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CANADIAN CENTRE
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CENTRE CANADIEN
de POLITIQUES ALTERNATIVES

Safety and Security Issues in Winnipeg's Inner-City Communities: Bridging the Community-Police Divide

by Elizabeth Comack and Jim Silver

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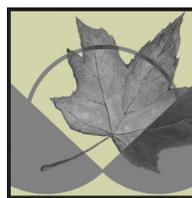
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THE REPORT IN BRIEF

The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives-Manitoba's 2005 *State of the Inner City Report* found that the issue of safety and security—particularly the problems of drugs, gangs, and violence—is a primary concern of Winnipeg inner-city residents. To follow up on this issue, we interviewed 45 residents and businesspeople and 17 community workers in three inner-city neighbourhoods: Centennial, Spence, and William Whyte. Interviews were also conducted with seven members of the Winnipeg Police Service (WPS), including the Chief and a Deputy Chief, to clarify the WPS inner-city policing strategy.

Safety and security is a serious issue in Winnipeg's inner city. So too are poverty and racism. The processes of globalization, suburbanization, the migration of Aboriginal peoples from rural and reserve communities, and the growing numbers of new immigrants have resulted in the concentration of racialized poverty in Winnipeg's inner city, where well-paid jobs are scarce, housing is often inadequate, and opportunities for youth are few. In this context, crime and violence, drug dealing, prostitution, and gang activity are among the unsurprising consequences.

This issue creates a difficult task for the Winnipeg Police Service. Like police forces in other jurisdictions, they have responded in a variety of ways. The traditional model of policing is one

based on a bureaucratic and military style of organization. Envisioning police as “crime fighters,” this model is a reactive, incident-driven one whereby police patrol neighbourhoods in cars, responding to calls from the dispatcher who sends them to crime scenes. This is currently the core of Winnipeg's inner-city policing strategy. The community policing model, a trend that began in the 1980s, involves a more proactive and multi-agency approach to service delivery, a generalist police role, and greater community involvement at the local level. Rather than “fighting crime,” the emphasis is on crime prevention and community building. Community policing now exists in the inner city, but plays a relatively minor role. More recently, “zero-tolerance” policing has emerged. It relies on a more aggressive style of policing and typically involves giving police increased powers to combat crime and disorder. Championed in New York City, zero tolerance policing is evident in Winnipeg in the form of “Operation Clean Sweep,” which has recently been extended city-wide in the form of the “street crimes unit.”

A neo-conservative political ethos that demands reduced public spending and “getting tough” on crime has pushed police services toward zero-tolerance policing strategies. The impact—of both social spending cuts and a ‘get tough’ policy—has been acutely felt in inner-city communities.

What kind of policing do inner-city residents want? To find out, we conducted interviews with residents, businesspeople, and community workers in three Winnipeg inner-city neighbourhoods.

In Centennial neighbourhood, three themes emerged. First, parents with young children are fearful for their children's safety and, to a lesser but still significant extent, for their own safety. Second, most people we interviewed do not like and are fearful of the police, and many related stories about what they consider to be inappropriate police behaviour—directed especially at Aboriginal peoples. And third, most people told us they rarely see the police in the neighbourhood and would like to see them on a regular basis, developing relationships with people and organizations and improving the level of trust between the community and the police.

In Spence neighbourhood, problems of safety and security are, according to most of those we interviewed, less serious now than a few years ago. This may be attributable to one or both of two things: first, the revitalization of the community being led by the Spence Neighbourhood Association; and second, the implementation in Spence of Operation Clean Sweep. Many (but by no means all) of those we interviewed in Spence say they like Clean Sweep because people causing problems in Spence are now less visible, and the police are more visible. However, many say Clean Sweep is simply “sweeping” dangerous and illegal activities into other neighbourhoods. It is not solving the problems; it is moving them. Most of those interviewed say they welcome a greater police presence in Spence, but want it in a form consistent with community policing and tied to neighbourhood revitalization efforts. They want the police to work in partnership with the people, businesses, and community-based organizations in Spence to remove or reduce the causes of crime, and to undertake a more proactive, sophisticated, and community-based form of policing.

In William Whyte, residents also expressed concerns about safety and security. But there is a sense that violence in this community has become “normalized”; it is a regular feature of everyday life. Nevertheless, this normalization of violence—and the harsh conditions that accompany it—are countered by a strong sense of pride in the community. While some residents believe that the police “try to do the best they can,” many told us that the police are slow to respond to trouble, that there is what they perceive to be a lack of respect from the police, especially for Aboriginal peoples, and that this includes not only racial profiling but “spatial profiling,” in which negative stereotypes are attached to people simply because they live in William Whyte. Similar to Spence, many residents were of the view that the community itself needs to take the lead in resolving issues of safety and security. People want a police presence, but they want the police to work in partnership with the community, building relationships and creating trust.

The prevalence of crime and violence in inner-city communities has created a difficult job for the Winnipeg Police Service. How have the police responded? And how do officers react to the negative assessments voiced by inner-city residents, especially in regard to charges of racism and mistreatment by police? We posed these questions to Chief of Police Jack Ewatski, Deputy Chief Menno Zacharias, and five WPS officers involved in policing the inner city.

Officers told us they entered policing to do something worthwhile, to “do good.” But they are increasingly frustrated. These frustrations have a systemic basis, rooted partly in the increased pressures on the police service to resolve all manner of societal problems—made worse by government cutbacks in social services, and the shortage of jobs and other opportunities in the inner city—but also in the particular logic of the policing strategy used in the inner city.

Winnipeg's inner-city policing strategy is described as a "blended approach." The front-line of the strategy is the general patrol officers who work in two-person cars and respond to 911 calls. In addition there are: community police officers in some parts of the inner city; School Resource Officers in certain North End schools; various special units; and, most recently, Operation Clean Sweep, now made permanent in the form of the street crimes unit which will cover the whole city.

While police departments in other jurisdictions have faced budgetary restraints, the WPS has benefited from budget increases in recent years. Nevertheless, officers told us that resources available to the WPS are limited, especially in terms of a lack of support staff to facilitate the work of the front-line officers. It follows that the solution to inner-city policing problems is not simply an increase in the number of general patrol officers. The problems run deeper.

The heart of the WPS inner-city policing strategy is the general patrol officers who respond in cruiser cars to 911 calls. This is the group that is "stretched the most thin, that's the most overworked." Officers spend their shift running from "call to call to call," the backlog of such calls growing ceaselessly, so that there is now a "never ending cycle."

Further, general patrol officers almost always interact with inner-city residents in situations that are tense and conflict-ridden. As long as reactive, incident-driven policing is the core of the inner-city policing strategy, this will continue to be the case. The underlying problems will never be solved, and the divide between the police and the inner-city community will continue to grow. A greater emphasis on zero-tolerance policing, as in Operation Clean Sweep and the new street crimes unit, will likely widen this divide, especially since the street crimes unit will not have a citizens' advisory body and therefore will not be able to work with community-based organizations in developing positive relationships.

On the matter of police mistreatment and racial profiling, while the Chief and Deputy Chief were ready to admit that there were likely some incidents where police mistreatment has occurred, all of the officers interviewed responded to the community's claims by saying that racial profiling was not a feature of policing in Winnipeg.

All of the people we interviewed for this study agreed that drugs, gangs, and violence are a major problem in Winnipeg's inner city. But that is where the agreement ended. There is a deep divide between the inner-city communities and the police service about the role of the police in the inner city, about the claims of police mistreatment and racial profiling, and about prescriptions for solving problems related to safety and security.

Inner-city residents and community workers think about inner-city issues in a community-centred way. This leads them to favour a policing strategy in which the police become part of neighbourhood revitalization efforts. This standpoint is in harmony with comments made by Chief Ewatski about the need for proactive and preventative action, and his view that the WPS cannot do it by themselves. We believe these insights constitute the basis for building a bridge across the divide that now separates the inner-city community from the police.

We propose that bridging this divide will involve both a re-framing of the issue of safety and security, and a shifting of the core strategy of the WPS's inner-city policing strategy from one centred on reactive, incident-driven policing, to one centred on community policing and community mobilization.

If we follow the current political trend to "get tough" on crime—a trend that frames the key problems confronting inner-city communities as the high incidence of drugs, gangs, and violence—then what logically follows is a move toward the kind of zero-tolerance policing strategy embodied in the new street crimes unit. Considerable empirical evidence suggests this will not solve

the problems. By contrast, if we frame the issue as being about the social and economic conditions that lead to drugs, gangs, and violence, then we see these dangers as symptoms and we are led to seek deeper, more lasting solutions beyond “fighting crime”—solutions that have prevention as their primary focus.

This different framing of the issue enables us to understand the paradox that so many inner-city residents dislike the police, but want more police in the inner city. What they mean is that the problems are real—but they want different solutions. They want community policing, and they want the police to be a part of the process of community mobilization.

An inner-city policing strategy that has community policing and community mobilization at its core is one in which the police would work in close partnership with community-based organizations engaged in a wide variety of neighbourhood revitalization issues. While not ignoring the need to make arrests and “get tough” when necessary, this approach would acknowledge and build upon the strengths of inner-city neighbourhoods. The WPS, through their beat officers, would be brought directly into partnership with the process of neighbourhood revitalization. Police officers would work hand-in-hand with the community. The police would become not an outside force engaged in conflict, as appears now to be the case, but a community force engaged in rebuilding.

I. INTRODUCTION

My belief is that society doesn't offer people equal opportunities, so I would never condone gang activity, but at the same time I would also say, how can it be prevented when you don't live in a society that offers equal opportunities to all people? (A long-time resident of Spence neighbourhood)

Concerns about safety and security appear to be pressing in inner-city communities. In the 2005 *State of the Inner-City Report*,¹ residents of three inner-city Winnipeg neighbourhoods—Spence, Centennial, and Lord Selkirk Park—were interviewed in order to identify strengths and problems in each community, and initiatives that were and were not working well. What was uncovered in

these interviews was that safety and security was the undisputed number one concern for people in these neighbourhoods. In particular, respondents repeatedly told of their fears regarding the prevalence of drugs, gangs, and violence.

To pursue this issue further, we undertook a further study involving three inner-city Winnipeg neighbourhoods—Spence, Centennial, and William Whyte. The aim of the study was to interview residents, businesspeople, and community workers to determine: their perceptions of and experiences with safety and security in their respective communities; the role of the police in responding to crime and violence; and respondents' ideas as to what they thought should be done to make their community safer. Because a number of people interviewed for the *2005 State of the Inner-City Report* suggested that an important part of the solution to fears about drugs, gangs, and violence was the use of what they called “community policing” in their neighbourhoods, respondents for the present study were also questioned about their thoughts on this topic, including how they understood the term “community policing,” what its implementation would look like, and whether they believed it would offer a solution to safety problems in their community.

To compile a list of study participants, the researchers met with community leaders who are

¹ *The State of the Inner City Report* is a collaborative project coordinated by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives – Manitoba (CCPA-MB). The project steering committee includes a host of inner city community-based organizations—the MaMawi Wi Chi Itata Centre, the Community Education Development Association, the Women's Health Centre, the Prairie Women's Health Centre of Excellence, the Spence Neighbourhood Association, the North End Community Renewal Corporation, Social Planning Council of Winnipeg, to name a few—plus such organizations as United Way of Winnipeg and the University of Winnipeg and members of the African community in Winnipeg.

active in and knowledgeable about each neighbourhood. These lists were designed to reflect the diversity of each neighbourhood (by age, sex, and racial composition) and included both residents and businesspeople (see Table 1). In all, forty-five interviews were conducted in the three communities. In addition, interviews were conducted with seventeen community workers to access their views on the study topic. Four interviewers (three of whom are of Aboriginal heritage and all of whom are now or have in the past been residents in the communities being studied) were hired and trained to conduct the interviews. The interviews were digitally recorded and later transcribed for analysis purposes.

Table 1: Social Characteristics of the Community Sample

Sex	Female	60% (27)
	Male	40% (18)
Age *	20 to 29	14% (6)
	30 to 39	27% (12)
	40 to 49	34% (15)
	50 to 59	18% (8)
	60 and over	7% (3)
Self-identified as	Aboriginal	53% (24)
	Non-Aboriginal	47% (21)
Sample Category	Resident	87% (39)
	Business owner	13% (6)
Total Sample		100% (45)

* One did not give an age.

Interviews were also conducted (by the two researchers) with members of the Winnipeg Police Service (WPS), including: Police Chief Jack Ewatski; Deputy Police Chief Menno Zacharias; and five officers involved in policing inner-city communities. The aim of these interviews was to clarify the WPS strategy for addressing the problems of crime and violence in the inner city,

and to solicit respondents' views on community policing, the deployment of police resources, and issues such as racial profiling. These interviews were also digitally recorded and later transcribed for analysis purposes.

The purpose of what follows is to report on the findings of this study and to offer a proposal for bridging what appears to be a significant “divide” between inner-city residents and the police in terms of their perceptions and interpretations of the role of the police in the inner city as well as prescriptions for resolving problems related to safety and security issues. We begin with a discussion of crime and violence in the inner city. From there we move to a consideration of different styles of policing—the traditional model, community policing, and zero-tolerance policing—and a consideration of the changing socio-political context in which policing is taking place in Canada. After presenting the results of the interviews undertaken in the three Winnipeg inner-city communities and with members of the Winnipeg Police Service, we put forward a “blended” policing model—centred on community policing and on the direct involvement of the police in community mobilization—for bridging this divide and attending to issues of safety and security in Winnipeg's inner-city neighbourhoods.

Decades of under-investment in Winnipeg's inner city and of largely ignoring the relentless growth of poverty and despair have created a complex and tangled web of problems whose solution requires much more than policing. But a modified inner-city policing strategy, at the heart of which is community policing and community mobilization, could become a part of a multi-faceted solution.

II. CRIME AND VIOLENCE IN THE INNER CITY

Winnipeg has garnered a reputation as a major site of crime and violence in Canada. In 2004 the city ranked first among the nine major metropolitan centres for its crime rates for homicides, robberies, and motor vehicle thefts, and second for break-ins (Statistics Canada 2005). In making sense of this reputation, it would be naive to ignore the connection between inner-city poverty and crime and violence. A 2004 study done for the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics found conclusively that the closer one goes to the socio-economically disadvantaged, geographic centre of Winnipeg, the higher is the incidence of crime. Fitzgerald, Wisener, and Savoie (2004: 8) concluded that: “After taking into account all other factors, the level of socio-economic disadvantage of the residential population in a neighbourhood was most strongly associated with the highest neighbourhood rates of both violent and property crimes.” Other studies (see, for example, Lezubski, Silver, and Black 2000; Kazemipur and Halli 2000) have shown that, for Winnipeg, rates of poverty, unemployment, and limited labour force participation—i.e., “socio-economic disadvantage”—are considerably worse in the inner city than in the city as a whole. Crime and violence correlate strongly with poverty and related conditions, and both are more prevalent in Winnipeg’s inner city than in Winnipeg as a whole. What

has created the socio-economic disadvantage in Winnipeg’s inner city that so closely correlates with a high incidence of crime?

First, the global economy has changed dramatically in recent decades. Among the consequences of globalization has been a shift in Canada from industrial to “non-standard” and service sector jobs (Broad 2000; Broad, Cruikshank, and Mulvale 2006). Many industrial jobs that were unionized, paid a living wage, and offered reasonable benefits have relocated to other, lower-wage jurisdictions or, in some cases (meat-packing is an example), have dramatically reduced wages in the face of external competitive pressures.

At the same time, in Winnipeg—as all across North America and throughout the post-Second World War period—the process of suburbanization has seen large numbers of those who could afford to do so moving away from inner-city locations to the suburbs. Many businesses followed suit. The result has been a ‘hollowing out’ of many inner cities—Winnipeg’s included. Those left behind in inner cities have been, for the most part, those least financially able to move.

The abandonment of the inner city by the more financially well-to-do put downward pressure on housing prices in an area where housing was already, for the most part, the oldest and most in need of repair (Deane 2006; Silver 2006). In

many cases cheap inner-city housing was acquired by absentee landlords who used it as a 'cash cow' while allowing it to deteriorate further. The problems that this created were accentuated by the continuation of the decades-long practice of severe under-investment in public facilities in the inner city, and especially in Winnipeg's North End. Cheap housing attracted those of lowest incomes, thus concentrating poverty in large numbers in Winnipeg inner-city neighbourhoods.

