

# Harewood Neighbourhood Safety Audit 2021



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Nanaimo Community Policing

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# Introduction

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The Nanaimo Neighbourhood Safety Audit is a hands-on crime prevention initiative undertaken by the Nanaimo Community Policing program in collaboration with the RCMP, Neighbourhood Associations, Vancouver Island University, and many other people and organizations in Nanaimo. Safety audits are a useful tool which have been used in many cities throughout Canada and the U.S to help address safety challenges in neighbourhoods.

Safety Audits work to promote neighbourhood safety by identifying factors relating to safety and crime. Safety Audits allow neighbourhoods to work with residents, businesses, police and other agencies to find ways to reduce the opportunities for crime and incorporate relevant crime prevention programming. The findings of the Safety Audits are based on residents' and business owner's experiences and perceptions of crime and safety, crime statistics, social contexts of the local neighbourhood and Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) assessments of problematic locations found in the neighbourhood.

Safety Audits have the potential to bring about a wide range of benefits, including:

- Reduction in opportunities for neighbourhood crime by working to address criminogenic factors.
- Identify a neighbourhood's strengths and weaknesses in regards to crime and safety, and work with neighbourhoods to incorporate community safety and crime prevention tools.
- Increase residents' awareness of neighbourhood crime and crime prevention, as well as reduce levels of fear of crime through the spread of information.
- Reduces isolation and creates opportunities for residents and businesses to share their experiences of crime and vulnerability.
- Strengthens connection between residents as they work together to build a strong and healthy neighbourhood.
- Creates a strong relationship between residents, RCMP, neighbourhood associations, blockwatches and other organizations through collaboration and communication.

The Neighbourhood Safety Audit seeks to give residents an opportunity to have their voices be heard, and prioritizes effective collaboration between neighbourhoods and other aspects of the community. The recommendations presented in this report are based on the needs of neighbourhood residents, and are intended to work towards effective, long-term interventions to address issues of safety and crime. Safety Audits are a tool that can greatly contribute to safer and healthier neighbourhoods in Nanaimo.

## Background

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The Harewood neighbourhood of Nanaimo was one of six sites selected for a safety audit. The environmental and social characteristics of the neighbourhood led the project team to conclude that a safety audit could be conducted effectively in this area, and could help promote positive change for the neighbourhood's residents.

Harewood was selected to be the site of a safety audit for several reasons. Conversations with members of the Nanaimo RCMP identified the Harewood neighbourhood as a strong candidate to be a part of this project. This was due to a variety of social and environmental factors, statistical data, and the perceptions and experiences of residents.

Beyond this, residents of Harewood are highly active in a variety of community policing techniques. This demonstrated to the project team that these residents were strongly invested in the safety of their neighbourhood, which would be valuable in a collaborative project such as the Neighbourhood Safety Audit. Harewood's Neighbourhood Association also assisted the project team to connect with neighbourhood residents, distribute information and survey materials, and understand the concerns and priorities of residents. These factors suggested that effective cooperation could occur between the Harewood neighbourhood and the project team, which was a central goal of the Neighbourhood Safety Audit.

The Harewood Neighbourhood Association's ReImagine Nanaimo report from October 2020 further illustrated the issues that mattered most to residents of this neighbourhood. The report identified concerns around growth management and how that would translate into transportation patterns in the neighbourhood. There is a desire to balance development with gentrification, environmental and character impacts (City of Nanaimo, 2020). This information helped focus the efforts of the project team in conducting the Harewood safety audit.

## Pre-Audit Survey Results

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The results of the pre-audit survey distributed to Harewood residents provided valuable insights into the issues that mattered most to this neighbourhood. These results informed and guided efforts in the Harewood safety audit. In total, 119 Harewood neighbourhood residents responded to the pre-audit survey.

