence.”*
- *“Poverty, racism, ‘pollution in the minds of the politicians’ (quote from a staffer at Ma Mawi). Our politicians and those in privilege need to be educated on the realities and worked with to drop their stereotyping and very uncreative responses to social issues. We don't need more studies on housing and poverty we need the resources. We don't need harsher penalties for younger people we need compassion (and limits of course).”*

- *“Until most residents take ownership of their community and visualize what the potential is in this great community we will always have the random attacks, the 911 calls where police don't come, the 3:00 AM banging on the front door for a 'fix', and domestic disputes that end horribly”*
- *“Cars driving too fast on residential streets; ice on the sidewalks during winter; lack of safe infrastructure for cyclists; sexism and violence against women; homophobia; racism, racist comments and slurs , racial profiling by the police.”*
- *“I think that a large source of the tension in West Broadway is due to the gentrification of the area. With Granite Gates taking over, condos and more expensive rents, the lower income community is being forced out or into poorer living conditions in the area. There needs to be a way to keep the area safe without making people move north of Portage. I believe that every neighborhood should be mixed income and that is a huge reason why I do love West Broadway. There are Manitoba Housing and Winnipeg Housing buildings as well as more expensive apartments for those who can afford it. We just can't let the higher income people take over completely and displace families all together to areas that are not as safe as West Broadway.”*
- *“Proper lighting not always being available, random act of violence, act of violence perpetrated by two people who know each other (these have the potential to spill over and affect bystanders), houses (rooming or otherwise) not being kept up with/used for parties/drinking/drugs.”*
- *“Kids have not enough positive adults in their lives or nowhere safe to go after the community centre closes. Too many people think that getting more cops will solve our problems but that just not true, we need more social workers, daycares that people can afford and stronger laws around keeping rental properties safe for tenants.”*

Do you have suggestions for how to make West Broadway a safer community?

- *“Improve housing stock; renovate buildings/homes that need repair and offer subsidies to families so they can afford to live there. Adequate housing would also lead to less transience, people would feel they could live where they are for longer periods, then neighbours get to know each other and the area becomes safer. More evening programming and events so that there is an increased number of eyes on the street.”*
- *Start a welcome wagon program so neighbours and local businesses actively welcome newcomers to our community. Arriving in a group at someone’s door would show the good people that we’re here and the not so good people that WE’RE HERE. Would build relationships and encourage people to stay here.*
- *“Crack down on the slum lords that let these gangsters use our community for drug trafficking and prostitution. Make them replace their broken windows, clean up the graffiti, and clean up the back lanes. The vacant and abandoned buildings look terrible too!”*
- *“I think we need more people / activity on the streets. This always makes people feel safer. We need more businesses / activities that attract people to the neighbourhood, particularly at night. We need better lighting in areas where there is none. We should encourage residents to use the services provided by the province and City police to discourage gang activity. We need to continue to support programs and services that discourage youth gang activity and give kids other options (ie: get them jobs so they don't have to earn \$\$ selling drugs). Encourage people to leave their outside lights on at night. Also, we should get rid of the Sherbrook Inn bar / vendor. That would probably transform the neighbourhood overnight!”*
- *“Building a sense of community, a stronger network of community people. People need to get to know one another. We need support, regulations and integration for rooming house tenants.”*
- *“Boot out the slum landlords, more housing improvement incentives in the neighborhoods. Paint the houses - encourage more families into the neighborhood... Encourage businesses on Broadway that bring more foot traffic - Increase the number of community places. Art City is really great for example. I don't know what is going on with the street lights in this town over the last couple*

years - half of them are either on or off. People could just leave their own porch lights on and build fences to stop people from cutting through yards. We need to identify individuals on different streets who are dealing and thieving and coordinate with other neighbors to... to what? How do you get them out? Where do they then go? Somewhere else where they will cause problems. I don't know how to deal with this but for me it is these individuals who cause most of the safety issues in the neighborhood."