In the 1960s Aboriginal peoples began to move from rural and reserve communities to urban centres, their numbers increasing significantly in the 1970s and 1980s. Many arrived in Winnipeg ill-prepared for urban industrial life, a result in large part of the residential school system, which did far more harm than good, and which left many Aboriginal peoples without adequate formal educational qualifications (see, for example, Milloy 1999). They concentrated in Winnipeg's inner city, at first because housing there was least expensive, and in subsequent decades because that is where other Aboriginal peoples already lived. But they were moving into neighbourhoods from which jobs—and particularly the kinds of industrial jobs that historically have been available to those with limited formal educational qualifications—had disappeared as part of the twin processes of globalization and suburbanization. With few well-paid jobs available, and facing a wall of systemic racism and discrimination because they were 'different'—as had Ukrainians, Jews, Poles, and other Eastern Europeans in Winnipeg's North End before them—many Aboriginal peoples became effectively locked out of the formal labour market.

In very recent years, growing numbers of immigrants and refugees from war-torn countries have been arriving in Winnipeg, many with low levels of formal education as a result of poverty and war. Most are locating in the inner city, for the same reasons that low-income people have, for decades, located there (Kazemipur and Halli 2000).

The result of these various processes—globalization, suburbanization, internal migration, and immigration—has been the concentration in Winnipeg's inner city of poverty and, to a considerable extent, racialized poverty. Those who reside in the inner city have come to be seen by many as 'Other.' Meaningful, well-paid jobs are scarce. Housing is frequently inadequate. Opportunities are few. This has been the case for decades. As a result very large numbers of inner-city people have been 'raised poor,' and have never known anything but poverty and joblessness. This reality takes a psychological toll. People in such circumstances may lose hope, and may see *themselves* as the cause of their problems. Problems that have broad, socio-economic and historical causes may come to be seen by many—wrongly—as problems related to personal failings. For Aboriginal peoples this is particularly the case, since the long historical process of colonization has been predicated upon the false assumption that Aboriginal peoples and cultures were and are inferior to European peoples and cultures (Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples 1996; Monture-Angus 1995, 1999; Hamilton and Sinclair 1991; York 1990). Systems, too, become permeated with such false beliefs and, as a consequence, become further barriers to inner-city people. Trapped in poverty, believing that their problems are their own fault, ignored by governments intent upon cutting public expenditures rather than creating opportunities, inner-city people can be forgiven when, in some cases, they lose hope for a better future. For many, a culture of despair has emerged—a culture beyond the experience of more well-to-do Canadians.

In this context, crime flourishes. This is particularly so when street drugs are readily available as a means of escape, and can be bought and sold at prices and in volumes sufficient to earn a living well beyond what can be earned at part-time, low-wage, non-union, service sector "McJobs" (Ritzer 2004). A self-reinforcing dynamic is set in motion. Many young inner-city people (and

some young suburban people as well, of course) reject such jobs on the grounds, among others, that the wages are insufficient to support a family and to create a financially secure future. Many pursue other, more lucrative ways to earn an income—dealing in illegal drugs, for example. For many young women, employment in the street sex trade is often their only recourse for getting by (Fontaine 2006; Seshia 2006). This draws them into a culture which is often violent, and which nurtures few of the life skills needed for more mainstream forms of employment. Mainstream, service sector employers, as a consequence, are reluctant to hire them—a reluctance reinforced, in too many cases, by racism and discrimination (Chueng 2005; Silver 2006). A vicious cycle is created, locking many young inner-city youth outside of the dominant economy. A life without legitimate paid employment becomes the norm. Many young people in the inner city have never held a mainstream job; it is likely that many live in families in which few, if any, of whose members hold mainstream jobs. Poverty and joblessness is concentrated in the inner city with all the problems that have been found to be associated with such concentrated poverty (Wilson 1987, 1996). A sense of hopelessness and other negative psychological manifestations take hold. Crime and violence, drug dealing, prostitution, and gang activity are among the unsurprising consequences.

This situation has created a difficult and challenging job for the Winnipeg Police Service. Faced with a high incidence of crime and violence in a geographically concentrated area, the WPS—like police forces in other jurisdictions—has responded in a variety of ways. This response can be situated in terms of the particular models of policing that have been used to frame the work of police in urban centres across Canada and elsewhere.

III. MODELS OF POLICING

Three main models or “ideal types” of policing can be identified historically: the traditional approach to policing; community policing; and the most recent version, referred to as “zero-tolerance policing.” Each will be discussed in turn, with particular attention to how they have been applied in the Winnipeg context.

The Traditional Model of Policing

The traditional or professional model of policing is one that has its roots in the early twentieth century. Spawned by the move to professionalize the police, it emphasizes a military style of organization with a focus on centralization and bureaucratization (hierarchies and chains of command), standardization (of recruitment, training, and patrol methods), reliance on technology (radio-equipped patrol cars and computerized dispatch systems), and specialization (youth units, morals units, homicide units, and the like). Envisioning police as “crime fighters,” this model is a reactive, incident-driven one whereby police work involves patrolling neighbourhoods in cars, responding to calls from the dispatcher to send them to a crime scene. The focus is on serious forms of crime as opposed to maintenance of community social order or general service delivery, and “success” is measured in terms of arrest statistics (especially for violent and property crimes).

This traditional model encourages a distinct separation between police and the community. The police are more insular and actively discouraged from developing ties with the community (for example, by frequently moving officers from one area to another). Citizens are discouraged from participating in their own protection and influencing the kinds of services provided, as their role is mainly to report incidents and let the police take over from there (see, for example, Morash et al. 2002; Herbert 2001; Greene 2000; Hamilton and Sinclair 1991).

As in other jurisdictions, this reactive, incident-driven form of policing is the one that has predominated in Winnipeg historically. By the 1980s, however, commentators coming from a variety of standpoints and perspectives began to reach a general consensus that the traditional model was ineffective. American conservative criminologist James Q. Wilson (1975; see also, Kelling 1974; Sherman 1974), for one, expressed skepticism about the ability of the traditional “cops in the car” method of patrolling neighbourhoods to address the problem of crime. In Britain, an official inquiry into a riot sparked when police initiated “Swamp 81”—a south west London project designed to detect street robbers that resulted in over 1,000 predominantly Black youth being stopped and searched—suggested that this military style

of policing had contributed substantially to the disorder (Scarman 1981 cited in Hopkins Burke 1998: 668). Other commentators have pointed out that the traditional policing model is counterproductive. Critical criminologists John Lea and Jock Young (1984), for instance, note that assertive policing only alienates police from the community and results in an unwillingness of the public to report offences. Without the support of the local neighbourhood, police are left to rely on stereotypes, which readily leads to charges of racial profiling and unfair treatment.

The increasing skepticism about the effectiveness of the traditional model's ability to "fight crime," coupled with a recognition that police on their own cannot solve crime and that communities also share in the responsibility for addressing crime problems, led to a community policing movement that soon swept across Canada, the United States, and the United Kingdom.

Community Policing

Community policing is a trend that began, for the most part, in the mid-1980s, largely in response to calls for better relations between the police and the community. The community, it was argued, was the most significant source of information about crime, and so detachment from the citizenry was a serious drawback for police to work effectively. In contrast to the traditional model of policing with its more reactive, incident-driven approach, community policing involves a more proactive and multi-agency approach to service delivery, a generalist police role, and greater community involvement at a local level. Rather than "fighting crime," the emphasis is on crime prevention and community building. Described as more of a philosophy than a specific program (Clairmont 1991: 471), community policing is said to encompass three basic elements (see, for example, Hamilton and Sinclair 1991: 598-99; Brodeur 1998; Linden, Clairmont, and Murphy 2000):

Community involvement in decisions about policing: there is a partnership between police and the community whereby police are responsive to community concerns and the community takes its share of responsibility for dealing with problems of crime and disorder;

Prevention-orientation: the focus is on resolving underlying community problems proactively rather than simply reacting to calls for service. The role of the police is expanded to enhance the community's quality of life; and

Decentralization: given the diversity of local communities, responsibility and resources are assigned to police at the community level to the greatest degree possible, making policing more responsive to local concerns.

Because community policing involves decentralized decision-making (and therefore a more active role for individual officers), it is said to offer the potential for greater job satisfaction for rank-and-file officers. As well, rather than focus on arrest statistics, "success" is measured in terms of greater community satisfaction with the police, an increased sense of safety and security (reduction in fear of crime) in the neighbourhood, and a greater sense of ownership and partnership on the part of community groups and police in solving an area's problems (Clairmont 1991).

The community-policing model is thought to be especially relevant for Aboriginal communities. It fits well with restorative justice initiatives aimed at increasing community participation in sanctioning criminal activity and healing breaches between community members. Community policing also has the potential to reduce the race and class divisions that have had a negative impact on police-community relations (Linden, Clairmont,

and Murphy 2000: 33). Indeed, the Commissioners for the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry of Manitoba were of the view that “community policing is a vital strategy for enabling local residents to have a structured, open relationship with the police” (Hamilton and Sinclair 1991: 600).

In a relatively short time, community policing replaced traditional policing as the dominant model in Canada (Kennedy 1993) as police departments across the country endeavoured to implement a number of community policing initiatives. For instance, the Metro Toronto Police Department, Canada’s largest police force, began implementing a number of organizational and operational changes associated with community policing as early as 1982. These included: decentralizing the management of police operations to zone or neighbourhood districts; creating the position of community planning officers to generate community-policing strategies; establishing police store-front operations; increasing the use of foot patrols in specific neighbourhoods; and setting up community advisory committees in some districts (Murphy 1993: 18).

In 1988, the Edmonton Police Service (EPS) established a Neighbourhood Foot Patrol (NFP) Program. The program placed NFP officers in each of the twenty-one neighbourhoods identified as “hot spots” of crime, providing both traditional policing and community policing services. The EPS also established a number of operational strategies, including decentralizing police resources through the use of storefront offices, increasing police visibility and communication through the use of foot patrols, problem identification and problem solving with the involvement of the community, and increasing individual officers’ autonomy and knowledge of the area in which they were serving (Leighton 1994).

In the early 1990s the Halifax Police Department began the process of transforming its traditional organizational structure and operational philosophy to a community-policing model. The

adoption of zone-based team policing, generalist constables, decentralized criminal investigation, directed patrol and crime analysis at the neighbourhood level, an expanded crime prevention function, and a re-emphasis on foot patrols were among the changes implemented (Murphy 1993: 18).

By the mid 1990s, researcher Barry Leighton (1994: 209) was able to claim that “community policing is firmly established as the dominant orientation or philosophy” in Canada and that “the overwhelming public rhetoric of Canadian police chiefs indicates they are committed to the paradigm shift, in principle and philosophy.” Generally speaking, the success of these initiatives has depended upon the leadership of particular individuals who have promoted a community-policing philosophy and ushered in changes in their respective departments. This was certainly the case in Winnipeg when David Cassels took on the position of Chief of the Winnipeg Police Service in May of 1996. Cassels began implementing the Edmonton model of community policing—including the assignment of twenty foot patrol officers in inner-city neighbourhoods—shortly thereafter. As reflected on its official website—<http://winnipeg.ca/police>—the Winnipeg Police Service continues to maintain a commitment (albeit a reduced level of commitment) to community policing under the direction of the current Chief of Police, Jack Ewatski.

Nonetheless, concerns have emerged about the extent to which community policing initiatives have had an impact on the hierarchical structure and bureaucratic organization of police services. François Dumaine and Rick Linden (2005), for instance, have noted that initiatives such as community police centres have been poorly integrated into the core functions of their department, and Jack Greene (2000: 332) has commented that efforts to change internal police routines have been likened to “bending granite.” As well, writers have pointed to difficulties in effectively implementing

community policing initiatives in neighbourhoods where the members (business, residential, community services, and government agencies) are in a state of disarray and therefore not in a position to actively participate in the kind of ownership and co-operation envisioned by the model. Commentators have also noted that individual police officers have tended to resist efforts to implement community policing, as this model runs counter to a police culture (Skolnick 1966) premised on the exercise of force and a pronounced sense of morality (“getting the bad guys”). As Steve Hebert (2001) notes, both of these components of police culture are at odds with community policing. For many officers, community policing is akin to social work, and therefore at odds with “real” police work. It also blurs the line between the “good guys” and “bad guys”—those who are seen as deserving the protection of the police and those who are not.

While community policing has garnered considerable attention and support since its emergence in the mid 1980s, the 1990s saw the advent of another model: zero-tolerance policing.

Zero-Tolerance Policing

Zero-tolerance policing is similar to community policing in that it involves an increased police presence or visibility in the community and a more decentralized authority structure. Nevertheless, it differs from the community-policing model in significant ways. For one, the main goal of zero-tolerance policing is to maintain order—and in a “hyper-aggressive” manner (Greene 1999: 175). Panhandlers, street prostitutes, street-level drug users, the homeless, and the disorderly are the main targets of this approach. To this extent, zero-tolerance policing shares in common the focus on law enforcement found in the traditional model. Like the traditional model, it also relies upon a more aggressive, militaristic style of policing and typically involves giving police officers increased powers to stop and search citizens for minor law

violations. As well, zero-tolerance policing tends to eclipse the active role of the citizenry by virtue of the more aggressive powers exercised by the police (for example, practices of intimidation and arrest). This is in contrast to the conception of citizens and the police as “co-equal partners in the construction and evaluation of tactics aimed at ameliorating community distress” found in the community policing approach (Herbert 2001: 446). With the zero-tolerance approach police measure “success” by counting field stops and the types of behaviour occurring in targeted locations (Greene 2000).

It was William Bratton who championed zero-tolerance policing while serving as the Police Commissioner of New York City in the mid 1990s.² As described by Bratton (cited in Greene 2000: 317):

The strategy is sending a strong message to those who commit minor crimes that they will be held responsible for their acts. The message goes like this: behave in public spaces, or the police will take action. Police will also check you out to make sure that you are not creating chronic problems or wanted for some other more serious offense. Police will also question you about what you know about other neighbourhood crime.

The legitimating framework for zero-tolerance policing was provided by the “broken windows” theory advanced by James Wilson and George Kelling (1982).³ Their theory suggests that certain

2 Bratton served as Police Commissioner of New York City from January 1994 to April 1996.

3 It is in part because of this connection to the “broken windows” theory that zero-tolerance policing has also been referred to as “quality-of-life policing.” However, as Wacquant (2006: 104) notes, this “polite expression” belies the more aggressive bent of the zero-tolerance approach.

areas will become more attractive locations for committing crime when states of physical disorder (such as broken windows) are not repaired. Such signs of dilapidation set in motion a process whereby community members become more fearful, thus retreating from public interaction and, as this informal social control decreases, crime and disorderly activities increase, leading to an array of more serious crime problems. Thus, while the traditional policing model focuses on more serious crimes, zero-tolerance policing places the focus on less serious, public order offences. The police's role is to step in and restore order in communities that have let their informal social controls weaken.

Perhaps more significantly, however, zero-tolerance policing meshed well with Mayor Rudolph Giuliani's election campaign promise to reclaim the streets of New York—from the squeegee kids, panhandlers, prostitutes, graffiti artists, and drug dealers—for law-abiding citizens. As Judith Greene (1999: 173) notes, "Cracking down hard on the most visible symbols of urban disorder proved to be a powerful political tool for bolstering Giuliani's image as a highly effective mayor."

Under Bratton's lead, the New York City Police Department (NYPD) initiated a massive restructuring that saw the number of uniformed officers increase from 27,000 in 1993 to 41,000 in 2001. As Loïc Wacquant (2006: 104) notes, this growth in personnel was only possible thanks to an increase in the police budget of 50 percent in five years, which allowed it to top \$3 billion in 2000 (during the same period social services in the city were cut by 30 percent). Bratton also decentralized authority in the NYPD in order to move power out to individual precincts and boroughs. A computerized information system known as COMPSTAT—meaning "compare statistics" (Silverman 1998)—was introduced to improve the police's knowledge of the occurrence of crime and disorder. The system "puts up-to-date crime data into the hands of the NYPD managers at all

levels and bolsters a department-wide process for precinct-level accountability in meeting the department's crime-reduction goals" (Greene 1999: 172). In other words, area police commanders are made directly accountable for the detection and apprehension of crime in their area.

While Bratton had a considerable amount of experience with community policing,⁴ he led the NYPD away from community policing fundamentals toward a more aggressive, militaristic style of policing. Police officers were authorized to stop and search people who were breaking even the most minor laws (such as vagrancy and drinking in public), to run warrant checks on them, or just to bring citizens in for questioning about crime in their neighbourhoods, sometimes finding on these citizens guns or other weapons, which were then confiscated. This zero-tolerance policing approach, according to Bratton, was ultimately preventing crime "before it happened" (Bratton 1998: 229 cited in Greene 1999: 175).

During his tenure as Mayor of New York City, Giuliani credited the zero-tolerance approach to policing for realizing a significant reduction in crime and disorder in the city (see also Silverman 1998). During 1993, his first year in office, New York ranked 87th out of 189 U.S. cities with populations of more than 100,000 for its FBI Index Crime rate. By 1997, it had dropped to 150th (Greene 1999: 171). Between 1994 and 1996 the New York crime rate dropped by 37 percent and the homicide rate fell by over 50 percent (Bratton 1997: 29 cited in Burke 1998: 668).⁵ It was largely on the strength of his tough

4 Bratton was a leading innovator in the development of community policing while serving as an officer in the Boston Police Department (Greene 1999: 173).