Harewood residents held generally positive views about their neighbourhood. Roughly 74% of survey respondents reported feeling a strong or very strong sense of belonging to the neighbourhood, and the

same percentage stated that they would recommend the neighbourhood to others. 97% of residents stated they were satisfied with their relationships with friends and family, and 77% stated this about their relationships with neighbours. In addition, a large majority of survey respondents stated they generally trusted their neighbours, work colleagues, and local businesses.

While the generally positive views held by Harewood residents about their neighbourhood are encouraging, it is clear from other data that these residents have concerns about neighbourhood safety and crime. 51% of respondents reported feeling dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their personal safety in the neighbourhood. 62% believed that crime rates had increased, and 47% believed that crime rates were higher in Harewood than in other neighbourhoods. 62% of the sample reported that they would feel unsafe or very unsafe walking alone in their neighbourhood at night. These figures suggest a level of fear of crime, and concerns over neighbourhood safety among Harewood residents.

Respondents reported a variety of reasons for why they answered the way they did to the survey questions. In regards to why these residents felt unsafe in their neighbourhood, the most common responses related to the issues of homelessness, drug use and crime, and traffic safety. Several respondents mentioned that they suspected certain houses in their neighbourhood were involved in the sale of illicit substances. Others pointed to the presence of homeless individuals as a reason for feeling unsafe, believing them to be contributing to neighbourhood crime. Some residents stated that they felt unsafe due to Harewood's traffic and pedestrian conditions, such as speeding cars, poor walking lanes, and a lack of crosswalks. Others identified a lack of visible deterrents to potential offenders, such as security cameras and effective street lighting as contributing to feelings of discomfort.

The survey respondents offered a range of opinions as to how best these identified issues could be addressed. Many argued that more attention has to be placed on enforcing drug crime in the area, as well as homeless individuals whom they believe to be creating unsafe conditions for residents. Others advocated for an increased overall police presence in Harewood, including more patrols and stricter enforcement of traffic laws.

Harewood residents also answered questions relating to their demographic information. 71% of respondents identified as female, and a diverse range of ages were reported. 88% of the sample identified their ethnic identity as Caucasian, while 7% identified as First Nations or a visible minority. A strong majority of respondents reported an annual household income of over \$50,000, and 62% stated they were employed full time.

These results provided the project team with a deeper insight into the priorities of Harewood residents in regards to neighbourhood safety. This aided efforts to tailor the safety audit to the needs of the neighbourhood in order to effectively address issues and promote positive change.

# Harewood Safety Audit Summary

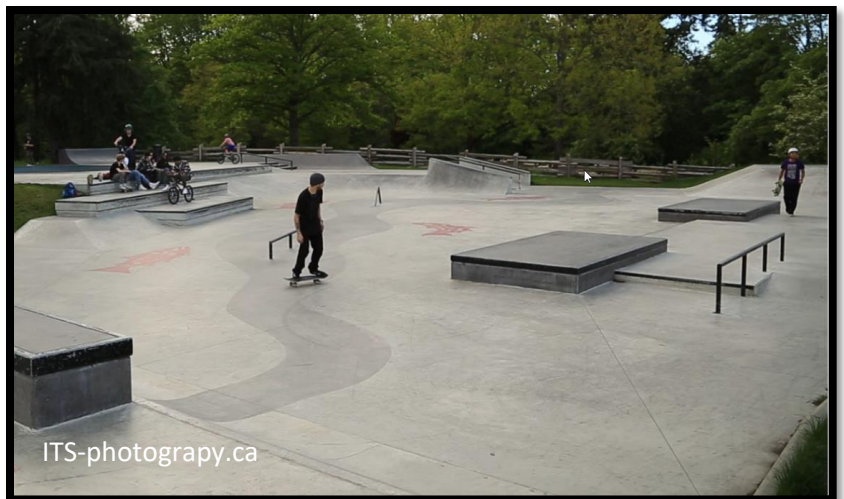
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On May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at 7 pm neighbourhood residents gathered to conduct a safety audit along a route that was identified through online survey and anecdotal sources as presenting community safety challenges. Due to COVID safety protocols, participation was limited to 10 participants. The Harewood Neighbourhood Safety Audit, had 3 neighbourhood residents participate along with 2 criminology practicum students, the Community Policing Coordinator and the City of Nanaimo Community Planner. The residents that participated represented other key groups in the neighbourhood, specifically, the Harewood Neighbourhood Association, and a Harewood area Block Watch.