- *"Beautification of the area needs to involve residents, get rid of garbage bins in the back lanes, people come to the inner city to drop off their waste, give inner city residents free garbage bins to roll out on the front street on garbage day."*
- *"I like the idea of having safe spots, like how the West End Cultural Centre is designated as a safe spot if someone is in trouble or needs to have some water, use the phone or something. I would like to know of other business or community centres I could go into if I needed some help. This would be a block-parent kind of thing... maybe they could have a sign in their window. Maybe we could put some more streetlights in dark alleys? Maybe there should be a free bus like the one downtown so people don't have to walk home alone."*
- *"Create better response from government, enforce By-Laws! Community members are shouldering responsibilities that should be City/Province. More youth supports needed, maybe pairing kids with seniors?"*
- *"More to be proud or, more involvement with one another, more community gardens, more opportunities for people to meet each other, police that actually show up when people call. Get rid of Nygaard... poverty is boring, poor people are lost and angry. I will work on this. A good question. I know I sound negative, but I do care."*
- *"What makes me feel safe is that I know many of my neighbours, so things that encourage stable tenancy & home ownership are good, plus opportunities to get to know people who live in the neighbourhood. Being home in the later evening also makes a difference--I think a lot of problems happen later at night. More consistent/better street lighting might help, plus maybe other measures for late night issues (not sure what). The more 'ordinary' people that are out on the sidewalks at all hours, the better--making this a pedestrian-friendly neighbourhood with things to do & places to be in the evening (other than bars), rather than businesses or libraries, etc that close at 5 pm. The other thing that affects my feeling of safety is not reading the Free Press--I think they're a bit better than they used to be, but their coverage is still crime-focused."*

- *“Traffic calming measures, less through traffic on side streets, safer cross walks, and less car parking would really make this neighbourhood more safe and livable. It would also help to define the neighbourhood as a place where people live and children play.”*
- *“I think that neighbors need to watch out for neighbors. This means knowing your neighbor and that is not always an easy task. Block parties are a way to start to connect with the people you live next to. Block captains (so to speak) who can drop information to neighbors concerning community events, concerns, celebrations, etc. may also help. I also think it is important to celebrate within the neighborhood...events like the Street Festival give people pride in living in this area.”*
- *“In my opinion, safety in West Broadway should be approached through a "community development" model -- the neighbourhood will be safe if neighbours know one another, talk to one another and trust each other. Following this model, safety, health and well-being would be an implicit aim of all of the activities of the WBDC. I have two concerns about a Neighbourhood Safety Plan for West Broadway. First, I am concerned that the plan will establish a BIZ Patrol. In my opinion, such a program will not increase safety in the neighbourhood, but will exasperate the challenges of West Broadway's most marginalized and vulnerable by bringing them into contact with the legal system on a more frequent basis by cracking down on minor crimes such as panhandling, loitering, squeegeeing, drinking, graffiti, jay walking, etc. The establishment of a BIZ patrol also sends a message to residents that there is a crime issue in the neighbourhood that needs to be handled by outside professionals, thereby reducing a tendency for residents to "self-police" and look out for one another. The other concern I have about a neighbourhood safety plan is that the vast majority of the people who contribute to the development of the plan, and who participate in whatever activities result from the plan (e.g. Neighbourhood Watch, block committees, resident patrols, etc.) will be white, university-educated homeowners, who, aside from not representing the demographics of the neighbourhood, will be participating in order to protect their personal property, and, though probably not explicitly, in order to address those persons and properties in the neighbourhood (e.g. rooming houses, youth who dress like gangsters, drunks, etc.) whom they consider to be a threat to THEIR safety. This dynamic, which is a consistent feature of neighbourhood crime prevention schemes, will not make West Broadway safer; indeed, it will only serve to exasperate relationships between neighbours.”*

- *“A new cycle that can only occur over time: loving parents, loved kids, general goodness in society b/c loved people can give out love, needs being met, addictions no longer necessary, happier relationships, loving parents...and the cycle goes round.”*
- *“More quality subsidized housing, free access to programs for healthy body, mind and spirit, more community advocates and community developers to help empower people in creating their own support programs.”*
- *“More block parties so strangers can meet each other and be less scared, laws to force/encourage more 'mixed income' housing development, more support for poor tenants, more support for moms and things for kids to do after school and at night.”*

Conclusions

The above statements by community members illustrate both the broad spectrum of feelings around safety in the community and the equally wide range of personal circumstances. Two common themes that cannot be overlooked are a genuine love and hope for this neighbourhood and a sense of frustration for the safety issues in our midst. Also significant is the number of perspectives that diverge from one another over how best to make things safer.

Regardless of the seriousness and at times dire circumstances experienced by those who participated in this process, all community members share the desire for safety and prosperity. Let this be our rallying point as we examine the following survey conclusions and move on to outline the many diverse suggestions that have been made for bettering this community.