5 Given the focus on public order offences, it is not surprising that misdemeanour arrests increased by 66 percent between 1993 and 1998 in New York City (Ismali 2003: 256).

stance on crime that Giuliani won re-election in November 1997 (Hopkins Burke 1998).

Nevertheless, claims that zero-tolerance policing is responsible for reductions in crime have been extremely contentious. In addressing this issue, one key research finding has been that crime is down in cities throughout the United States (Herbert 2001). As Peter Grabosky (1999) notes, rates of property and violent crime declined annually in the United States through the 1990s. The contributing factors for this decline are numerous and complex and include:

A sustained period of economic growth; a significant reduction of crack cocaine use; the stabilization of cocaine markets and a concomitant reduction in warfare between drug gangs; the ageing of the “baby boom” generation beyond the crime-prone years; concerted efforts, particularly in large metropolitan areas, to restrict teenagers’ access to firearms, particularly handguns; increased police-community cooperation; longer sentences, particularly for perpetrators of violent crime; and the proliferation of crime prevention programs, particularly early intervention programs for children with little parental supervision. (Grabosky 1999: 2)

As well, Wacquant (2006: 99) points out that the drop in criminal violence in New York actually began *three years prior* to Giuliani becoming mayor in 1993, and continued to decrease at the same rate after he took office.

Researchers have also found the decline in crime rates to be the case regardless of the policing strategy in place in a particular locale. G. W. Cordner (cited in Greene 2000; see also Greene 1999) compared New York with San Diego, a city that has chosen to adopt a community policing approach to respond to crime. Cordner found that San Diego had achieved comparable results, as measured by declining crime over the same period, as New York.⁶

In San Francisco, a policy of systematic diversion of delinquent youth towards job-training programs, counselling, and social and medical treatment resulted in a reduction in the number of jail admissions by more than half while reducing criminal violence by 33 percent between 1995 and 1999. This compared to a 26 percent drop in New York City, where the number of jail admissions swelled by a third during the same period (Wacquant 2006: 100).

The zero-tolerance approach adopted in New York has also raised concerns with respect to police-minority relations. Judith Greene (1999: 176) reports that “there is a wealth of documentation to support the charge that police misconduct and abuse have increased under the Giuliani administration’s zero-tolerance regime.” Between 1992 and 1996, the years during which Bratton implemented zero-tolerance policing, the number of claims made to the Civilian Complaint Review Board (CCRB) regarding police brutality and abusive conduct increased by 60 percent. In 1996 alone, 53 percent of all complaints filed were by African Americans (Siegel and Perry 1997: 13 cited in Greene 1999: 177). The proportion of “general patrol incidents”—civilian complaints associated with routine police contacts—among all complaints increased from 29 percent in the last year of the Dinkins administration to 58 percent under Mayor Giuliani. After 1994, the CCRB stopped distinguishing this type of complaint from others (Greene 1999: 176).

In sum, while proponents of zero-tolerance policing point to the widespread public support for this initiative (Silverman 1998), opponents raise concerns about the implementation of an aggressive and anti-democratic style of policing that targets marginalized and excluded members of society

⁶ Also significant, complaints of police misconduct in San Diego fell from 552 in 1993 to 508 in 1996 (Greene 1999: 184), a marked difference from the New York experience (see below).

and provide evidence to show that the incidence of serious crime has declined under other forms of policing, not just zero-tolerance models. Regardless of the controversy surrounding zero-tolerance policing, it is a model that has caught on in a number of countries and jurisdictions beyond New York City. In November 1996, for instance, the Metropolitan Police in London, England implemented a six-week experimental project, “Operation Zero Tolerance,” the purpose of which was “to target and prevent crimes which are a particular local problem, including drug-related criminality” (Metropolitan Police 1995 cited in Hopkins Burke 1998: 678). Zero-tolerance policing has also taken hold in the city of Winnipeg with the implementation of Operation Clean Sweep.

Operation Clean Sweep

Operation Clean Sweep was a pilot project initiated by the Winnipeg Police Service in November of 2005. The announcement of the project came in the midst of heightened media attention and public concerns generated by the gang-related shooting death of a 17-year-old male bystander in the city’s West End one month previously. The project, with an initial estimated cost of \$1.6 million (with \$800,000 of that amount in new money from the city administration), involved the deployment of 45 police officers—mainly in the West End—to suppress street level violence and disorder “including, but not limited to, gang, drug and prostitution related offences” (Winnipeg Police Service 2005). The project also incorporated two advisory groups, one an interagency group of other city and provincial departments to facilitate an exchange of information, and another consisting of community representatives to provide feedback and suggestions.

In May of 2006 the City of Winnipeg sponsored a two-day summit comprised of business and community leaders to examine the economic, social, and infrastructure development opportunities and barriers with the goal of creating new

initiatives for the city. The keynote speaker for the event was former New York City Mayor Rudolph Giuliani.⁷ Giuliani reportedly told his audience at the \$260-a-plate dinner that, “Winnipeg can get rid of its image as a high-crime, rundown city by first cleansing the streets of aggressive panhandlers and squeegee kids” (Sanders 2006). He also expressed his enthusiastic support for the use of computerized crime-mapping techniques such as COMPSTAT. Winnipeg Mayor Sam Katz was quick to act on Giuliani’s advice. Initially designated as a pilot project, Operation Clean Sweep was subsequently bolstered by a \$2 million contribution from the provincial government and an addition of \$3.5 million to the police service’s overtime budget to make it a more permanent feature of policing in the city (Katz 2006). Plans to implement COMPSTAT were also put into action (City of Winnipeg 2006).

Like zero-tolerance policing generally, the success of Clean Sweep has been measured in terms of the number of warrants served, arrests, gun and drug seizures, and drug houses shut down (*Winnipeg Free Press* October 26, 2005). By the end of July 2006, this “clean sweep approach to policing” had netted 873 arrests and 73 apprehensions. While 5,555 spot checks were conducted and 42 search warrants executed, 897 offence notices were issued and 6,689 police-person hours were logged walking the beat. Some \$990,650.00 worth of illegal drugs and firearms was reportedly seized. A “Clean Sweep Tip Line” set up to receive information from citizens had netted 322 calls (Winnipeg Police Service 2006).

Described as a “take back our streets” and an “in your face” form of policing (*Winnipeg Free Press* October 26, 2005), Operation Clean Sweep has generated considerable media attention—and

⁷ Giuliani was paid \$100,000 for his services at this event. He was flown to Winnipeg in a private jet at an estimated cost of \$25,000 paid for by Power Corporation (*Winnipeg Free Press*, August 23, 2006).

public controversy. While some commentators have deemed the project to be a success in that people were reported to have welcomed the increased police presence and now feel safer in their communities (*Winnipeg Free Press* February 9, 2006), others have defined the project as a strategy that “paints entire neighbourhoods as the place ‘where the bad guys live’” and as one in which “innocent citizens are often victimized by the police service’s over zealousness to win the ‘war on crime’” (*Winnipeg Free Press* April 22, 2006). As well, some West End residents—especially Aboriginal peoples—have complained of being harassed by police and subjected to racial profiling as a result of Clean Sweep (*Winnipeg Free Press* February 26, 2006).

While Winnipeg—in company with other Canadian jurisdictions—adopted a community-policing model in the 1990s, the recent shift to a zero-tolerance model signals a new development in the policing of inner-city communities. Understanding some of the dynamics underlying this development involves attending to the changing nature of the broader socio-political context in which policing occurs.

IV. THE CHANGING SOCIO-POLITICAL CONTEXT OF POLICING

For most countries in the Western industrialized world, the post–World War II period was one of a continuous process of expansion and prosperity. As David Garland (2001: 90-91) notes, the conditions that created this prosperity were also ones that led to unprecedented increases in the crime rate in most Western countries, as they led to increased opportunities for crime (the consumer boom put into circulation a mass of portable, high-value goods that were attractive targets for theft); reduced situational controls (more and more well-stocked houses in suburbia were empty by day as both wives and husbands left the home to work and downtown areas emptied out to the suburbs at night); an increase in the ‘at risk’ population (a large cohort of teenaged males, the age group most prone to criminal behaviour, accompanied the post-war baby boom); and a relaxation of informal social controls (a more permissive society in terms of child-rearing styles, attitudes towards drug use and sexuality, and a questioning of traditional authority). In the Canadian context, this combination of economic prosperity and increasing crime led governments to dramatically increase the number of police officers, raise their salaries, and supply them with expensive police equipment and technology. Public policing was thereby transformed into a

well-staffed and expensive public service (Linden, Clairmont, and Murphy 2000).

The oil crisis of the 1970s, however, signaled the beginning of a period of economic recession and political instability. According to Garland (2001: 81):

In this recessionary context ... the tools of Keynesian demand management failed to bring supply and demand into line.... Within a decade, mass unemployment reappeared, industrial production collapsed, trade union membership massively declined, and the labour market restructured itself in ways that were to have dramatic social significance in the years to come.

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, a political movement against Keynesian economics and against a continued commitment to the welfare state gained momentum. In its place emerged neo-liberal economic policies that called for deregulation and market freedom and a neo-conservative political ethos that called for reduced public spending and tighter controls. In the pursuit of deficit reduction, government services—including policing—were to be limited in their size and cost. One result of these processes has been the movement to “rationalize” police services across Canada.

One of the most significant costs of public policing is salaries. Some 80 percent of police budgets are devoted to salaries (Linden, Clairmont, and Murphy 2000). During periods of fiscal restraint, therefore, one response of police departments has been to lower the number of new officers they take on. In 1999, for instance, Winnipeg cancelled an entire recruit class at the police academy in an effort to reduce costs (Katz 2006). Indeed, the number of police officers per capita in Canada began an unprecedented decline in the mid 1990s. While the ratio was 2.06 officers per 1000 population in 1975, it fell to 1.81 per 1000 in 1999. According to Linden, Clairmont, and Murphy (2000), levels at the end of the 1990s were the same as in 1971, a period of significantly lower crime rates and lower overall demand on the police. Linden and his colleagues also point to the impending retirement of large numbers of police personnel as “perhaps the most significant and immediate human resource challenge facing Canadian policing and police management.”⁸

Chris Murphy (2004) has documented how—in response to the impact of rising costs, limited resources, and growing service demands—Canadian police services have adopted neo-liberal business models and values in order to facilitate the rationalization of police governance, organization, management, and services. This shift from traditional bureaucratic to corporate management values (such as cost-benefit, productivity, accountability, and consumer satisfaction) has involved: eliminating some traditional police services altogether and/or significantly reducing or restricting access to others; a sharing of responsibility with others in the community or private sector; a commodification of police services whereby police departments are encouraged to price, sell, or raise revenues from their services; the implementation

of new technologies which are transforming the nature of police work, especially in terms of enhancing or replacing in-person police activities; and the privatization of some police functions.

Murphy and Clarke (2005) report on the impact of these changes in the cities of Halifax and Edmonton, especially in terms of their commitments to community-based policing. The Halifax Regional Police (HRP), which until recently had prided itself on being a community-based policing service, has moved away from broad community involvement to a more reactive form of policing. According to Murphy and Clarke (2005: 218):

Despite public and political support for more collaborative community policing efforts, HRP have tended to see community policing as a drain on critical or core police resources and have done little more than offer conventional crime prevention programs such as Neighbourhood Watch. This limited response has failed to satisfy poor and minority community demands for more police involvement and response to their elevated crime and public order problems. There is now increasing discussion with HRP about the need to revitalize community policing through more effective and resource-limited target community policing strategies such as problem-solving teams.

Murphy and Clarke note that with the election of the Klein government in 1993 and its move to restrain budgets and restructure government, municipal policing in Alberta suffered two direct hits: municipal policing grants were reduced by 50 percent (\$16 million) over the three years of the new business plan introduced in Alberta Justice’s 1994-95 annual report; and disbursement and administration of policing grants were now included in a lump sum grant allocated to municipalities by Municipal Affairs. These grants were cut by \$59 million in 1994-95 and reduced again by 10 percent in 1995-96.

8 In 2004, for instance, the WPS lost 45 members through retirement (Winnipeg Police Service 2004).

Edmonton's response to fiscal restraint and increasing demands for efficiency was to implement the "Edmonton Police Plan." The objective of the plan involved "implementing a decentralized service structure, whereby the responsibility for service could be downloaded to the division and thus to the community" (Murphy and Clarke 2005: 233). Community involvement played a key role, as volunteers supplied a valuable resource. One example was the Ottewell Community Patrol Program, in which citizens patrolled using their own vehicles and fuel, equipped with radios funded by various community leagues. Between November 1993 and March 2001, citizens involved in the program logged 17,295 patrol hours and 146,043 kilometres. As Murphy and Clarke (2005: 236) comment:

In more generic terms, the plan was a model that supported the basic principles of measuring results, putting the customer (the community) in the driver's seat, introducing a market orientation, and fostering decentralization. And while the rhetoric of customer service guided the actions of the service, citizen responsibility and a reliance on community partnerships were also key components of the reform initiative, corresponding with public service initiatives of responsabilization. The link between the public sector reform mantra of accountability, efficiency, and effectiveness and the service's objectives of decentralization and citizen responsibility is readily apparent.

In large part because of limited resources, then, the current trend in community policing is to expand and empower the community to do more of its own policing, either in partnership with the police or independently (Linden, Clairmont, and Murphy 2000:12). As well, police services are stretching their response capacity by using civilians, volunteers, cadets, retired officers, and private security. In Winnipeg, for instance, un-

der a new program targeted at the homeless and panhandlers and designed to help people feel safer in the downtown area and free up police and paramedics to deal with more pressing calls, "outreach patrol" officers deputized as "special constables" will be empowered to enforce the Intoxicated Persons Detention Act and transport inebriated people to the drunk tank. The police union president has argued that putting more able-bodied police officers on the street would be the best solution to the city's woes, and advocates for the homeless have expressed concerns that the special constables may use heavy-handed tactics to move homeless people off the streets (*Winnipeg Free Press* August 16th, 2006).

Murphy (2004) suggests that while the move to a neo-liberal form of police governance has the potential to improve police efficiency and effectiveness, the adoption of corporate business values such as cost-benefit, efficiency, and consumer satisfaction that are increasingly driving police service practices potentially run into conflict with public service values such as equity, police accountability to the citizenry, due process, and social justice.

In tandem with neo-liberal forms of governance, however, has been the emergence of a neo-conservative political ethos that includes increasing calls to "get tough" on crime. While crime rates declined in most urban centres across Canada throughout the 1990s and into the twenty-first century (Sauve 2005), concerns about "disorderly people" intensified. Many analysts (see, for example, Hermer and Mosher 2002) attribute these concerns to the uncertainties and anxieties generated by globalization and the impact of economic restructuring. On the one hand, the retreat by the state from its professed commitment to the provision of social welfare has meant that increasing numbers of people are left to fend for themselves, without the benefit of a social safety net. According to John Pratt (1999: 149), "the subjection of economies to market forces and the

cutting back of welfare programmes of assistance has led to the re-creation of risk which welfarism had alleviated—poverty, unemployment and the formation of a new indigent class of vagrants, beggars, homeless, the mentally ill with criminal tendencies who now find themselves left to roam the streets.” On the other hand, the resulting effects of lean production and re-engineering have removed a sizeable proportion of middle-income jobs, engendering a feeling of precariousness in those previously secure and a social anxiety that readily translates into a fear of crime (Young 1999: 8). In these terms, neo-conservative calls for more “law and order” and the need to “fight crime” have increasingly become a prominent feature of political discourse at both the national and local levels.⁹ It is in this socio-political context that new forms of policing—in particular, zero-tolerance policing—have emerged.

While the pressures to rationalize police services are considerable, there remain significant challenges now facing police departments as they endeavour to respond to public concerns about safety and security. These challenges are especially pressing in inner-city communities where, it could easily be argued, the impact of neo-liberal economic restructuring has been most acutely felt. One way of addressing this issue is to seek community input. What do residents of inner-city communities want? How do inner-city residents define issues of safety and security? And what kind of policing do they deem to be most desirable? Answers to such questions were found in interviews conducted with residents, businesspeople, and community workers in three

inner-city Winnipeg neighbourhoods: Centennial, Spence, and William Whyte.

9 The Conservative Party under Stephen Harper, for instance, made ‘law and order’ issues a key component of its platform in the last election, and both the current Minister of Justice and Minister of Public Safety have adopted this stance during their tenure. As well, Winnipeg Mayor Sam Katz declared the need to “fight crime” a key issue in the recent civic election campaign.