The route chosen, as mentioned previously, was largely based on feedback from those living and working in the Harewood Neighbourhood. The route included a community park, many residential areas, and 2 main commercial hubs. (See Appendix A for specific route information).

## *Harewood Centennial Park (Location #1)*

Harewood Centennial Park is located in the heart of the Harewood Neighbourhood right next to John Barsby High School and nestled in between 2 commercial hubs. The park has had extensive work done around accessibility, beautification and multi uses for the community at large. The Park hosts baseball diamonds, soccer fields, a large playground, a water park, a newly constructed skate park, and 2 lacrosse boxes, one being covered and well supported for spectators,



and evening uses. There are public washrooms on site. The park is well managed and maintained by the City. Recently a pedestrian walkway was incorporated in the park that links the two commercial hubs and runs along Georgia Avenue. The park is well used with all types of activities happening in the park 7 days a week and well into the evening hours. COVID has reduced the organized activities that normally happen at the park however the informal activities and usages by private residents is frequent.

Some of the challenges noted at the park included some youth participating in negative activity in the park, for example, using substances and causing some vandalism to the park. There often is a group of young teens who often engage in negative activity for something to do. As an example, there was a group of young teens blowing up condoms and throwing them at each other during of one of the site

visits. However, there was very little damage and very little graffiti found in the park during the audit. The residents mentioned that the sign at the Skate Park had to be replaced several times due to graffiti and damage but that it was a minimal issue. There are some reports of garbage and debris but again the City maintains the park well and any noted garbage or debris is removed right away.

The biggest challenge residents noted was the forested area along Chase River which borders the north end of the park. They noted some encampment activity and drug use under the foliage for privacy. There are several spots along the river that are noted as most challenging, one under the river bridge at Howard Avenue and the other closer to Bruce Avenue. There was evidence of debris, shopping carts, and illegal dumping of furniture.

#### *Sixth Street and Howard Avenue (Location #2)*

This location was identified in relation to the traffic safety concerns the Harewood Neighbourhood faces. Audit participants felt that the way traffic patterns are set up on the surrounding streets has encouraged motorists to use Sixth Street as a travel corridor for motorists looking for the quickest route to and from the highway. With this increase usage there has been reports of increased speeding. This has been problematic for pedestrians as there is no sidewalk going up Sixth Street between Howard Avenue and the much used entrance to Colliery Dam Park. The neighbourhood is concerned with the speeding that may be perpetuated with the increase of traffic that will come along with new developments in the Harewood Neighbourhood. It is reported that currently the Harewood Neighbourhood has more building permits than any other areas in Nanaimo.

Georgia Elementary School received special mention and the changes it has recently seen in the last few years. Residents noted that the student population historically had been one of the lowest economic areas in BC. The school used to operate the community schools program that provided outreach support to low income families. This programming has changed mainly due to the gentrification of the area and the move in of higher income families. This has drastically changed the dynamics at the school.

#### *Fifth Street and Howard Avenue (Location #3)*

Residents noted the major challenges that have come from the affordable housing site called "King Arthur's Court". Residents recollect a City consultation process for the Harewood Neighbourhood Plan that reflected King Arthur's Court as the biggest safety issue in the Harewood Neighbourhood in 2013. There were comments about these particular dwellings as having high call out services to police and health services. There have been several operators involved in supporting the housing site and they struggled with managing the complex health and safety issues associated with the site. Currently, BC Housing has control over direct operations. The plan is to demolish the site as the pest infestation and other health concerns related to the physical structure of the buildings is unrepairable. Many of the units are empty.

A new partnership formed between BC Housing, the City of Nanaimo and School District 68 is working on the development of a master plan for the site including environmental and social structures supporting future affordable housing on the property.