- The vast majority (approx. 80%) of West Broadway community members have not been victimized by criminal activity (assault, robbery, break and enter, small property crimes, etc) in the past 12 months.
- The vast majority (approx. 85%) feel positive about their personal safety
- The majority (Approx. 59%) felt that safety in West Broadway compared positively to conditions in other Winnipeg neighbourhoods and had improved within the past 1-5 years
- More than half of respondents had **witnessed** some level of criminal activity within the past 12 months (assaults, graffiti, vandalism, car theft, etc)
- All demographics reported having experience with being physically or verbally threatened (36% reported some degree of victimization within the year previous to the survey). This was the same result for renters as it was for property owners. Likewise it was similar across all income levels.
- A small segment of youth and men living below LICO standards reported the highest degree of criminal victimization over the past 12 months. This was particularly the case for those respondents who also reported being close to homelessness.
- Similarly there is a small segment of female community members who have been victims of theft in the past 12 months and feel very dissatisfied with their personal safety as a result.

Strategies for Making West Broadway Safer

For the sake of ease, we will examine safety-enhancing strategies from two angles: first, those that focus on broader social and political issues often one step removed from our individual control, and second those that respond locally, through direct action to the needs of community members.

Broad Strategies

Throughout this process community members have referred to a number of broad social issues they felt warranted collective attention. In particular, it was widely expressed that our community should improve on existing efforts to provide supports for families, youth and tenants. Similarly, many interviewees expressed a desire to see closer relations between West Broadway residents and the Winnipeg Police Service, particularly the return of walking police patrols, augmentation of the Police in Schools program and specific officers working closely with community groups and recreation centres.

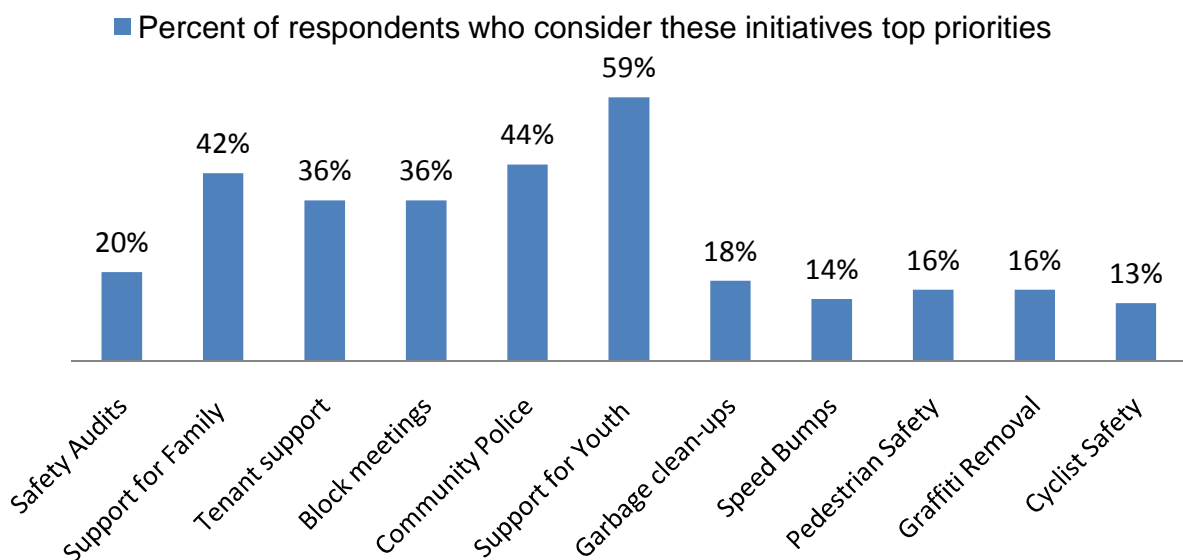
These broader strategies were framed in the following way for our survey and received the corresponding level of interest (see Figure 9 below).