V. CENTENNIAL NEIGHBOURHOOD

Three themes emerge from our interviews in Centennial neighbourhood. First, parents with young children are fearful for their children's safety and, to a lesser but still significant extent, for their own safety. Second, most people that we interviewed do not like and are fearful of the police, and many related to us stories about what they consider to be inappropriate police behaviour—directed especially at Aboriginal peoples—in the neighbourhood. And third, most people that we interviewed told us that they rarely see the police in the neighbourhood and that they would like to see police on a regular basis, walking the beat, getting to know people (especially children and youth), developing relationships with people and organizations in the neighbourhood, and improving the level of trust between the community and the police.

Safety in Centennial

Parents with young children—twelve of those we interviewed in Centennial have responsibility for young children—told us that there are certain places where and times when they feel their children's safety is at risk. Many said, for example, that they will not venture out, and will not allow their children out, after 8 o'clock at night. The dangers are seen to be too great (see sidebar *People Are Especially Fearful at Night*).

Even during the day there are dangers (See sidebar *Young Are Exposed to Things They Should Not Be Seeing*). Children being walked to and from school by parents are often exposed to illegal drug dealing, drug use, and prostitution.

Youngsters are often harassed by other young people who engage in violent behaviour, and several residents told us stories of children and youth being beaten up in the neighbourhood.

People Are Especially Fearful at Night

I never go out at nighttime.

I don't feel safe at all at night.

Me and my kids, we don't go out after eight unless it's necessary. If it is necessary, I feel scared. I'm scared. I'm always looking over my shoulder.

To see the problems you have to come out at night, and there's no way a politician will come and roam our streets at night because it's very dangerous. I wouldn't recommend it.

Several observed that violence is common in the neighbourhood.

Most attribute this violence to the prevalence of the drug trade—and to gangs. As one community worker told us, “gangs are part of what makes it not safe, and they recruit kids and, you know, it’s really at the point where kids have to make the

decision not to be in a gang, if they don’t want to be recruited. And so I mean that, all the turf wars and drug wars and, you know, all that happens around the gangs is in our neighbourhood, we do hear gunshots at night, and kids are frightened.” Drugs and the drug trade appear to be omnipresent (see sidebar *The Prevalence of Drugs and Drug-Dealing in the Neighbourhood*).

Young Children are Exposed to Things That They Should Not Be Seeing

It’s to do with the prostitution and stuff in the neighbourhood because the johns want to bother the kids, they even bother the older ones.

The kids see everything and my girl always says: ‘Mom, look, that guy’s dealing drugs.’ She always says, she knows.

Well, this was a crack house at one time, and the girls that lived here were all hookers, even some guys tried to pick up my little girl from the park, and my kid is only eight years old, you know.

Prostitution, that’s my big problem, is when you’re walking down the street with a child who knows what they’re seeing, and you have to answer questions like, ‘Mom, what do they do?’ How do you explain things like that to a ten-year-old child?

It’s disgusting, especially the prostitution, because there are times when I have to walk my daughter to school because these johns were approaching her. She misses a lot of school because of it.

The Prevalence of Drugs and Drug-Dealing in the Neighbourhood

There’s too much drug dealers around here and I don’t feel safe at all because there’s a lot of shooting and violence.

I have neighbours that are drug dealers and they come to the wrong house and they keep constantly banging and throwing rocks at my windows and there’s some nights where I don’t sleep.

Drugs, I can’t stand drugs. You see people always coming up to you asking if you want to buy weed or if you know anybody that can sell weed.

Just in my block alone I know there’s at least six or seven houses that deal drugs, that sell drugs, but I just tend to stick to myself, I really don’t want to know, I just tend to stick into my home, shut the door, shut the lights, try and block out everybody else.

Crack is just getting to be a huge, huge issue...They’ve got kids as young as 10 or 11 running around on bikes delivering drugs.

It is primarily young men who are engaged in the illegal drug trade, and they may or may not be gang members, but are believed by most of those people we interviewed to be gang members. People fear these young men, so much so that they rarely report their activities to the police for fear of retaliation (see sidebar *Fear of Gangs and Gang Retaliation*).

Parents of teens also expressed deep fears that their children would be drawn into illegal and/or gang activity. Some have been successful in pulling their children away from such activity. One mother described her long struggle to extract her daughter from such a life. “Well, my daughter Sophia [not her real name], she was in two gangs, she was with Indian Posse and I tried to get her out of it. But I managed. I never gave up on her. Now she’s doing really good and she’s got two children of her own. She really switched her life around.” Others expressed openly their fears for their teenaged children in the face of the powerful draw exerted by illegal gang activities (see sidebar *Fears That Children Will Join Gangs*).

Fear of Gangs and Gang Retaliation

Gangs, they’re all out of control. They get away with a lot of things in the neighbourhood.

Nobody wants to say anything because they’re too scared. Like, I don’t blame them. I wouldn’t say anything either, because they know where you live, they find out where you live and how many people live in that house. Like, it’s not only what happens in the movies, it also happens in real life. That’s why nobody wants to say anything.

Fears That Children Will Join Gangs

I really think it’s related to poverty. I think kids get recruited in it because they don’t see any other options so it’s a way of having money, a way of having some power. They say [it’s] a sense of belonging... I guess there’s a sense of belonging to it, but I think it’s money and power, and sometimes just out of fear. They join because they’re scared not to be connected.

He’s always out and about and all the things going on with teens, so I’m always worried about him, but he’s, our son is 18 and I worry about him because ... with all the stuff going on nowadays it’s not like when we were young, gangs and stuff.

I’ve noticed his friends really into gangs and everything and I try not to really let it get to me, because to me they’re really just ‘wannabe’ kids and they’re trying to fit in, but for Andrew [not his real name], my 14 year old, he hangs around at Rossbrook House, which is in the area, so I find that good about the area.

Well, I know there’s gangs, drugs, and violence and I wish it would stop but I don’t know how you stop it. I mean, as a parent myself, my boy, I know for one he’s involved and I can’t stop him... I could just watch and hope that someday something will wake him up. And most of the kids who are in gangs I’ve known since they were babies, so it’s kinda hard. And how they’re getting into them I don’t know. I wish there was a way to prevent it because it’s pretty deadly.

Our interviews reveal to us that many parents and caregivers live in a near-constant state of anxiety about their safety—and especially their children’s safety. A Canadian evacuated from Lebanon in July 2006 is reported to have said upon his arrival in Canada what many Canadians take for granted: “it is a very important thing to live in a safe place” (*National Post*, July 22, p. A13). Many parents in Centennial neighbourhood believe that they do not live in a safe place. Most, however, are poor, and given the cost of housing, have few options. Yet it surely cannot be appropriate that as a society we forget, at least as far as those who live in the inner city are concerned, that “it is a very important thing to live in a safe place.”

Policing in Centennial

Making matters worse is the lack of confidence in the police, even fear and dislike of the police, expressed by many of those that we interviewed. Many told us that they rarely see the police in their neighbourhood (see sidebar *Perceived Absence of Police in Centennial Neighbourhood*).

Others told us of their dislike, and even fear, of the police, and several described incidents of rough and seemingly inappropriate behaviour by the police.

We are not in a position to determine the veracity of the specific stories that we were told, and it is likely that the incidents described were more complex and nuanced than what was relayed. What is obvious, however, is that an “us versus them” mentality appears to exist regarding the residents of Centennial neighbourhood and the police. The police are seen as an alien force, their activities are seen to be negative, and the exchange of information and trust between the two “sides” appear to be minimal (See sidebar *Negative Attitudes About the Police*).

Yet, there is a seeming paradox here. Despite the negative opinions of the police voiced by the residents, almost all of those we interviewed see the need for—and want—an active police role in

their neighbourhood. And most have quite a clear idea of what that role would look like.

Perceptions of Community Policing in Centennial

Respondents told us that they want to see the police regularly, walking the beat. They want the “cop on the beat” to get to know the neighbourhood and its people—especially the children—and to develop relationships with residents and organizations in Centennial. They believe that if this were to be done, trust would be developed and more information would be made available to police to address the problems of drugs, gangs, and violence. The neighbourhood, they believe, would be safer as a result. In short, Centennial residents support a community policing model

Perceived Absence of Police in Centennial Neighbourhood

I never see the police.

I just don’t see that much cops around...I just don’t see cops around.

I’ve had problems where I’ve called the police many occasions and nothing’s been done...I find there’s not enough policing...no, the policing here is very terrible.

I never see them around...I don’t see any kind of patrolling around here.

I never see them anywhere so I don’t even feel safe.

I haven’t seen any police at all, foot patrol, whatever. I haven’t seen anybody.

of police work (see sidebar *People in Centennial Want Community Policing*).

One of the community workers we spoke to indicated that a community police officer had been assigned to work in the Centennial neighbourhood for a period of three years and that his presence made a positive difference—“he did some really good work with us.” However, the officer “was here about a quarter of the time in the end. He was being called out to do other things all the time,” outside of the neighbourhood. According to this worker, “I don’t think one person can do it here. And especially not if they’re calling them away all the time.”

A number of those we interviewed expressed the view that the community itself has to take a part of the responsibility for neighbourhood safety

and security. Several spoke positively of the role being played by the Centennial Neighbourhood Project (CNP), and one person informed us that discussions are now underway at the CNP about forming one or more of a Citizens on Patrol Program, a Neighbourhood Watch program, and/or a Block Parents program. This suggests that the residents of Centennial are not passive victims; they are active, and working to become more active in defending their neighbourhood and their families.

But given the forces against which they seek to defend themselves, it would be naive to think that residents can do this on their own. They need the support of the police, and they know what they want that support to look like, but they believe that far from being supportive, the

Negative Attitudes About the Police

I think it’s all reactive, almost all, just reacting to crisis, and even then they’re not, there aren’t enough of them to do that well. And I think there is a lot of racism and that, you know, kids get targeted...I couldn’t say they’re doing a good job.

I don’t have much faith in the police, never have.

Well, see, I try never to associate myself with the police for whatever reason because I never felt safe being around them myself.

The role played by the police in our neighbourhood is to me not a positive role.

I don’t really get along with them and I don’t think they’re really helpful in some ways because most of them are racist.

It’s sad when you see a little kid, just four to six years old, and see an officer drive by and the kid saying ‘you pig.’ I mean, a lot of that comes from experience of what they’ve seen happen. Some of these kids in this area have seen things that go on with the police when the police come to their house. I mean, they’re coming to get the bad guy and the bad guy may be their dad or their uncle and they [the police] can’t be respectful of it. If there’s little kids at least do it in a respectful way so they’re not scaring the children. And I think if communication is good maybe people would come forward with information to help stop some of this stuff.

Many people are afraid to call the police...and some of the immigrant groups have had in their countries, have had terrible experiences with police, so they’re scared to make phone calls.

police presently are, on balance, a negative force in their neighbourhood. Given that “it is a very important thing to live in a safe place,” this is a problem that ought to be rectified.

People in Centennial Want Community Policing

[If we had] more police in this area I wouldn't have young ladies on my corner, across the street, and I just want to cry every time I see them. I mean, it's so sad, it's so damn sad.

I think they should be more visible, you know, in finding out who's doing what and when. People know that the police are there, they ain't gonna be doing what they're doing, and they will think about it.

If there were community policing I think we'd see them all the time, I'd like to see them all the time in our community... That's where we'd get the trust going.

Community policing would help us solve some of the problems in part with build-

ing that relationship and working together ... and getting the kids, showing them a positive side too.

To me, in my view, community policing is an officer who gets along with the community, the residents, the businesses, the schools.

Community policing is a community working together with law enforcement to make sure that their neighbourhood is a safer place to live for everybody; it's working together hand in hand.

To me community policing is having police walking the beat...I think it would show a lot of the teenagers around here that there's more police around here now, they're being watched, like, they know they're going to have to be more careful of what they're doing.

VI. SPENCE NEIGHBOURHOOD

Problems of safety and security are, according to most of those we interviewed, less serious now in Spence neighbourhood than they were a year ago. The lower level of concern about safety and security in Spence compared to previous years may be a function of one or both of two things: first, the revitalization of the community being led by the Spence Neighbourhood Association; and second, the implementation in Spence of Operation Clean Sweep. As for the latter, many (but by no means all) of those we interviewed in Spence say that they like it because people causing safety and security problems in Spence are now less visible, and the police are more visible. However, there is a strong suggestion that Clean Sweep is simply “sweeping” various forms of dangerous and illegal activities into other neighbourhoods. It is not solving the problems; it is pushing them into other parts of the inner city. There is also the strong suggestion that what people in Spence really want is community policing. Most of those we interviewed say that they welcome a greater police presence in Spence, but they want it in a form that is consistent with a community policing model, and some of those we interviewed describe the kind of community policing that they want as an integral part of the revitalization efforts of the Spence Neighbourhood Association. In this latter version of community policing, the police

would work in partnership with the people and businesses and community-based organizations in the neighbourhood in an effort both to remove or reduce the causes of crime, and to undertake a more proactive and sophisticated and community-based form of policing.

Safety in Spence

Most of those we spoke with in Spence say that the neighbourhood is safer now than it was a year or two ago, and that they personally feel safe in the area (see sidebar *Feelings of Safety in Spence Neighbourhood*).

There are still safety and security problems in Spence, despite the improvements. One long-time resident told us: “almost everybody I’ve talked to that lives in the neighbourhood is concerned about safety.” While most people told us they personally feel safe in the neighbourhood, many identified particular groups of people who are still at risk (Aboriginal and new immigrant youth, the elderly, and people involved with the drug and street sex trades were specifically mentioned), and most said that they would not walk around the neighbourhood at night (“oh definitely after dark, I wouldn’t go out alone after dark”). Many identified groups of young people walking around late at night as the source of problems and the cause of fear. One man described them as “these big packs

Feelings of Safety in Spence Neighbourhood

The violence I think is really not as prevalent as it used to be.

Oh, I think it's much safer than it was five years ago...I've talked to my neighbours, I've talked with my fellow people that I work with all over the place, and everybody has noticed that it's much different now.

I've noticed there is a fraction of the roaming bands of teenagers that were getting into so much trouble last summer and the summer before—this is my third summer here—huge difference this year. I don't know why but there seems to be a dramatically less amount of kids outside roaming around causing havoc...it's way better this year.

I've never had any sort of threat to my personal safety whatsoever, and I do a lot of walking around in the community.

I think for the large extent the perception of what the neighbourhood is like, versus what it actually is like, are two vastly different things. I think there are a lot of really nice people. You can walk up and down the streets and people say hello and have conversations with people up and down the street. I guess it's because of my tenure, a lot of people do recognize me...but I still feel very safe—perhaps that's naive, but I guess I just refuse to think badly about this neighbourhood.

I do actually, yeah, I don't know if it's a delusion (laughs) but I do feel safe, yeah.

of youth that worry me the most,” while another expressed concern about “seeing gangs walking around, packs of kids, you know they're looking for trouble, they're not just out for a walk, kind of thing, they're looking for trouble.”

While many mentioned young people being out and about late at night as a cause for fear, it is not clear whether these are gang members, or merely groups of young people with nothing to do. Both opinions were expressed. One person, for example, told us that:

These kids hanging outside 7-Eleven with their hats tilted doesn't necessarily mean a gang, but the way people perceive is often through the media, and this is what they are told is the gang sign or whatever, and so there's a problem. You know, many of these kids, if you get past the tough exterior they're actually pretty good kids.

It seems likely that many young people in Spence are more 'wannabes' than gang members. Yet it cannot be denied that there is gang activity, and it is dangerous, and that vulnerable youth are at risk of being drawn in. Aboriginal youth are particularly at risk, as are new immigrant and refugee youth. One resident told us that with new immigrant and refugee youth:

The parents don't have a familiarity with our society or with our culture.... And a lot of these kids then build their own social group apart from the safety of their parents or their cultural group and that's when they get pulled into gangs or into dangerous situations ... And often their parents have to work extraordinarily long hours if they're going to support the family. And I see that with a lot of the families, like, the mothers working all night, the fathers working all day. Sometimes in the evening they're both working and there's nobody at home. So

the kids, as I say, they build their own social networks which aren't always that safe.

A recent African refugee, himself a parent, told us that some new immigrant youth drop out of school due to language problems, or have never attended school because they have come from war-torn countries, and when they look for work “somebody will ask them [for] Canadian experience. They never went to school, they just came from there to here, and then they're not going to be qualified to get a job.”

Drugs continue to be a problem—particularly crack and crystal meth. We were told that:

If you go back ... even 10 years ago or seven or eight years ago, you didn't hear as much talk about crystal meth and crack, and they're very highly addictive and they damage the chemical in your brain. You become a different person. So we're seeing more children out on the street working in the sex trade, we're seeing more crimes that aren't planned. You know, they just kick somebody's door in. They just want to get money and get a fix right away.... Crystal meth and crack became available for free, you know, they're handing it out ... because it's so highly addictive. And ever since then there's just been, you know, crime has taken off, random crimes.