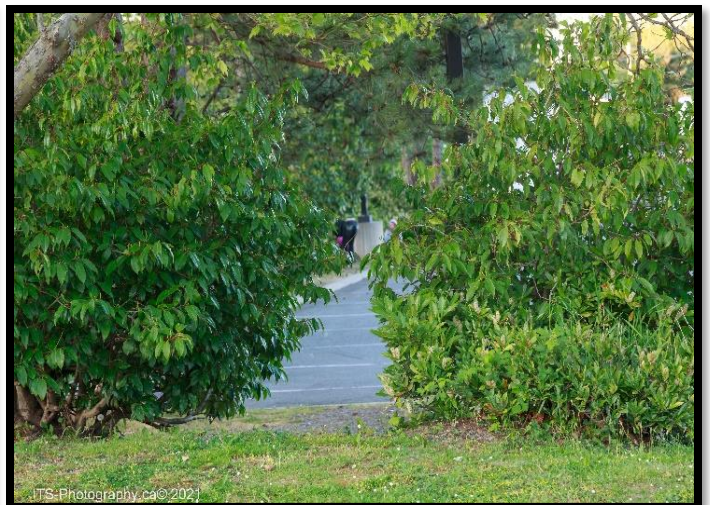
As the audit participants were walking to the next stop location, special mention was made about the traffic calming measures that have been implemented on Harewood Road between Howard Avenue and Fourth Street. The change of speed

limit to 30 km and the temporary placement of Tire Signs creating an inexpensive roundabout scenario on Georgia Avenue has really slowed down traffic in the area making it much safer for children living in the housing developments on Georgia and Harewood Road and for pedestrians travelling to the University Village or to the Vancouver Island University site.



#### *University Village (Location #4)*

This by far was identified as the most problematic area of the neighbourhood. There are large crowds that gather at the 7/11 especially at night time. Residents noted disturbing behaviour of drug induced behaviour usually in the vicinity of the 7/11. Another problematic area is the parking lot immediate behind the Value Village store. The lot is surrounded by trees and the backs of stores making it a perfect space to conduct activity without being seen. At the time of the audit, there was presence of individuals using drugs. During the audit and at other site visits there was often a police presence responding to calls in the area. The businesses at the University Village face theft and vandalism in this area. A couple



of businesses indicated to the Safety Audit Team that they were leaving the area due to the crime that was occurring. A business at the new development at the University village fell victim to an arson inside their store and was forced to close for several weeks to repair the damage.

The University Village complex is one of the first steps in community planning to create a “High” Street, a road through the heart of Harewood that would see mixed use, shops and the main flow of traffic through the neighbourhood. The hope is that this type of concept would continue on up until the Vancouver Island University site. The increase of traffic to this area has highlighted the need to revisit the 4 way stop signs at Bruce Avenue and Fifth Street. There were anecdotal reports that many motorists do not stop at the 4 way stop. There was discussion about how traffic lights would improve the safety of the intersections for motorists and pedestrians. According to ICBC Statistics, there have been 50 crashes at the intersection of Bruce Avenue and Fifth Street (Insurance Corporation of British Columbia, 2021). These crashes took place between 2016 and 2020 and include casualty crashes, crashes resulting in fatality or injury, and property damage only crashes.

#### *Bruce Avenue (Location #5)*

As mentioned previously, dumping of debris and garbage at the juncture points of Bruce Avenue and Chase Avenue was again noted. Walking along Bruce Avenue, residents pointed out many examples of the large amount of graffiti that seems to be present in the neighbourhood. The majority of utility boxes, hydro poles and other structures had graffiti present.



#### *Harewood Quality Foods (Location #6)*

Residents commented on the improvements being made in this location. The new Quality Foods and the Liquor store is very well maintained and managed. The area is beautiful and clean. There are a variety of amenities in the area in a residential area creating a positive mixed use area. The recent building developed by the Nanaimo Affordable Housing Society has added a nice addition to the area and brought positive diversity to the area. There were some issues with the unsecured parkade and some suspicious activity. This includes where the stairs leave the parkade into the pathway between the housing complex and the house on the south side.