- **More programs for neighbourhood children and youth** – This could include mandating WBDC and/or organizing in the community to lobby government for the expansion of local afterschool programming, anti-gang initiatives, sports and recreation options for youth, employment and training opportunities, outreach programming, and the introduction of a 24 hour drop-in centre for youth, etc.
- **More emphasis on community policing** – This could include mandating WBDC and/or organizing in the community to lobby government for the return of walking police patrols, pushing for an expansion of the School Resource Officer program, advocating for official relationships between the WPS and community centres, etc.
- **More supports for neighbourhood families** – This could include mandating WBDC and/or organizing in the community to lobby government for the augmentation of local initiatives that help to stabilize and nurture families and individuals in need. Examples include healing circles, parenting programs, programs for street involved women and single mothers, addictions programming, etc.
- **More supports for tenants** – This could include mandating WBDC and/or organizing in the community to bolster supports for local residents who are currently housed in unstable or inappropriate accommodations, to continue offering support for agencies and businesses working to address core housing

needs in West Broadway, and decreasing neighbourhood mobility rates by advocating for stronger government response to rising rents and rental displacement.

- **Improving mobility and safety for pedestrians/cyclists** – This could include mandating WBDC and/or organizing in the community to lobby for improved lighting, speed bumps on side streets/lanes, distinct cycling lanes on major streets, improved traffic law enforcement for intersections and crosswalks, traffic calming measure for pedestrian oriented streets, etc.

Figure 9: Answers to survey question 8.4 - From the following list of safety enhancing strategies, please indicate *THREE* that you feel would be the most useful for West Broadway. (Note – 138 total responses to this question)



Based on further review of community feedback, the following points have been added to our list of broader strategies for making West Broadway safer:

- **Work to alleviate fear in the community** - This could include mandating WBDC and/or organizing in the community to create opportunities for residents to interact and get to know one another, educating with community members on both the root causes of crime and real, as opposed to perceived dangers, etc.
- **Work to ensure that existing crime prevention mechanisms are widely used and accessible** - This could include mandating WBDC and/or organizing in the community to bolster the awareness, use and capacity of existing resources,

such as City by-law inspections, City bulk waste pick-up, Residential Tenancies Branch, Public Safety Investigations, City lighting inspectors, WPS Community Support Unit, Legal Aid, Child and Family Services, Osborne House, Mobile Crisis Unit, Mediation Services, etc.

- **Work to encourage stable housing and poverty reduction in West Broadway and for the broader community** - This could include mandating WBDC and/or organizing in the community to lobby government for improvements to income and housing supports for those most vulnerable to victimization/involvement in criminal activity. Some examples might include advocating for raising Income Assistance rates, lobbying for increased regulation on condo conversions, advocating for introducing incentives for operating mixed-income rental properties, lobbying for improving the regulations governing the operation of rooming houses, advocating for stronger vacant and derelict building by-laws, advocating for a stronger government response to bed bug infestations (support for landlords, instructions for tenants, etc), etc.

Based on survey response and subsequent feedback, it is clear that these strategies resonate with community members. To date, many efforts have been made in West Broadway to address safety concerns and we have reason to celebrate the excellent resources already in our midst. That said, neighbourhood crime rates remain consistently above City averages suggesting that more work needs to be done to help augment existing resources. Individually, community members have the capacity to volunteer, to organize new initiatives, to mentor and educate, to create supports for one another, and to lobby for proactive agency and government response to neighbourhood shortcomings. As a community development agency, WBDC has the capacity both to play an advocacy role and to help organize community efforts around specific issues.

Direct Strategies:

Many suggestions have been made for strategies that respond locally, through direct action to the needs of community members. These are efforts that can be made by individuals and by agency staff at WBDC and elsewhere to improve neighbourhood safety:

- **Block meetings and block parties** - This could include working to increase the frequency and number of community events: street parties, festivals, block parties, community yard sales, neighbourhood dances, Powwows, etc. Block 'safety' meetings in particular bring community members from a specific street together to share stories, trade contact information and work together on strategies that will improve the safety of their street.