Businesspeople told us that crime and the perceptions of crime in Spence neighbourhood adversely affect their businesses. One business owner described customers being propositioned by street sex workers as they entered or left his shop, and one case of a customer almost having a purchase stolen from her by a group of young men as she walked to her car. Other business owners remarked on the serious downturn in their businesses after a shooting in late 2005 resulted in the death of a young man. One said that he “easily lost \$30,000” and that “it's taken me years

to build up that kind of business.” Another told us: “It curtailed business because people saw it on the news.... The [business] was filmed, there were bullets lodged in the wall.” Spence has “already got the connotation of being a crime-ridden neighbourhood, so people read that and it just feeds more into that perception they have of the neighbourhood.”

It is significant that in Centennial neighbourhood what we heard most from those we interviewed were concerns expressed by parents about the safety of their children. What we have heard in Spence are concerns expressed by many about the activities of youth—young people in their teens and twenties. In these inner-city neighbourhoods, both children and youth are at risk. Most Canadians, we believe, would consider it to be morally wrong that children and youth face such dangers in their day-to-day lives in the heart of Canadian cities. What is more, if we do not, as a society, protect these young people from such dangers, we are allowing the conditions to persist that will result in the constant reproduction of the problem. At least some of the young people who are regularly exposed to such dangers will themselves become dangerous, adding to the vicious cycle of poverty and crime. Young people need other activities and opportunities—the kind of activities and opportunities that are routinely made available to suburban youth by their more well-to-do middle-class parents.

Policing in Spence

Some of the people we spoke with feel positively about the police role in Spence. A building superintendent, for example, told us that:

We've had the police here I would say 20, 30 times, and they're absolutely magical in their ability to calm people. Most of our disturbances were alcohol by nature so the people were very unruly, very violent, and very difficult to talk to. And the police come in and they just calm the situation so well.

I'm just so impressed with the police.... In all, the police do an exceptional job of calming people.

Most people, however, were much less positive. There is, we were told by many, a limited police presence in Spence. One person said: "well, there's no police presence, you don't see cops walking the beat or anything like that. You see them drive by in their cruisers, and you're lucky if you can get them out of that cruiser, kind of thing. You know, that's where they are and that's where they stay." Another resident said much the same: "you see them driving by, you see a number of cop cars in the neighbourhood, and occasionally you see a stopped one, but in terms of having a conversation or talking with one, that's pretty rare. They usually seem to be going somewhere in this neighbourhood.... So they're present, but they're not really present." And the presence of the police in the neighbourhood makes a difference, we were told (see sidebar *A Police Presence Makes a Difference*).

Our interviews also strongly suggest that perceptions of safety and security are different for Aboriginal than for non-Aboriginal residents of Spence. One Aboriginal woman, for example, referred to the police as a "gang":

Well, I think the police are a gang, and we don't like that kind of a gang in our neighbourhood, especially when they harass our young people.... The police have a gang, they're just another gang in our neighbourhood and they're taking over our neighbourhood and it doesn't feel good. So, if the police want to know about gangs they can take a look in the mirror.

This claim arises from the view, expressed by Aboriginal and African respondents, that their young people are being stopped and harassed by police. One woman told us: "I've talked with other women who've had their sons and brothers who

have been roughed up by the police for no reason at all, other than the police want to. I don't know, I think, have some fun and assert their authority over another human being." She added: "I feel like there are many families who are very upset with the police in the neighbourhood because of the way ... the young people are treated."

What kind of a citizen is a police officer that bullies people instead of going up and trying to talk to them in a civilized way? ...They pat teenagers down and slam them

A Police Presence Makes a Difference

I think the presence of the police is very important because troublemakers when they see the police they just don't like to hang around. They shy away from them.

I think the first way to deal with somebody, to calm somebody's fears, is a presence...somebody that they see regularly...someone that's willing to be very visible, flexible hours, and is willing to meet, is very approachable and approaches a lot of people.

People really seem to respond when they see people walking around, you know, even the Biz Patrol, like the West End has a patrol, a bunch of young men mostly who walk around the neighbourhood and just try to respond to residents' concerns, and people just really seem to appreciate seeing these guys walking around. I think it just strengthens their feelings of safety...People just really seem to like a visible patrolling or a police presence in the neighbourhood.

against the cars. Like, how is that going to encourage this youth to say 'I seen an incident.' You know, they don't encourage communication.... I think that fearing the police is a lot of the issue too, you know. Like, because you don't know how they're going to approach you, what they're going to say to you, and how they're going to treat you. And on the whole it's not in a very good way. So you don't go to police to be treated with respect.

An African refugee said much the same:

The reason why the police are not doing a good job ... other people, they look at police as brutal to them, they see police intimidating them, and most of those people you would see likely from the Aboriginal community, the Black community, they look at police as a trap, because the more police come, they will ask them a type of question, then assume they do not belong to the society.... So they want to ask you where you come from rather than treating you as a citizen of this country.

A long-time community worker in Spence told us that:

One of the things that's raised its ugly head in the last few years around here is that there are some really bad apples in the police department who are racist, who are violent towards community people, who harass people for no good reason. So, I mean, that's a serious concern. I don't believe by any stretch that it's all or even most of the police department that behave that way, but I think that there are significant numbers that do. There are just too many stories that we hear to ignore it.

This, of course, is the same complaint raised so frequently in Centennial neighbourhood. And as

was the case there, several in Spence referred to the police as an "outside force," with little or no connection to or knowledge of the neighbourhood. The police, respondents told us, respond to incidents. They are reactive. Something happens, they are called, they deal with it—although there were many complaints about the slow reaction time of police—and they leave. No relationships are built; little happens that is positive. What is more, this reactive kind of policing will never, several argued; solve the neighbourhood's problems. It is a Band-Aid. "I would say that working in disadvantaged communities like ours you have to work on a prevention piece, because otherwise you're just cleaning up messes all the time and nothing's ever going to be improved."

Perceptions of Operation Clean Sweep

Given the prevailing negative attitudes toward the police in Spence, it is interesting to note how people in the neighbourhood have responded to Operation Clean Sweep, which was instituted in November 2005.

Many people told us that they like Operation Clean Sweep because the people causing trouble in the neighbourhood are now less visible. People also like Clean Sweep because most consider it important that there is a visible police presence in the neighbourhood, and with Clean Sweep the police are more visible (see sidebar *Positive Comments About Operation Clean Sweep*).

Nevertheless, many of those we interviewed said that they believe that Clean Sweep is not a solution to anything at all, because it merely pushes the problem into another neighbourhood. Spence may have less crime for a while, but the result is that a neighbouring community has more (see sidebar *Clean Sweep Pushes the Problems into Other Neighbourhoods*).

One person said that Clean Sweep moved gangs out of Spence, but that they moved right

Positive Comments About Operation Clean Sweep

A great thing, I think it's a great thing. I don't know, exactly, like you see the statistics in the newspaper and stuff, but they must be doing something. Like even the prostitution, I don't see as much of it out there.

Well, I personally know some of the officers that are involved.... I think that makes people feel safer...I think it's a really good program.

I think there's a lot of people in the community who are happy about it. They're kind of happy to see any kind of measure that's going to try and deal with some of the violent stuff that occurs.

There's no two ways about it, there are a lot more cops on the street, and there are a very small minority of residents that don't like it. Ninety-five percent of residents really enjoy having the extra police presence.

I would say, for the most part, from talking to community members daily, that for the most part, people feel safer. So I think that's good.

The whole idea of the Operation Clean Sweep thing has positive effects in that there's more of a police presence and they're more focused with dealing with, not just responding to, this thing or that thing but actually following what's happening within the gang activity and within the drug activity in the community.

It's one of the best things that's happened in recent policing.

Clean Sweep Pushes the Problems into Other Neighbourhoods

Well, it doesn't work to eradicate a problem, it just kind of puts the band-aid fix, or sweeps the problem to another neighbourhood or something like that, you know?

The difference is that we pushed a lot of it out into other communities, which I find completely unacceptable...We've pushed the working girls down the street further out, or else to the North End, same with all the dealers.

Well I feel like Clean Sweep has probably picked up a lot of people, but as soon as you pick up people and charge them it just sends them to another area.

The point is that person [street sex worker] is standing there not because they want to stand there. They have a drug addiction that needs to be fed and they're going to, until they've solved their drug problem, they're going to be standing there or somewhere else. So when you look at the city as a whole, moving crime around doesn't help, it's just going to move to a different area.

I think that's one of the biggest steps in the right direction to clean this area, or any other area for that matter, but you know, like, if they do that, then that'll be less problems around here...If they go elsewhere then you know then they'll have to deal with them elsewhere, but we have had enough problems in here.

back in when there was a pause, and will be moved out again when Clean Sweep resumes:

During the process of having Operation Clean Sweep happening here it [the gang presence] was very minimal, where it was visible. Being that it's the end of the month and the police are dealing with their own staffing problems right now, they [the gangs] are more prevalent again and that's, I can see, coming to an end towards May when the police is back to its full force again, and they continue on with their new version of Operation Clean Sweep.

Another said much the same: "I mean, sure they have presence, but at some point the presence is going to wane and then what?"

A third told us that: "I see Operation Clean Sweep as somewhat of an emergency measure that should be longer than three months, but maybe not forever, and maybe after a year or a year and a half resources could be funneled into the community policing piece."

The views of people in Spence about Operation Clean Sweep are nuanced. Few are totally favourable or totally unfavourable. Many are saying that Clean Sweep is good because the increased police presence reduces crime, and they have been concerned about the lack of a police presence in their community. But they are also saying that Clean Sweep merely moves the problems to other neighbourhoods; it does not solve the problems. What is really needed, most are saying, is the kind of ongoing relationship that comes with community policing.

Perceptions of Community Policing in Spence

People in Spence know what they mean by "community policing." One community worker told us that: "every time we have a community meeting people say the police have to build closer

relationships with the community—that comes over and over. And I don't know if Operation Clean Sweep is doing that, although maybe it's doing a little bit of it." She added:

We did for a while have the system where there were police officers that were assigned to a beat within the community and they got to know the people there so the people that lived within the community could go to that person and say 'okay, this is happening' or 'that is happening' and they would assist in dealing with the situation. People in the community want that back. They get told that it's there, but it isn't there, because the reality is that although people get assigned to beats, they are constantly pulled off for special assignments, so they're not really present.

Another respondent described community policing by saying:

Well, I was a big fan and I continue to be a big fan of community policing.... There's two things that you need to really have, you need to have a local presence and you need to be consistent, because it takes a tremendously long time to get to know everybody in this neighbourhood, the various people, the various agencies, that type of thing.... It takes a very long time to develop people's trust and develop a reputation with people in the neighbourhood.... It is their job to go out and talk to people, find out what the issues are, be at the schools, be at the cafes, be at the associations, and be walking around in the neighbourhood and just create that presence.

Another resident concurred with this view:

Well, community policing is to me when officers take ownership of an area and ev-

everything that goes on in that area, and they don't leave that area to go and do Charging Bison and to go out to the airport for protocol because some hot shot's coming to town. They stay in their area, period. That's their neighbourhood, and they know every person in the neighbourhood by name, they know what's going on.... They become the face of the police for the community. That isn't happening. The guys are way too stressed. There's not enough officers.

In short, there is a desire in Spence for community policing. People know what they mean by community policing—cops on the beat long

enough to get to know the neighbourhood, the people, the organizations, and the businesses, and who develop relationships and work in partnership with the community—but they believe that they do not have community policing now.

Neighbourhood Revitalization as a Safety Initiative

Many of those we interviewed told us that they considered the role of the police to be less important in promoting safety in the neighbourhood than are various community-building initiatives that are being actively pursued in Spence. As one resident told us: "I think it's not so much the police, it's the community itself. It has to be the community first to do the work, and the police as backup." For example, many people said that

Neighbours as a Source of Safety

I think more of a solution is building neighbour networks. Like, part of the reason I feel really safe here is I've had fantastic neighbours, like, just unbelievable.

Just knowing your neighbours makes you feel safe because you know in a way if you're friends with people, friends look out for each other.

To me the biggest safety initiative is getting neighbours to know each other. It's the whole idea of eyes on the street. If somebody's watching, looking out for you, looking out for your kids, then they're safer.

I think that there needs to be a lot of things done to our neighbourhood to make our neighbourhood more safe and

I feel, like, getting to know your neighbours, like having more gatherings.

I think if there would be a way to encourage, for example, neighbours to meet one another, meet other people in the neighbourhood, building a stronger sense of community.

More things that get people out into the neighbourhood so they do feel safe ... where there's people walking together ... or where people know their neighbours better. And I think that will be far more effective than, you know, a police crackdown.

Neighbours are talking more to neighbours in our neighbourhood and I think that's made the change...Some of the people...who live in our neighbourhood are really good human beings and contribute to the overall feeling of well-being in our neighbourhood.

simply getting to know one's neighbours improves neighbourhood security (see sidebar *Neighbours as a Source of Safety*).

The work done in recent years by community-based organizations such as the Spence Neighbourhood Association, Inner-City Aboriginal Neighbours, and many others has done much to build a renewed sense of community in Spence, and this has improved people's feelings of safety and security. Yet, more needs to be done. In particular, many told us, more opportunities need to be created for young people, especially the ones that are vulnerable and are being drawn into trouble. As one long-time resident of Spence told us, "these are the kids that are really without lots of alternatives that they can get involved in." A youth worker said much the same:

I think if you provide programs and opportunities where there's peer mentorship, one-on-one, for the youth, I think that it helps. And it's no secret, it's not rocket science. They start to develop more self-esteem.... Okay, so that's one part. And I'll tell you how it connects to safety. If kids develop this self-esteem that they can actually get out of some of these situations, that they aren't terrorized by gangs and know that they can go to all these other places to be safe, then they want, and start to believe that, they can achieve more, right? They start to think well, hey, some of the goals might be getting a job.... They start to dream about having their own furniture, their own place, their own life.... So they're not feeling bitter and sad and angry and wanting to lash out—where do they lash out? In the community.

The truth is that many of these young people who are being drawn into trouble do not have many opportunities. Ours is a society that does not provide equal opportunity, a society that excludes some people. When that happens, problems follow. Gang activity, for example, is not

to be condoned. But we need to understand its origins, and respond intelligently. One long-time resident of Spence put it this way:

I guess that it's really easy to just look at the gangs and say, 'yeah, they're victimizing other people,' but it does take a certain amount of compassion to look and see in some ways the gang members themselves are victims and if your Dad was a gang member then you might be a gang member too, just because you didn't grow up knowing any other way of life.

It is clear that people believe that the Spence Neighbourhood Association and other community-based organizations are doing an excellent job, and that their work has made a significant contribution to improved safety in the area.

You look down, say, Langside Street, I remember two, three years ago and boarded up houses like crazy, you know, and that was scary. Now I think you probably don't see one boarded up house anymore.... And some of these places have been fixed up and there are families living in there now who seem to care for the property and for the neighbourhood—which is very good. And what we need is more of that, so as one place gets cleaned up then the neighbours around do the same. And it does change the image of the area. But like I said, that is a positive step since three, four, five years ago or so, you know.

The community really needs to take back their community, the neighbourhood. And I see that happening. Spence [Neighbourhood Association] is doing a great job. They're the model now.... Spence has done so much great work that people are looking to them for ideas and just supporting local

programs, supporting local police, community police.

What is needed now, people are telling us, is for the police to become a part of this neighbourhood revitalization. Rather than being an outside force that comes into the neighbourhood in response to incidents, and leaves immediately to respond to the next incident—and the next and the next—the police should become partners with the community residents and with community organizations and businesses. The police should work side-by-side with the community in building a better neighbourhood. That would be community policing. It would involve the police walking the beat, getting to know the neighbourhood, and the people and organizations in the neighbourhood, getting to know the children and youth by name, developing a relationship with people and organizations in the community, and ultimately earning the trust of people in the community. As a consequence, police would be able to develop a highly-sophisticated intelligence system about who is doing what in the neighbourhood, work with the community in a proactive fashion to prevent problems before they arise, and create alternative opportunities for those now getting into trouble.

None of this is a “soft” form of policing. It is hard work. And it would involve being tough with people in the neighbourhood when that is warranted. But getting tough would be an option exercised only in the context of a joint community-police effort to build community, and to be inclusive and create opportunities and self-esteem. One long-time community worker put it this way, in expressing her concerns about Clean Sweep:

It isn't balanced with a community-based approach. Like, if you had a real, strong, intensive, committed community-based policing program, I'm not sure that you would need that kind of a big hammer kind of approach. And I'm not saying you don't need the, you know, you need the cops to

deal with guys who are breaking the law and stuff, that's their job for sure, but I think it needs to be balanced, also, with a more community-based approach.