#### *Other Observations and Comments*

Residents on the audit and within the online survey mentioned a “goon” squad which was allegedly a group of youth, the leader being around the age of 12, that frequent the Harewood Neighbourhood



causing crime, mischief and vandalism. No one in the audit could provide more details about this but did comment they have seen groups of youth possibly participating in negative activity. Finally, there were some concerns around gentrification happening in the neighbourhood. The residents mentioned that they were happy that more families were moving into the neighbourhood because of affordability however they wanted to ensure that the neighbourhood stayed affordable.

## Crime Statistics Summary

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The Uniformed Crime Reporting Survey (UCR) is a tool developed to measure the frequency at which various crimes and other activities occur in our communities. UCR data, when taken alongside other indicators, can provide valuable information to police, community organizations, and other agencies about the ways in which neighbourhoods are affected by crime. UCR statistics for the Harewood neighbourhood were provided by the Nanaimo RCMP. The report contains measurements about the frequency of various incidents from January of 2016 to March of 2021. This information can offer useful insights into the experiences of Harewood residents.

A notable increase in the number of total incidents reported in the Harewood neighbourhood can be seen across the 5-year period included in the report. A total of 361 total incidents were reported in 2016, 275 were reported in 2017, and 190 in 2018. However, there were 661 total incidents in 2019, and 996 in 2020. For the first quarter of 2021, January to March, there is 208 incidents reported. While this increase across the last two years of the reporting period is clearly significant, it does not on its own indicate a rise in the frequency of actual crimes. This is the case because UCR statistics include both incidents of actual crime, as well as incidents where a crime was only suspected to have occurred. Beyond this, the UCR changed its methodology for categorizing incidents during the reporting period. As of January 2019, all incidents are considered to be “founded”, and are included in the report, unless a police investigation has found credible evidence demonstrating that the incident did not happen, or was never attempted. This change was made to ensure the UCR respected the experiences of victims, and avoided excluding legitimate incidents even though investigation did not provide evidence. As a result, many incidents which may have been excluded prior to 2019 are now likely to be added to the reported figures.


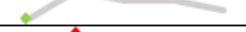




















The categories of Other General Occurrences (Other GO<sup>1</sup>) and Suspicious Occurrences (SO) saw the most dramatic increase across the 5 year reporting window. Only 59 Other GO incidents were reported between 2016 and 2018, but 105 were reported in 2019, and 226 were reported in 2020. Similarly, 94% of reported SO incidents occurred in 2019 and 2020. This spike in incidents is likely due to changes in the UCR’s methodology for categorizing incidents, and may not represent an actual increase in the frequency of these types of activities. There was also a notable increase in the number of reported

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<sup>1</sup> Other General Occurrences include reports that pertain to Well-Being Checks, the Trespass Act, the Quarantine Act, Lost Property, the Safe Streets Act, etc.

municipal bylaw violations. Incidents of Mischief to property, and incidents causing disturbance became more frequent across the 5 year reporting window. 65% of Mischief to Property reports occurred in 2019 and 2020, and 64% of incidents causing disturbance were reported during this time. Mischief to Property incidents for the first quarter of 2021 is almost half the yearly average.

Incidents of Break and Enters occurred less frequently across the reporting window. This downward trend may be a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic, as people were forced to spend more time in their homes. Incidents of Auto Theft, Theft under \$5000, and Theft from a vehicle occurred at a relatively high and constant rate across the 5-year period. Shoplifting was also reported frequently in the report, though there was a notable dip in 2018, with only 5 total incidents being reported. Serious crimes such as Robbery and Arson occurred rarely during the last 5 years, with no real evident trends being present in the UCR data. However, the rate of Arson for the first 3 months of 2021 is concerning as it seems to have met the 5-year average threshold in the first quarter of the year.