- **Neighbourhood mentoring/tutoring programs for youth** – WBDC and community members in general could commit to working with existing service providers to bolster opportunities for youth to access mentoring and tutoring. Individuals have the capacity to volunteer and to help organize initiatives providing increased adult guidance and supervision of youth. Community elders in particular could be engaged to provide leadership and strength for our young people.
- **Newcomer welcoming wagon** - This could include mandating WBDC and/or organizing in the community to bring together neighbours and local businesses to actively welcome newcomers to our community. Such an initiative, whether on a small scale or as an official program could help build relationships, educate newcomers on available resources and encourage people to stay and participate fully in the West Broadway community for longer periods.
- **Improved garbage removal** – This could include some or all of the following: educating with residents on their rights and responsibilities regarding garbage and recycling, promoting wide use of 311's free inner city service for bulk waste [furniture, beds, etc] removal, working with local businesses through the West Broadway BIZ to continue recent efforts to pick up litter in back lanes and in green spaces, etc.
- **More supports for tenants/residents** – For WBDC this could include maintaining or expanding our Rooming House Safety program for working with tenants one on one and in groups to educate on rights and responsibilities, provide advocacy, audit safety conditions, and work with landlords on making improvements. WBDC could also continue efforts supporting tenants to organize collective initiatives (block parties, multi-unit bedbug responses, tenants associations, etc) while offering similar support (property improvement grants) to landlords who show a commitment to providing adequate, safe housing in this community. Individually, residents have the capacity to organize tenants associations, to work with neighbours to ensure that renters are welcomed and made to feel accountable to the community, to host block safety meetings/audits, to organize block parties, to employ preventative mechanisms (Residential Tenancies Branch, City By-law Enforcement, Fire Inspections, etc) if codes and by-laws are being broken, and to call the Manitoba Justice Public Safety Investigations Unit if neighbours are involved in residence-based trafficking of illegal substances or sex trade activity, etc.

- **Safety Audits/Neighbourhood Watch/Block Parents** - The goal of a safety audit is to bring neighbours together to identify and improve local safety conditions. Similarly, Neighbourhood Watch and Block Parent programs have the capacity to offer children safe places to turn in a moment of crisis and suggest to the greater community that residents are vigilant and proactive about neighbourhood issues. The potential of these initiatives include stronger relationships, reduced opportunities for anti-social behavior (violence and crime) and stronger efforts to make physical improvements to the safety of public spaces.
- **Graffiti removal program** - Note – In February of 2010, the West Broadway BIZ introduced a graffiti removal program that has begun responding to the graffiti concerns of neighbourhood businesses, residents and property owners.
- **Safety walks and ‘Take Back the Night’ marches** – Individuals and community agencies have the capacity to organize regular or random ‘safety strolls’ through their block or neighbourhood. Well organized patrols can be an effective way for neighbours to meet; they put eyes on the street and help to discourage criminal activity while offering occasion to document neighbourhood safety issues. Historically, the downside to this approach in West Broadway has been that volunteer based patrols are difficult to maintain and rely heavily on the experience and drive of a volunteer coordinator to stay afloat. Another criticism of safety patrolling is that while highly visible patrols deter some forms of criminal and obnoxious activity, they can also pose a threat to the safety of poorly trained volunteers and have the potentially adverse effect of reinforcing perceptions of danger where there may not be any.

Conclusion

The process for creating this Safety Plan was received with great enthusiasm and seriousness by a wide range of community members. Discussions of personal and community safety bring out a sense of urgency and passion in many of us which can translate into tremendous collective power if organized effectively. As the research and writing portion of this process draws to a close it remains clear that the future of West Broadway is in the hands of those community members and agencies who are actively engaged in building relationships and augmenting the resources painstakingly built by those who've come before.

For WBDC in particular, this process has strengthened our understanding of local priorities and shed light on both the strengths and weaknesses of existing safety efforts. It has reinforced our commitment to safety as an agency priority and introduced fresh ideas for how to move forward. The safety planning process has taken a year to complete. The second year of WBDC's two-year safety pilot program will focus on resourcing as many of the above mentioned strategies as possible while working to secure funding for safety programming beyond 2011.

As directed at the final meeting of the Safety Plan Advisory Committee, the implementation of the above mentioned strategies will be undertaken within the capacity of WBDC staff and approached in order of expressed community priority (see Figure 9 above). To begin, efforts will be made to strengthen WBDC's support for youth serving initiatives, family serving agencies, community policing strategies, and pedestrian/cyclist safety initiatives. Existing efforts to support at-risk tenants and build relationships between tenants and renters will be bolstered. As will efforts to ensure that existing crime prevention mechanisms are widely used and accessible in West Broadway. The Safety and Rooming House Coordinator will work to implement or resource community efforts around Safety Auditing, Block Meetings/Parties, Welcome Wagons, and Safety Strolling while continuing to support the graffiti removal and broader safety efforts of the West Broadway BIZ.

While WBDC has one year of funding remaining to advance (rely on) in its safety efforts, this document is intended to provide leverage for other agencies and community organizers to begin or augment their own efforts in this area. Above all, this document concludes with the widely expressed point that for West Broadway to see lasting safety improvements it will require strong commitments from community members who recognize that goals are easier to achieve with collective action and strengthened relationships.

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