Others in the community are saying much the same, and there is some evidence that to at least some extent this is now being done, and that at least some police officers want to do more. A community worker told us that:

I think that the police ... are really trying to do the best that they can. It's, they're coming to community meetings, they're talking about situations, they're asking what we need from them, they're asking us to help them, we are the eyes and ears, let them know if we see this, let them know, and they actually do things about it. I think it's great. Of course we could use more community police.

A resident added, along the same lines:

Well, I think on most fronts the police are doing a pretty good job, on most fronts. Where they are lacking is in their community relations, and I know that it's been poo-hooed by the powers that be, but that is crucial in this community. And they really haven't been given, I mean, I know a lot of the officers personally, because we work with them very closely. They would love to have the time to do that, but that is not part of their mandate and their job description. And until that changes sort of from the top down, that is going to be an issue. The perception of police in this area is not as good as it should be, and that really needs to be changed, and the only way to change that is to put the effort into doing it and the will isn't there right now. So that's something we're working on as a community, to sort of try to persuade the upper echelon that it is critical and we do have to do some changes in that regard.

The police have a crucial role to play in Spence, as in other inner-city neighbourhoods. People in Spence believe that the role of the police is best played by their working closely with community-based organizations in neighbourhood revitalization efforts, because doing so gets closer to the root of the problem. As one community leader in Spence put it, in referring to the problem of crime and violence: “I think that the problem is that the more that you see it, the more you see now difficult it is to change, and the enforcement, crime enforcement, is just a small piece of the answers.” The bigger piece is the rebuilding of community, and most people in Spence want the police to be a part of that process.

VII. WILLIAM WHYTE NEIGHBOURHOOD

Similar to Centennial and Spence, residents of William Whyte expressed concerns about safety and security issues in their neighbourhood. One noticeable difference that emerges from the William Whyte interviews, however, is a sense that the presence of violence in this community has become “normalized.” Violence has come to be understood as a regular feature of everyday life in the North End. Nevertheless, this normalization of violence—and the harsh conditions that accompany it—are countered with a strong sense of pride in the North End.

On the one hand, residents are well-aware of problems. As one woman told us: “It’s parties just about every weekend and it’s always young punks and there’s always fighting.” She added, “I’ve had things thrown through my windows a few times, too. One time it was a beer bottle, the other time it was a brick ... anything can happen around here, it gets so crazy sometimes.” A middle-aged man described it this way:

Too many kids walking around with knives, hockey sticks. It’s just crazy. Guns, a lot of kids with guns, that’s just—a lot of kids selling crack. Yeah, it’s crazy, nuts. Lots, lots, lots of violence. There’s lots of things here that you don’t hear on the news. You just have to be around it to see it to know what’s going

on around the neighbourhood. There’s lots and lots of violence. Lots. Younger people ... robbin’ off dope dealers, break and enters. See a lot of that in broad daylight. See lots of that. Yeah, the kids these days are really violent. I don’t know where they picked that up though. It’s crazy.

A middle-aged woman offered an example:

Well, like, one day I was sitting here, last week, a boy came by asking me—and my friends and my daughter were sitting here, you know, visiting one another during daylight—and this boy rides by on a bike and asks us if we wanted to buy weed. We said ‘no,’ then he swore at us, came back within 15 to 20 minutes, pulled out a gun. He showed us he had a gun as he rode by, just to threaten us. So that’s, like, I kinda got scared because I knew he’s got a gun.

Some residents suggest that drugs—crack cocaine and crystal meth in particular—are at the heart of the problem. A community worker who has lived most of her life in the neighbourhood told us:

I think the bigger issue for the last couple of years has been [that] the crack and meth situation in the community has really made

people that normally wouldn't be violent or vicious, you know, their lives are changing and they're changing in order to get their next fix so they're doing crazy things.

She added:

I think it's a different era, and really, the drugs, I haven't seen a drug so devastating as this crystal meth. It seems to be so addictive that people lose all their genuine self, themselves, their being and their love for other people. They lose all that and they just have a love for this drug and it's, so, and you do crazy things when you're controlled by a drug, you know, you're not controlled by emotions anymore. So I'd say that, I think that is the biggest thing.

Another woman who has worked for a quarter-century in the North End said much the same thing:

I feel like it's less safe because I feel like this crack is, like, I see families that I've known for years and years and years and I've seen where it's really destroying families and where kids are being left alone by a Mom who would never think for a minute of leaving her kids alone, and is now leaving her kids alone so she can go out and make money so she can get crack and stuff.

A younger woman in her early 20s added:

Definitely the drugs and the violence are an issue, especially the drugs, because it's just so open and out there that it's almost like the norm for these kids growing up in the inner city. Like it's ... part of life almost for a lot of them, so that's really concerning.

As this woman relayed, drugs and violence have become "almost like the norm" for kids growing up in the neighbourhood—and the situation is perceived to be getting worse: "when I was

younger we were fighting fist and fist. Now people got guns, you know, it's getting pretty violent out there."

On the other hand, while residents are well aware of the problems that exist, they also take considerable pride in their community. After all, the North End is home (see sidebar *The North End is Home*).

Nevertheless, the William Whyte neighbourhood is also a place where violence has become such a regular feature of everyday life that its residents have had to take its presence in stride (see sidebar *Violence is Normalized*).

As one community worker who works with street-involved women put it:

You know, what amazes me a lot, what I hear from the women, is how they accept that violence is a part of their day to day life, like, a story that would horrify me if it happened to me or anybody that I know

The North End is Home

I'd rather walk around in the North End than anywhere else. I feel safer here. I know more people.

I know so many people in the neighbourhood that I don't really feel unsafe...I pretty much trust the Aboriginal people in our community.

I've lived here for thirteen years. To me, it's okay. Nobody bothers me.

I like the area. We never move. It's home for some reason.

There's a safety net here, there is ...for Aboriginal people there is, there's a safety net, and a comfort level.

outside of work, but that's something that's part of their everyday life, and that's the horrifying part. It's how normal it's become for them, to take risks like that and to be injured and to be assaulted and to be sexually assaulted.

While violence has been normalized as "something that's part of everyday life," that is not to say that the residents do not take precautions or alter their behaviour as a result. Many spoke of the strategies they use, such as avoiding being around particular places (such as the Merchant Hotel—"I never walk by there alone") and never walking the streets at night, especially by themselves.

One interesting finding to emerge from the interviews in William Whyte is that many of the residents do not perceive gangs to be a significant issue of concern (see sidebar *Gangs are Not the Most Serious Issue*).

But while gangs were not perceived by many to be a serious issue, this was certainly not the case when it came to drug use, drug dealing, and

prostitution (see sidebar *It's Not the Gangs—it's the Drug and Sex Trades*).

The presence of the drug and sex trades has generated concerns about the safety of the children in the neighbourhood. While many of the people we interviewed were not so concerned for their own safety, this was not the case when it came to the children. Residents spoke of their worries about needles littering the neighbourhood and young children being exposed to and involved in drugs and prostitution (see sidebar *Concerns for the Children*).

One grandmother told us: "we don't allow the grandchildren to go anywhere, even at the playground by themselves, no we don't.... If they're to go somewhere I would go with them, yeah. Because I'm keeping my own granddaughter and I wouldn't let her out of my sight. I wouldn't go anywhere with my granddaughter, no, it's too dangerous." A mother of teenaged sons described

Violence is Normalized

We live next door to a crack house and next door to a gang house, so I don't know how safe I'm supposed to feel?...I guess we have the respect. They don't bother us, we don't bother them kind of thing.

[Are there particular times and places where you don't feel safe?]

Not really because I grew up in the North End so it doesn't bother me.

I've just been through a lot, and there's really nothing anybody can do to me that I haven't been through.

Gangs are Not the Most Serious Issue

There's no gangs, it's just people that know each other...It's not a gang problem...Big gang of kids selling dope, that's all it is.

I don't see them as stereotypical gangs...I just see them as my neighbours, if anything, just because they are. Just because I think I have a better understanding and more of an understanding of who they are, why they're there.

I don't have any problem with gangs. There's gangs everywhere but they don't bother me because usually most of the time I've got my kids and they're really not interested in me.

one of her boys being jumped and threatened on his way to the store, and another occasion when one of her son's friends was stabbed in the stomach. She expressed concerns about the difficulty of raising children in that environment, and frustration with the lack of things for young people to do. Yet, she emphatically expressed her preference for living in and raising her children in the North End.

Despite such problems, it would appear that much about the William Whyte neighbourhood is positive. In this regard, if one looks at the community through a deficit lens, then all that will be seen is the problems encountered in the area. But

It's Not the Gangs—it's the Drug and Sex Trades

It's not the gangs that are really the problem; it's just the dealers and the people that are buying.

Drugs is a number one issue. It's the drugs that leads to the violence that leads to gangs that leads to the break and enters. It's the drugs that's the core root of it all.

We don't have a lot of gang activity that we can see...Prostitution is a big thing because they work right on the end of the street there.

A lot of people in the community have expressed that it's not so much just the gangs and the prostitution that they're scared of, it's outsiders that come in for those services ... johns coming around... the more upper class people are coming in, the ones with the money.

Concerns for the Children

Everybody's vulnerable, but I mean especially the children and the youth. I think those are the most vulnerable in the community, and they're getting younger and younger getting involved in some activities, whether it's prostitution, being sexually exploited, the drugs and the gangs, and...vulnerability just through say violence in the home, too.

Small kids, they come out and see this bullshit every day. There's hookers and some of them are 11, 12 years old. So it's crazy. Sometimes they're out there five, six o'clock in the morning...these young girls, like, where they should be sleeping, going to school. And no, they're out there hooking.

I seen a 15-year-old doing crack and he looks like he's maybe 40, 50 years old already, and he's only 15. [So is there rivalries with gangs?] Not really, I don't see none of that. Just mostly crack dealers trying to get the younger ones in.

Another [concern] I have would probably have to be the johns driving around. Because my 12-year-old looks older than she actually is. She's young. She can be naïve. It seems that the johns automatically assume that she's working the streets.

For the kids I feel it's unsafe, but we're trying to make a difference.

I always keep an eye on the kids.

if one looks at the community through an asset lens, then one finds enormous strengths—and these can be built upon. The woman who told us about her son being jumped on the way to the store also remarked: “I’m telling you there are some amazing teenagers who live within the North End, and they’ve accomplished so much you wouldn’t believe it... There’s a lot of positive things, you know, look at our graduation at Children of the Earth [the Aboriginal high school]... They demand excellence and they got it.” In these terms, the lens through which we choose to view the area determines, to a large extent, what we see there. It is possible to see the North End—and the William Whyte neighbourhood—as an area full of problems, as a “troubled area” and a “dangerous area.” In many respects that would be accurate. But it is equally possible to see the community as an area full of warm and vibrant people, and “amazing teenagers.” To miss the many strengths is to misunderstand the more complex reality.

Policing in William Whyte

While some respondents believe that the police “try to do the best they can” and are “doing as much as they can do, as much as they’re allowed to do,” numerous people told us that the police are slow to respond when there are troubles in the neighbourhood (see sidebar *Police are Slow to Respond When There’s Trouble*).

When asked about the police presence in the community, several residents expressed their concerns about what they perceived as the lack of respect by the police for people—and especially Aboriginal peoples. One woman who told us about the slow response time of the police said that, however much that is a problem, “more of an issue for me [is] lack of cop respect because of ‘who you might be.’” She attributed this lack of respect to the existence of two cultures: “I really think the problem is more to do with the separation between two people, two cultures, lack of respect on either culture... Like, I mean, we live

in a very racist city, our city is the most racist I’ve ever seen in Canada.” One way that this divide between the two cultures can manifest itself is racial profiling (see sidebar *Concerns about Racial Profiling by Police Officers*).

One woman described a visit by the police to her home after she called them about an incident:

Like, I make sure I always have a lot of nice stuff in my house and that, like, I buy the stuff myself, and one time a police officer came in here and said, ‘oh, you have so much nice stuff, you must be doing good in the business.’ And I says, ‘what are you talking about?’ He says, ‘oh, only crack dealers own this kind of stuff.’ I said, ‘well, I’m not a damned crack dealer. I buy this stuff out

Police are Slow to Respond When There’s Trouble

Well, actually, when you do need them they’re not around. Like, all that stuff that happens around here, like when it’s happening, you don’t see a police officer anywhere, and then, sure, after everything quiets down that’s when they show up.

No, they’re no help at all. None. They’re scared to come down this way. They’re scared they’re going to get shot at by the kids or something... You give them a call, it takes them about a day and a half. They say they’re always busy doing something else. They’re just too scared to come down this way.

I think that they close their eyes to a lot of things.

of my own pocket.' And I found that he, oh, he just really kind of pissed me off, like, just because I'm Native I'm not allowed to have nice stuff?

And it extends, some people argue, to “spatial profiling.” One woman expressed anger about police engaging in “spatial profiling,” and said, “so just because you live in a certain neighbourhood then you're a criminal, you're a this or a that, all these negative stereotypes.” “Spatial profiling” extends to stereotyping young people in the neighbourhood. As one community worker told us,

I don't know when it became a crime to be a teenager, but apparently it is because a lot of teenagers get harassed by police, and if they're walking down the street in a group

Concerns about Racial Profiling by Police Officers

I think they profile any Native kid that's walking down the street. I make sure, I watch and I make sure that they're not out to hurt anybody. I stop and I watch them to see what they're doing, because I really don't trust them. Personally, I've witnessed police brutality.

My son can't run down the street...and that's not fair because, I mean, he wants to do jogging or whatever he does.

I think a lot of it is racially motivated. I don't want to say the police are racist, but they are, a lot of them are. They use their positions to overbear other people and to intimidate.

of more than two—which is frequently the case because teenagers like to hang out in groups—then they're called a gang and they're treated like a gang. I also know of teenagers who have been pulled over by the police and harassed and threatened and beaten by police and who were told they were dealers of drugs when they're not. Now, how's that going to teach a young person respect for the law? I don't think it does, and I know this to be a fact because I've seen it happen.

To the extent that the police operate on the basis of these kinds of assumptions, on the basis of these

Many William Whyte Residents Fear and Distrust the Police

I know a few cops that I don't even get close to, I stay arm's distance away. I hear stories ...I don't know what's wrong with them. They don't like coming down here and when they do it they just give the people a hard time. They wanna arrest somebody, they don't come down here for nothing. It doesn't matter what you did, they wanna arrest somebody.

There's a lot of mistrust [of police] in the community, that's for sure.

Residents don't trust the police.

They've got power issues...I think the police have a very negative role in my community. A lot of the community, they don't respect the police, they don't call the police, you know. The community kind of takes it upon themselves to deal with stuff as opposed to calling the police.

kinds of stereotypes, the result, almost inevitably, is conflict. And because the police have the power, many people in William Whyte distrust and even fear them (see sidebar *Many William Whyte Residents Fear and Distrust the Police*).

Referring to young people in the neighbourhood, a woman in her 50s who has lived there most of her life said: “a lot of them are scared of the police because the only time they see the police is either they’re picking up their big brother or their father or something, so they see them as negative.” This woman added: “people shouldn’t be afraid to talk to you [the police], but they’re afraid to talk to you because I might look like someone that you’re looking for and you’re going to beat me up before you find out I’m not that person.” She was quick to say that “it’s not all policemen,” and it is important to acknowledge that. Yet there are enough stories about the rough treatment by the police of people in the neighbourhood, and particularly of young Aboriginal men, that the result is fear and distrust of the police in general. And it goes both ways. One young Aboriginal woman described it this way: “I think there’s a lot of prejudice that goes both ways. The police to the people and from the people to the police, and they don’t trust each other, they don’t get along, they knock heads.” Young people feel this tension:

The kids around here, when they see cops or cop cars, they’ll duck and hide, you know, because that’s the mentality that is around here. And it’s sad, because like kids should see police officers as, you know, not as strangers but as a person they can run to if they need any help, you know, never mind running and hiding and seeing them as a bad person.

Some residents believe that because they live in the North End, police treat them differently than they would be if they lived in a “rich area” of the city. The young Aboriginal woman who said “they knock heads” in the North End expressed the view

that things are different in more well-to-do areas of the city: “like, in the rich area, like, they get a lot of attention and a lot of the people there feel a lot better that there’s a presence. And not only that, but the kids see them and it’s kind of like a friendly atmosphere, you know.” But in the North End, she added, the police “can’t get out of their vehicles to walk on the street, [and they] point fingers and look down at us.”

Perceptions of Community Policing in William Whyte

While residents of William Whyte are keenly aware of the problems in their neighbourhood, and have become all too accustomed to dealing with the presence of violence, drug dealing, and the sex trade on a daily basis, they also have a strong sense that things can get better. Much like what we learned from the residents in Spence, many of those we interviewed in William Whyte see community empowerment as the ultimate solution (see sidebar *Community Empowerment is the Ultimate Solution to Problems in William Whyte*).