HAREWOOD	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	5year Trend	5year Average	Jan-Mar 2021
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>375</b>	<b>261</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>621</b>	<b>996</b>		<b>489</b>	<b>208</b>
ARSON	0	3	2	2	1		2	2
AUTO THEFT	3	6	5	5	4		5	0
BIKE THEFT	14	7	4	5	10		8	1
BREAK & ENTER - BUS	8	4	2	5	3		4	0
BREAK & ENTER - OTH	8	2	5	5	0		4	3
BREAK & ENTER - RES	17	7	7	2	10		9	1
CAUSE DISTURBANCE	50	36	18	50	136		58	23
COUNTERFEIT CURRENCY	3	2	0	15	7		5	0
FRAUDS	17	16	5	26	30		19	3
MISCHIEF TO PROPERTY	39	33	24	71	110		55	26
MUNICIPAL BYLAW	1	1	16	63	77		32	11
OTHER GO	7	13	39	105	226		78	67
OTHER THEFT U/5000	39	28	16	24	33		28	8
POSSESS STOLEN PROPERTY	5	4	1	5	4		4	0
PUBLIC MISCHIEF	0	0	0	1	6		1	2
ROBBERY	0	3	2	0	3		2	0
SHOPLIFTING	127	54	5	55	68		62	9
SUSPICIOUS OCCURRENCES	3	2	21	147	232		81	50
THEFT FROM VEHICLE	34	37	18	35	35		32	2
THEFT UTILITIES	0	1	0	0	0		0	0
TRESPASS AT NIGHT	0	2	0	0	1		1	0

# Crime Prevention and Community Safety Recommendations

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The purpose of the Neighbourhood Safety Audits is to support local neighbourhoods in building resiliency and increase safety. Work is done by activating the neighbourhood by capturing their real lived experiences through tools such as the pre audit survey, the group audits and/or self-directed audits. Engagement of the neighbourhood is important to help co create safety and connect agencies that can provide support in developing and carrying out community safety initiatives or appropriate crime prevention activities.

Crime and community safety issues are complex and are often a symptom of a lack of access to the social determinants of health for not only individuals but neighbourhoods and communities. The root causes of crime are often the results of adverse social, economic, cultural and family conditions (Waterloo Region Crime Prevention Council, 1996). The recommendations made here are suggestions on activities that neighbourhoods can do to contribute to the overall safety and security of the neighbourhood. They do not guarantee that crime will never happen as a result of implementing these recommendations nor will the following recommendations solve complex problems such as homelessness, the opioid crisis or the lack of resources around mental health services.

## *Harewood Neighbourhood Recommendations:*

1. Harewood Neighbourhood has a Neighbourhood Association and 5 block watches set up. This has allowed a network of neighbours to evolve into a bit of a network. Having relationships with neighbours is a positive indicator for increasing neighbourhood safety. This network can be used as a resource to improve conditions in neighbourhood. It will be important to sustain this work especially as people move in and out of the neighbourhood. Consider hosting regular block or work parties several times a year in areas of the neighbourhood that might need some clean up or beatification. For instance, graffiti is problematic in the Harewood Neighbourhood so hosting a block party in the hardest hit areas may help to alleviate the effects of the Broken Window Theory<sup>2</sup>. Clean up parties could also happen around Chase River in between Bruce Avenue and Howard Avenue. These types of events also support relationship building between residents and can reach other residents who are not currently involved in neighbourhood through the association or block watches. There are several options that may cover the costs,

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<sup>2</sup> The Broken Window Theory, defined by social scientists James Wilson and George Kelling in 1982, as any visible sign of disorder including graffiti in a neighbourhood will encourage further disorder and misbehaviour leading to more serious community safety issues. The more the space is in disarray the more the message is sent that no one cares for the space and therefore the space is “free” for the taking. For instance, in high crime neighbourhoods in Philadelphia there was an initiative to repair abandoned properties and transform vacant lots into community parks which subsequently saw the reduction of gun violence by 39% (Psychology Today Canada, 2021)

for instance, the City of Nanaimo often provides social planning grants that support projects that build resiliency and social connectivity. The Nanaimo Foundation also provides Neighbourhood grants to help build safer communities. These grants can cover supplies and food for event. Community Policing can provide the support of additional volunteers to help with painting and/or garbage pickup and provide Anti-Graffiti Kits. Always ensure you have the permission of the property owner prior to conducting any clean up events or block parties. It's always a good idea to reach out to the municipality to let them know about your plan and if there is any protocols or regulations that might apply to the area you are looking to clean up or host your block party at.