There is a distinct sense, then, that the community itself needs to take the lead in resolving issues of safety and security. As one Aboriginal male told us, “I don’t think it should be up to the police service to do anything. I think it should be up to the people themselves to come together and say, ‘well, we know we can stop this.’ ... It shouldn’t be up to them [the police]. It should be up to the people.” But that is not to say that residents in William Whyte see no role for the police service—quite the contrary. People do want a police presence, but they want the police to be more a part of the community. One community worker and long-time resident of William Whyte described the kind of policing that she says is needed:

A big part of the solution is to have community police officers, but not just ... you know, they talk about community police when they had those storefront little offices. That was not community policing. That’s not the kind

Community Empowerment is the Ultimate Solution to Problems in William Whyte

I think honestly one of the keys to moving forward is to empower the people.

I think this community is a very vibrant community. I think a lot of good things are happening in this community, you know, and I think that one of the biggest keys to trying to change things is to really focus on this community as a community that has a lot of strength.

I think really people do care about their community. They're just not given the opportunity to really take an active part in making it safe... We tend to look, I guess, that the outside can come in and clean this up. But it's really the inside out. We have to clean ourselves up. We have to do that ourselves.

We need to have the community more involved because a lot of things are seen by people, criminal activity that can be reported, but sometimes a lot of people don't care or they just don't want to have the effort to do it.

The community needs to work together in order to improve things within the community. You know what I mean?

I think just the community getting together and getting closer, because the more eyes you have, you know, power in numbers. When people work together to do things, anything's possible.

I want. I want them actually walking the beat, on the streets, really being visible out there and really stopping in for coffee, you know, just stopping in to say hi to kids, just talking to kids ... just being part of the community, really, committing themselves to the community and being part of that community to make it safe.

Another resident agreed, saying that, "there definitely needs to be more of a police presence, and more of a positive police presence rather than only showing up to the calls.... They need to do more proactive work."

As one community worker noted, one of the benefits of a more positive police presence would be that people would feel safer: "when people feel safe they engage in their community, they come out and have coffee on their step, they let their kids play on their front yard. You get a lot more people watching, you get a natural surveillance that just does not exist prior to that." Another community worker mentioned that this kind of policing was actually being practiced in the North End several years ago. Two Aboriginal police officers worked out of an office in Lord Selkirk and spent time walking the neighbourhood and getting to know the residents: "they got to know you and build a rapport with you and you learned to be able to approach them and have a cup of coffee with them. It was absolutely wonderful to be able to do that with police officers, and that was all taken away, so now there's absolutely no relationship at all with the police force, not with us here."

In these terms, while there are problems in William Whyte there are strengths as well—and enormous potential. The police can play a role in nurturing that potential, in building on those strengths. As one young Aboriginal woman told us:

It's how they deal with the community, you know, because they just don't seem like

they're a part of it. They just, you know, they're not working together with the community. They're working against the community. And I think that if they would just be more open to community input and being more compassionate towards these inner-city communities, because there are good residents that perhaps they could change, you know, that people wouldn't fear them as much. And maybe they can ... do something positive in the community.

By working in partnership with the community, building relationships, and creating trust, the police can play an important role in creating the conditions in which residents of William Whyte can find a new way forward—so that violence is no longer a normalized aspect of life in their neighbourhood.

VIII. VIEWPOINTS FROM THE WINNIPEG POLICE SERVICE

The prevalence of crime and violence in inner-city communities in Winnipeg has created a difficult and challenging job for the Winnipeg Police Service. Inner-city communities are areas where the impact of neo-liberal restructuring—particularly in terms of the disappearance of well-paid jobs and of the social safety net—has been most acutely felt, making concerns about safety and security even more pronounced. With neo-conservative calls for more “law and order” and the need to “get tough” on crime growing louder, police forces across the country have come under increasing pressure to live up to the promise of this political ethos, an ethos premised on “fighting crime” as the key to resolving social problems and making communities more safe and secure.

How has the Winnipeg Police Service responded to this challenge? How do police officers understand the issues of drug- and gang-related violence in the inner city? What strategies have been adopted to respond to these issues? Where does community policing figure in these strategies? What barriers do police encounter in their endeavour to meet the increasing demands being placed upon the Service? And how do officers respond to the negative assessments voiced by inner-city residents, especially in regard to charges of racism and mistreatment by police? These were the kinds of questions we posed to four general

patrol officers, one community constable, Deputy Chief of Police Menno Zacharias, and Chief of Police Jack Ewatski.

We were impressed by the police officers we interviewed. Most told us explicitly that they entered policing in order to do something worthwhile, to “do good.” They take pride in the job that they do, and they do care. As one officer remarked, “I feel bad when people in the inner city say that they’re ignored by police or the police don’t care. We do—or we wouldn’t be working in the area. We are frustrated sometimes, just like they are.” The frustrations that many police officers experience, we found, have a systemic basis to them, one that is rooted partly in the increased pressures on the police service to resolve all manner of societal problems. As one of the few social services that operates 24/7, the police find themselves inundated with calls for assistance—and especially from the residents of inner-city communities, whose access to other resources has become more and more limited. But the frustrations also emanate, we believe, from the particular logic of the policing strategy used in the inner city. We examine this strategy here, after first describing what officers told us about their perceptions of the problems of drugs, gangs, and violence in the inner city.

The Problem of Drugs, Gangs, and Violence

The police acknowledge that drugs, gangs, and related violence are a large and growing problem in Winnipeg, and especially in Winnipeg's inner city, and in so doing confirm what we were told by so many inner-city residents, businesspeople, and community workers. Chief Ewatski told us, "if I could pull a magic switch and say there's no more illegal drugs in the city, well, we'd probably reduce crime in the city by 80 percent. And I don't think that's an overly bold statement. But that's not going to happen. We're not going to be able to flip a switch."

In Chief Ewatski's view, the large presence of illegal drugs leads to crime, because those who become addicted to such drugs—including women who work in the sex trade—commit crimes to raise the money to feed their habit. And the large presence of illegal drugs induces the creation of gangs, whose members organize to control the flow of drugs and the large profits to be made from their sale. One officer said: "where there's drugs there's gangs. Gangs will control the drug trade." Chief Ewatski concurs: "really, we've seen the growth of organized crime groups, whether they be street gangs or outlaw motorcycle gangs or ethnic-based gangs, we've seen the growth of them and the common link between all of them, the common commodity, are drugs." The connection between gangs and illegal drugs, Chief Ewatski adds, "leads to violence for the protection of drug turf, for the competition between people selling drugs, as well as some of the crimes that take place with people who have used illegal drugs and do not have control of their senses." The result is the drug- and gang-related violence that was described to us in last year's 2005 *State of the Inner City Report*, and that has been confirmed in our interviews this year with residents in Spence, Centennial, and William Whyte neighbourhoods. The officers we interviewed offered a similar

analysis (see sidebar *Police Views on Drugs, Gangs, and Violence*).

Clearly, the relatively high incidence of crime and violence in the inner city is a problem that

Police Views on Drugs, Gangs, and Violence

In the six and a half years that I've been down here [Division 11], I'd say there's definitely been an increase in both of them [drugs and gangs]. Yeah, definitely, there has.

It's the hard drugs that are, you know, they just kind of exploded. It's become so common. There's so much crack down here [Division 11]...It's really kind of wreaking havoc.

The gangs are absolutely terrorizing and destroying the city. Absolutely. We have to have more support.

Drugs, they're the cause of most of what we deal with.

[There are] spin-offs, of course, because the addict then starts to affect the rest of the family, dropping out of school, stealing stuff from the home, you know, maybe assaulting or extorting family members. And then the family unit may fall apart. And when that family unit falls apart nobody's got any support. So that addict may just delve right into a life of crime because now they're shunned by the family. So their only friends are other addicts or criminals. And I think it's just a vicious circle.

is difficult to solve. And the prevalence of illegal drugs, and thus gangs, makes it more so. As Deputy Chief Zacharias put it: “the question is how do you keep it out? And as long as there’s huge profits to be turned, tax-free, and people that don’t have qualms about how they make their money, it’s very difficult.”

Nonetheless, as one officer told us: “we know who 85 percent of these people are—we know who they are, we know where they are, we know what they do—we just don’t have time to do anything about it.” To understand why this is the case, we turn to a consideration of the Winnipeg Police Service inner-city policing strategy.

The Winnipeg Police Service Inner-City Policing Strategy

Winnipeg’s inner-city policing strategy is what some of the officers call a “blended” approach. Chief Ewatski told us that this blended approach includes the following elements: the inner city—what the police call Divisions 11 and 13—has the highest ratio of police officers to population in Winnipeg; the front-line of the strategy is comprised of the general patrol officers who work in two-person cruiser cars and respond to 911 calls; there are community police officers in some parts of the inner city; there are School Resource Officers in certain North End schools; there are various special units (for example, the gang unit, the arson unit); and there is, most recently, Operation Clean Sweep, which started in the West End in November 2005 and has now been made permanent in the form of the “street crimes unit” which will cover the whole city.

While police departments in many other jurisdictions have been re-structured in the face of budgetary restraints, as described earlier, the WPS actually has benefited from budget increases in recent years. In 2005, for instance, Winnipeg City Council authorized expenditures of \$146.7 million for the WPS, an increase of \$6.1 million over the previous year’s budget. As well, the provincial

government, in two separate announcements that year, authorized just under \$4 million for the hiring of an additional 46 new police officers (Winnipeg Police Service 2005). Deputy Chief Zacharias confirmed that in addition to the 46 positions added in 2005, 47 more positions were created in 2006.

Despite these additional revenues, all of the officers we interviewed believe that the resources available to the WPS are limited. For one thing, much of the new funding (at least half of the almost \$4 million in 2005) has gone to backfill many of the temporary assignments in the various specialized units within the police service (such as the arson unit, missing persons unit, cold case unit). For another, several of the officers commented that the WPS does not have the support staff to facilitate the work of more front-line officers. As Deputy Chief Zacharias noted, while there have been significant increases for salary and benefits on the police side, “one of the areas where we are significantly lagging is the support staff to go with it.” He explained: “the people on the street are only as effective as the backups that they get, and when you don’t get the backups, that means that you have to take people off the street to do that work that those people could do, and that’s basically the stage we’re at. Part of our effectiveness is being eroded by our inability to grow the civilian side of the service.”

Thus the solution to inner-city policing problems is not simply an increase in the number of general patrol officers. The problems run deeper, as can be seen when we examine the core elements of the inner-city policing strategy.

General Patrol Officers: Reactive, Incident-Driven Policing

The heart of the strategy, and the front-line of the service, is the general patrol officers who respond in cruiser cars to 911 calls. Almost all of their time is spent responding to calls for service, and there is always a backlog of calls. Running endlessly from one call to another takes up the

lion's share of police work in the inner city. As one officer told us, the front line "is the group that is stretched the most thin, that's the most over-worked" (see sidebar *The Character of the Work of General Patrol Officers in Winnipeg's Inner City*).

Deputy Chief Zacharias told us that "our calls for service queue at any given time is anywhere

from 60 to 120 calls waiting." One officer told us that as recently as five years ago:

We could come in on a busy night and we could see there would be so many calls in the queue, it was like calls waiting for us to do. And we could say to ourselves, and take pride in the fact, that we're going to go in and we're going to clean it up. We're going to clean up the queue.... [But] it's gotten in the last five years that you will never take a day where you can say, "wow, we've taken care of all the calls waiting."

This officer also told us that, "it just seems now that it's a never-ending cycle." Another added: "as general patrol members, there's nothing you can do about it. If you hammer and you take as many calls as you possibly can, well then, it's just more calls will come up." There is a deep sense of futility attached to this strategy. "We don't have a chance to get to know an area and a community as well as we can. It's simply a numbers game, we have to respond to those 911 calls."

The Character of the Work of General Patrol Officers in Winnipeg's Inner City

Our main function is answering calls for service, and in this area it's 99.99 percent what you're doing because of the volume of calls that are there. So in a sense you'd be running from call to call to call, to complaint or incident. Once that's dealt with, on to the next one, kind of thing.

General patrol, 98 percent of the time, all you do is respond to calls.

Now the volume of calls is beyond belief. I mean, there's, in the summertime in Division 11 for example there's times when there's forty, fifty calls waiting for service. And unfortunately we're not able to get there because of these calls that have increased, I don't know how many times. It's still the same amount of police officers responding.

The call volume in Division 11 is particularly, like, out of control, and we go to calls that are hours and hours old.

The volume of calls is getting out of control.

Community Policing

According to the officers we interviewed, there is community policing in Winnipeg's inner city. Officers are assigned to a neighbourhood, they get to know the people and the organizations there, they develop relationships and trust, they come to know in an intimate way who is doing what and where, and they can be much more proactive. Nevertheless, the number of officers working in this area is small.

Deputy Chief Zacharias noted that, "we've been working at various versions of community policing for many, many years." The WPS first got into community policing in 1977, as Operation Affirmative Action, but abandoned it on the grounds that it was unaffordable, even though community response was generally positive (Epstein 1978). In 1990 a pilot community-policing project was run in two districts and, subsequent to that, com-

munity service centres were introduced. Community policing has worked well in Winnipeg to the extent that it has been tried. Deputy Chief Zacharias, who helped implement community policing in District 6 in 1990, told us:

I think we had a good model going there, and if we had enough people to do it city-wide people would have really liked it. The level of service was really quite incredible. I mean, we had a lot of people, like at one point in time citywide we had 25 people walking designated beats.... What we did is the beat areas were actually identified based on high crime areas through the computer system and people loved it, people thought it was great. We liked it too, but like I said, we've had to filter some of those people back.

This seems to be the story of community policing in Winnipeg. When it is tried, it works well and people like it. But the relentless demand for front-line general patrol officers, and sometimes the call for the creation of ever-new special units—the arson unit, the drugs unit, or Operation Clean Sweep, for example—drains the strength of community policing, leaving it under-resourced. One officer told us that while there are community police officers in his division, “the number of people in community policing seems to have decreased from when it first began.” Under-staffing of community policing means the job is not done the way it ought to be, and this is likely what leads inner-city residents to say that they never see their community policing officer. A general patrol officer told us that:

I believe that their resources have also been cut back since they've come into being. So what you have now is a community officer who may spend 50 percent of their time in one school deflecting problems or dealing

with a handful of kids and not out in the neighbourhood walking around.

Another officer provided us with detailed information about cuts to the community policing complement in a particular inner-city neighbourhood, the result of which has been that the all-important police presence that community policing is intended to create is simply no longer possible. A small component of an overall inner-city policing strategy driven by the relentless need to respond to 911 calls, community policing is “the first area manpower is taken away from” when other needs arise.

The School Resource Officer Program

In Winnipeg's North End there is a School Resource Officer (SRO) program that places police officers in particular schools. Each officer in the SRO program is responsible for a high school—one for each of St. John's, R.B. Russell, and Children of the Earth—plus five of the feeder schools for each. This program is a form of community policing. The uniformed officers make sure that they are a regular presence in the schools. Their job is to get to know the students and staff, and to develop positive relationships and a sense of trust. It is a preventative strategy, and it has a long-term focus. Large numbers of inner-city children fear and dislike, perhaps even hate the police. Echoing comments we heard from community residents, one officer remarked:

And why is that? Well, it's got to be either they're taught to fear us, or their encounters with us are unpleasant. Not that we are unpleasant with children, but we're coming into their home and arresting a relative or seen on the street trying to deal with the subject and it's not pretty. And it's probably the biggest benefit of having a police officer in the school.

This officer sees the SRO program as a means to “break the cycle of all these problems.”

Chief Ewatski is a strong supporter of the SRO program, although he acknowledges that he was not at the outset:

When it was first proposed, quite frankly, I wasn't a supporter of it. I did not feel that there was a need, first of all, to have that kind of presence in the school.... [But] we ran the pilot project for three years and I turned around 180 degrees. I'm a strong supporter of that type of approach in the school system itself.

Deputy Chief Zacharias offers the same positive interpretation of the SRO program. He noted that the schools themselves, and people in the North End,

.... felt that if they had an officer within the school, number one there would be a better relationship developed with the students, which I think is a no-brainer. And when minor issues came up that sort of required police mediation between students or between students and staff, they were on site, everyone knew them, everyone worked better, and all of those things happened. And the response times were obviously better. They've got someone [the three School Resource Officers] servicing six schools. So, you know, they're all on a first name basis. You know, 'can you drop by?' They say, 'sure I can drop by.' So that all worked well and we knew it would work well.