2. Actively encourage new block watches in the neighbourhood. Invite Cst. Gary O'Brien to annual Neighbourhood Association meetings to promote and support the implementations of new block watches within the neighbourhood. This will be especially important with the new apartment/housing complexes appearing in the Harewood Neighbourhood.
3. Consider reaching out to the operators of the 7-11 and the University Village Mall with the support of the Community Policing Services to inform them of the community safety context of the neighbourhood and encourage a Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) assessment on their property. Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) incorporates a set of strategies that help to reduce the opportunities to commit crimes, reduce the fear of crime, and prevents negative activity by replacing it with generators of positive activity (International CPTED Association, 2020). CPTED is grounded in practical and theoretical knowledge primarily from the fields of criminology, sociology, psychology, and architectural design. Community Policing can provide this assessment free of charge.
4. Knowledge around who to call and when to call to report criminal or nuisance activity is very helpful in proactively addressing safety issues. Reporting all incidents of suspicious, criminal or nuisance activity help to bring awareness to the problems happening in the neighbourhood and can directly protect family, neighbours and business owners. Many individuals hesitate to call the police or the local municipality out of fear of getting involved, sounding overly suspicious, taking up scarce resources or they may fear being identified. Only residents in a neighbourhood know who or what stands out in your neighbourhood so this is a critical part of crime prevention. There are several ways and points of contacts to make reports so this can be confusing to residents. It is encouraged that all residents in the Harewood Neighbourhood receive the appropriate information via digital or physical resources. Community Policing Services can work with the City of Nanaimo to deliver the "Who to Call and When to Call" pamphlets to residents. Information can also be shared around what types of details are needed to share with departments such as police, bylaw, sanitation, at Neighbourhood Association meetings.
5. Community Policing will implement regular Crime Watch patrols throughout the Harewood Neighbourhood to increase their presence and provide additional "eyes" and "ears" for the

neighbourhood. Crime Watch Patrols will focus on the areas noted most problematic, around the University Village Mall area. The Community Policing Volunteer Program hosts almost 50 dedicated and caring volunteers. They report all suspicious, criminal and nuisance behaviour they observe. Patrol teams are trained to keep notes and maintain contact with RCMP dispatch, City Bylaws and City Sanitation as needed via cell phone and GIS Mapping systems.

6. Traffic Safety is a concern along Fifth Street and one of the initiatives that can support the reduction of speed is to deploy Speed Watch programming. Speed Watch is a program that is delivered by Nanaimo RCMP Community Policing Services with the support of ICBC. Trained Nanaimo Community Policing volunteers set up speed monitoring equipment that help to educate drivers on the local speed limit and provides a general deterrent to speeding for most motorists. Statistics are also collected and passed along to ICBC and our local Traffic Unit to help bring forth problematic areas and provide focus for enforcement strategies especially where excessive speeding is a problem.

*Opportunities for Change:*

1. The Harewood Neighbourhood is growing and anecdotal reports illustrate that due to housing affordability, more and more families with children are moving into neighbourhood. There is strong, positive infrastructure in the Harewood Neighbourhood that can be utilized by the neighbourhood. Harewood Centennial park provides an amazing opportunity to engage families and children in positive activities that can help to improve the safety and well-being of the neighbourhood to help support young families. There are dedicated agencies working with children and youth in the area including the Harewood Neighbourhood Association. Encouraging more usage of the parks by agencies to do outreach is highly recommended especially since noted in the survey and audit data there are reports of at risk youth roaming the neighbourhoods and are often found in these parks. Outreach programs for children and youth are proven to reduce the likelihood that these young people will grow up and participate in the criminal justice system. For instance, programs like Leadership Resiliency, SNAP, or Project Venture are proven crime prevention programs and show the total social return on investment to be a cost savings of \$12.58 in the criminal justice and health systems for every \$1 spent (Government of Canada, 2021). More support needs to be given to initiatives like, Friday Night Lights which operates a drop in out of Georgia Elementary School for marginalized children and youth. This program offers mentorship, fun, healthy activities and also offers food security options to the families of these children. It is strictly run by the Practicum Students completing their degrees at Vancouver Island University in Social Work or Child and Youth Care. 29.9 % children and youth 17 years old and younger living in the Harewood Neighbourhood live in households below the Low Income Measure (Government of Canada, 2021). Recent studies link childhood poverty to a higher risk of crime and offending. One recent published study links the length a child lives in poorer circumstances to the higher their risk for self-harm and violent criminality (Mok & Kapur, 2021) Programs that improve the health and wellbeing of children

such as the ones mentioned need to be expanded in the Harewood Neighbourhood to help with upstream approaches to neighbourhood safety and well-being for children and youth. *\*Note connections are currently being made between the school of Social Work at VIU, Community Policing, Boys and Girls Club, the City of Nanaimo's Parks and Recreation Department and other youth serving agencies to discuss gaps and possible plans for moving forward.*

2. Another concern of the Harewood Neighbourhood is the public disorder correlated with the drug, mental health, homelessness and housing crisis. The neighbourhood is seeing some pressures from the downtown core spill into their neighbourhood as are many other neighbourhoods. Many residents are concerned with the lack of housing, and support services for individuals with mental health and addictions issues. The Harewood Neighbourhood is also concerned that there isn't enough affordable housing for families who need it and that the sky rocketing prices of housing will gentrify the neighbourhood pushing lower income families out. There is a need, like many other neighbourhoods nationally, for more family oriented affordable housing. There is hope that the partnership between the Snuneymuxw First Nation, City of Nanaimo, BC Housing and School District 68<sup>3</sup> will create a healthy community where families can thrive with affordable housing and other supportive services (BC Housing, 2021).

## Summary

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The Harewood Neighbourhood finds its roots dating back to time immemorial as the unceded territory of the Snuneymuxw People where villages and families engaged in their way of life. The tradition of raising families carried on in Harewood where it housed many mining families in the early 1900s until today (Nanaimo Culture & Heritage, 2021). The neighbourhood has a sense of pride for the families that make their home in Harewood. The residents' commitment and dedication to safety and wellbeing for their neighbourhood is apparent through the networks they have built with one another and their willingness to get involved. Nanaimo Community Policing is looking forward to supporting them in their efforts with the crime prevention programming recommended. It would be very beneficial to revisit the Harewood Neighbourhood again in 2 to 3 years to see what crime prevention programs have been implemented and what positive impacts have been made in the neighbourhood.

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<sup>3</sup> Collectively known as the Knowledge Partners

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# Appendix A

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## Harewood Neighbourhood Route Map

~Start and Finish at Harewood Centennial Park (meet by the Lacrosse Courts)

- 1) Head Towards Howard Avenue and turn right on Howard Ave to Sixth Street (Stop 1)
- 2) Continue on Howard Street to Fifth Street (Stop 2)
- 3) Continue on Howard and turn right on Harewood Road until Georgia Ave. Turn right on Georgia Ave (Stop 3 at entrance to University Village)
- 4) Continue down Georgia Ave until Fifth Street, turn left on Fifth and head towards Bruce Ave (Stop 4 in front of Tim Hortons)
- 5) Turn Right on Bruce Ave and continue down towards John Barsby. (Stop 5 on SD68 property just before Hewgate Street)
- 6) Continue down Bruce Ave to Seventh Street and turn right into the Harewood Centennial Park pathway (Final Stop).