It is notable that this program arose as a demand made by North End residents and community-based organizations, and it is in place because the WPS was able to partner for funding with the Province of Manitoba and the Winnipeg School Division and others. In this regard, given the apparent success of the SRO program, there is increasing community pressure to implement the program in other schools. According to Chief

Ewatski, however, there are not resources for doing so: "what I had thrown back at me was, 'well if you're such a strong supporter, why don't you put police officers in all the schools that need them?' Well, I wish that was possible. I have to deal with the reality of having limited resources and, you know, finite resources, and being able to put them in areas where there's the greatest need."

Operation Clean Sweep (Now the Street Crimes Unit)

According to Chief Ewatski, one of the objectives of the Operation Clean Sweep project (the name of which, he told us, did not originate from the police service) was for police to be highly visible in the community. "It wasn't just about going out there and just arresting everybody we saw and stopping everybody we saw." To this extent, Clean Sweep had elements of a community-policing model built into it. While the Chief acknowledges that one of the outcomes of Clean Sweep was that some of the "bad guys" were displaced to other neighbourhoods (a concern expressed by a significant number of community residents we interviewed), he maintains that this aggressive approach had the benefit of shutting down crack houses and "cracking down" on people who were in violation of their recognizance and bail conditions.

With the provincial government dedicating funds—through the collection of fines under the Highway Traffic Act—to a new street crimes unit comprised of 47 officers, Operation Clean Sweep has now been made a permanent feature of the policing strategy of the WPS. According to Deputy Chief Zacharias, this new street crimes unit will not be tied to calls for service, but will focus instead on "generating intelligence." It will involve a form of "evidence-based policing," whereby officers are to be encouraged to "let the evidence lead you to where you should go." And much of the information will be provided by the implementation of a version of the COMPSTAT computer system.

The central feature of this policing strategy is that it is not tied to the 911 call system, and so can be proactive in going after crime-related problems. Largely because of its proactive nature, the officers we spoke to were excited and optimistic about this new unit (see sidebar *Officers' Views on the New Street Crimes Unit*).

While the street crimes unit may have the benefit of avoiding the continual cycle of going from “call to call to call” that figures so prominently in the work now being undertaken by the front line officers in the service, there are foreseeable

Officers' Views on the New Street Crimes Unit

It's great and something that's long needed.

We'll be able to do a lot of the proactive things and probably will be able to put a bigger dent in the gangs and the drugs.

The idea of Clean Sweep I think is great. Because any time you can bring together a group of officers who like what they're doing, who are dedicated to what they're doing, and aren't bound by our dispatch system...when you're not bound by that, constantly having to go out, you can do that, you can develop your strategies.

I mean, we know who the gang members are, we know who the drug dealers are, we know where they operate. We just can't go after them because we're too busy taking 911 calls...But now that Clean Sweep is going to be around we'll be able to do a lot of the proactive things and probably will be able to put a bigger dent in the gangs and drugs.

limitations to this new strategy. When it was piloted in the West End, the program included not only a considerable police presence on the streets, but also a local citizen's advisory body. At least one community worker told us that Clean Sweep officers were beginning to work closely with community-based organizations to build positive relationships in the community. Because this permanent street crimes unit will operate on a citywide basis, it will not have a neighbourhood-based citizen's advisory body, and therefore will not be able to work with community-based organizations in developing positive relationships. As Deputy Chief Zacharias told us: “it would be more difficult this time because this isn't going to be a group that's concentrated in just one area.”

With the reduction in community policing elements that were a part of Clean Sweep, the new street crimes unit is likely to become even more of a “zero-tolerance” form of policing. More drug dealers and gang members are likely to be arrested and removed from inner-city neighbourhoods, but they will soon be back, either because—as in the view of many officers—the justice system is too lenient with them, or because they have been incarcerated but are released upon serving their time. In either case, they will come back into the community and—meaningful alternatives being absent—are likely to resume the same kinds of activities. As one officer remarked: “we can go out and do our job and be it the next night or in a week or six months, eventually those people are out, and the problem as to why has never been dealt with.” Thus the street crimes unit may well become part of the “never-ending cycle” that has been created with the reactive, incident-driven policing that is at the heart of the inner-city policing strategy.

Perceived Barriers to Effective Policing

With the present focus on reactive, incident-driven policing, general patrol officers are most likely to interact with inner-city residents in situations that are tense and conflict-laden. As

one officer described it: “we deal with people at their maddest, their baddest, and their saddest.” Officers we spoke with are certainly alive to the challenges created by this aspect of their job. And they are also mindful of some of the barriers that are presently limiting their ability to be effective in carrying out their work.

Increasing demands on the police service

One obvious pressure on police is the demands being placed on the service. As one officer put it, “everyone phones the police for everything now.” Another officer commented on what was interpreted as the misuse of the 911 call system:

Unfortunately a big percentage of those calls are people who don't understand how to properly use 911, so it's a lot of wasted time. And I think we need to almost educate people on why we're there and why you phone 911. Phone 911 if it's an emergency.... You'd be absolutely astonished at what we go to that comes in as a high priority call.

There are two aspects to this issue that connect to our previous discussion of the current socio-political context in which policing is now located. One relates to the impact of neo-liberalism. With the disappearance of the social safety net that has accompanied the state's retreat from social welfare, there are increasingly limited resources made available to citizens—especially those in inner-city communities—to manage their troubles. The one agency that is available to the citizenry, and on a regular basis, is the police service, which may help to explain why “everyone phones the police for everything now.” Another relates to the impact of neo-conservatism. As a political ethos that puts the focus on criminalization as a solution to societal ills, more and more demands will be placed on police services to solve problems relating to safety and security issues. Under such conditions and expectations, police will increasingly find themselves going “from call to call to call.”

The police officers we interviewed are keenly aware of the pressures on the police service to live up to these ever-increasing expectations. As one officer told us, “I don't think there's another public service agency within the city who has to follow the recommendations and guidelines from outside agencies ... as much as the police.” This officer was referring to the changes implemented in the 911 call dispatch system after the murders of two Aboriginal women who had repeatedly called the system for assistance in dealing with an abusive partner. In this officer's view:

Any time there's a public inquiry and inquest people can come up with all types of new strategies ... without realizing the trickle down effect and the impact of that. That's fine, but you're creating a lot more work and that lot more work that you create, like for the front line officer, it's not necessarily anything that's going to add to public safety or is going to avert that tragedy given the same type of circumstances next time. I mean, quite often tragic events happen because tragic events are going to happen.

In these terms, changes implemented in the dispatch system have not necessarily led to more efficient police practices.

Changes to the computer dispatch and reporting system

According to several of the officers we interviewed, dispatchers no longer have the discretion to screen out calls that are non-emergency, and it now takes much longer for officers to enter information into the reporting system (see sidebar *Problems with the Computer Dispatch System*).

In addition to the nature of the reporting system, officers expressed frustration with the demands being placed on the service to handle the huge volume of domestic violence calls, which according to Deputy Chief Zacharias, are “still around 15, 16,000 a year.” As one officer stated:

We deal with the same people over and over, and as much as we can do to protect them with what the courts have decided the actions we should take, we can't protect people from themselves.... So that's where it becomes frustrating for us, because is that a police problem or is that a societal problem?

Such comments suggest that unless root causes are addressed, the police will continue to be overwhelmed, running from “call to call to call” or, as one officer put it, “chasing our tails.”

The impact of increasing specialization

Several officers commented on the problems created by the increased specialization of the police service. On the one hand, increased specialization has often led to a lack of information sharing

Problems with the Computer Dispatch System

There's no call that you can take anymore that doesn't require about an hour...It's no longer a fast system.

It's probably the greatest area of concern and frustration for front line officers these days, is our new dispatch system. On both parts—for officers and our people that work in the dispatch system.

I can remember a major domestic arrest would take you a couple of hours to write up. Now we have this wonderful new expensive system, but it takes pretty much double the time to do everything now.

Our reporting system is unbelievably inefficient. It just bogs everything down.

between the units (such as between the gang unit, the drug unit, and the homicide unit). On the other hand, every time a new unit is created (such as the arson unit), it eventually becomes a permanent unit that must be staffed. As one officer commented: “every strategy that comes up once again takes away from our front line.” Another remarked: “every time we create a new unit or something to target something, we don't hire any extra personnel to make that unit. All we do is take people from other spots to fill them, so you end up with holes in other spots... Even the number of people in community policing seems to have decreased from when it first began.” This issue was also raised in relation to the new street crimes unit: “it'll be interesting to see what happens because they're now taking general patrol members into those Clean Sweep spots, leaving more vacancies in general patrol. So it's going to have—some areas are going to be better, some areas are going to be worse.”

These comments suggest that much like the use of new technologies for dispatching and reporting incidents, the increasing specialization of the police bureaucracy does not necessarily translate into increased efficiency of the service, and may well exacerbate the pressures on the overworked front-line officers.

The police culture

Another barrier to effective policing—especially in terms of realizing a community-policing model—is the presence of a police culture that reinforces the notion that police work is all about “catching the bad guys and locking them up,” and not about building closer relationships with community residents.

As Deputy Chief Zacharias noted, “there are going to be people in the organization that say, ‘well, those are the grin and wave guys, they kiss the babies, pour the tea, while the rest of us do the real police work.’” Chief Ewatski concurred: “there are still some that truly believe that their job is strictly and solely a law enforcement officer,

‘that’s why I became a police officer, that’s what I want to do.’” But the Chief believes those officers are in a minority: “I think most people within policing today, and in particular in my organization, have a much broader viewpoint.”

Racial profiling?

One other significant barrier to effective policing is the apparent disconnect between inner-city community residents and the police over the issue of police mistreatment, specifically in the form of racial profiling. Many of the residents we interviewed reported that Aboriginal peoples and new immigrants and refugees are treated badly by the police, and this was especially a concern with respect to what was seen by people in the inner city as the police mistreatment of their young people. When we posed this issue to members of the Winnipeg Police Service, we got a different interpretation.

Both Chief Ewatski and Deputy Chief Zacharias were ready to admit that there were likely some incidents where police mistreatment occurred. Chief Ewatski noted:

I’m not going to deny the fact that there have been times that police have treated people in a manner that is not acceptable. And when those incidents occur we deal with them, and if we could prove that that is actually the case, that that has happened, then those officers are sanctioned. There’s consequences to their actions too.

Deputy Chief Zacharias responded in a similar fashion:

I think that it’s possible there are isolated incidents where that happens ... I’m saying we have some people out there that probably go further than they should sometimes when they’re making an arrest, not necessarily only with Aboriginal people, with a lot of people, and I mean, if people are willing to come forward and give us a statement and

explain what happened, I mean, we’re very anxious to investigate these kinds of cases. We don’t need those people here.

Nonetheless, all of the officers we interviewed were of the view that racial profiling was not a feature of policing in Winnipeg. Officers see this issue as “definitely the most frustrating part” of their job. In their view, the police do not profile or target on the basis of race. In part, this is because so much of their work is reactive (see sidebar *Police Officers Do Not Have Time to Engage in Racial Profiling*).

Officers suggest that what appears to be racial profiling is merely a function of the large proportion of Aboriginal peoples who are concentrated in Winnipeg’s inner-city communities:

I think it’s due to population demographics. I mean, we have a large Aboriginal population in downtown Division 11, so we end up dealing with a lot more Aboriginal people than you may in a lot of other areas of the city, just simply because there happens to be more Aboriginal people living in the area.

Well, in the core area, what’s the majority of the population? It’s Aboriginal people. So to say that we target Aboriginal youth in the core area, um, I worked in a suburb for two years. Nobody ever mentioned there that I targeted young Caucasian males. I targeted young males, I targeted whichever young males happened to be around. Do we target young Aboriginal males? No. We tend to target young males, in an area of the city, tend to be I guess, what, 15 to 30? If we’re just to look at stats are the ones most likely to be in contact with police. In the core area, the majority of the population of males 15 to 30 would probably be Aboriginal, so they unfortunately fall into the target category of people who are likely to come in contact with police in that area.

In these terms, “it’s not a profiling thing; it’s just who fits in our category.”

Chief Ewatski maintains that members of the WPS engage in “bias-free policing,” but at the same time the police also have to respond to their senses. He illustrated this notion with an example:

I’ve used this sort of example when I actually met with a bunch of young Aboriginal men

Police Officers Do Not Have Time to Engage in Racial Profiling

I don’t think it’s a fair statement to make to say that we target Aboriginal youth and we go after them and those are the people we go after most. Because if you actually worked within our department you’d see that it’s actually a ridiculous statement because the call volume is so astronomical. We don’t have time to target anybody—anybody.

We’re reactive. We’re always one step behind. We’re not targeting, we’re being told who to target...We are reacting to someone’s description of what happened and this is who we’re looking for.

If I’m going to a break and enter in progress, involving a suspect described as Aboriginal, I’m going to stop Aboriginal suspects who look like that suspect in question. That’s what I’m paid to do. And as far as targeting goes, certainly in our division we don’t have a lot of time to just cruise around and pick on people. I mean, we’re just going from call to call, basically.

that wanted to know why they were being sort of spot checked by police or why, when the police would come by, they would sort of look at them sideways and stuff like that. I said, ‘put yourself in a police officer’s shoes, okay. We have a significant street gang presence in this city, and we’ve had from time to time some significant issues with street gang members, who have demonstrated they’re capable of violence against police officers. Our officers have to be very alert to those facts. Well, what are some of the things that they look for? Well, they look for some of the obvious things with street gang members—that street gang members want to be seen as street gang members, they want to be recognized by, whether it be their style of dress, you know, all that stuff like that, that our officers have to be in tune to that. Put that against the backdrop of our culture, you look at our general culture now and you have people who are not gangsters or street gang members, who want to also look like street gang members and act like street gang members, like, the way they dress, the way they act, the way they do things. But they’re nowhere involved in that type of activity. As a police officer, how do I know that you are a street gang member who could be prone to violence, including violence against police, or somebody who just likes dressing like that? ... How do they know the difference? So, of course, when they drive by you and when you dress like a gangster or you act like a gangster, what’s the first thing that’s going to cross their mind?’

Another officer relayed a similar example. When a group of young new immigrant men complained to their school principal that the police kept stopping them on the street, the principal explained that it was likely because of the way the young men were dressed: “they were wearing, you know, like, the basketball- and the sweats-type of

clothing. Now what they were buying was what they saw advertised for young guys their age. You know, like, this is the way everyone dresses.” The principal told the young men that police were stopping them because this was also the way a lot of gang members dressed. The young men returned to the principal’s office the following week, “wearing khaki pants and button up shirts,” and asked “they’re not going to bother us now are they?” In the officer’s view, this was an example of young men being proactive, and making sure that they were not identifying themselves as a problem group. It is also apparent, however, that for young Black men to avoid being targeted by police, they need to dress in a fashion that is more in tune with conservative, middle-class attire.

While police officers must obviously be concerned with their own safety, Chief Ewatski also concedes that this “doesn’t mean that police officers should have carte blanche.... The only way they should treat people is to ensure that their safety first is foremost in their mind. Officer safety has to be paramount, but that doesn’t mean being disrespectful, being over bearing, being authoritarian to the people that are in that type of environment.”

The Chief also expressed concern that charges of racial profiling and racist treatment of Aboriginal peoples by the police have become part of “urban lore”—that allegations of police racism become stories that circulate and grow within the Aboriginal inner-city community. “It’s the perception that still I think we need to work on. Why are people still saying that, even if it isn’t happening? Why are they still saying it? If it is happening, then we have to do something about it. I tend to believe that those type of incidences where our police officers treat people in a biased manner, acting on their own biases, are few and far between. But it’s that perception that’s still there, and how do you deal with that perception?”

Moving Forward

Our interviews with members of the Winnipeg Police Service indicate that on the front lines of the inner-city policing strategy are the general patrol officers engaged in responding, seemingly endlessly, to 911 calls, the backlog of which grows and grows. It is a reactive system. There is never time to be proactive, to solve problems. As inner-city conditions worsen, the problems intensify, and the call queue expands. However hard and well they may work, the front-line officers can never catch up. Their efforts are like a finger in the dike, holding back a rising sea of problems. A primary consequence of this reactive, incident-driven policing is that in almost every case that general patrol officers interact with inner-city residents, they do so in tense, conflict-laden situations to which they have been called by the 911 dispatcher. Naturally, in this situation, inner-city residents’ views of the police will inevitably continue to worsen, best intentions of the police service notwithstanding.

Officers we spoke with suggested that one means of addressing the apparent divide between inner-city residents and the WPS would be to increase the number of Aboriginal officers in the police service. “You can imagine now these kids, you know, looking up to a police officer who’s Aboriginal and getting an example from that of police officers. That would be a pretty positive experience.” While adding more Aboriginal officers to the service would no doubt make a difference, it would not address the fundamental issue of the “never-ending cycle” of reactive policing that is now at the heart of the WPS inner-city policing strategy. Resolving this issue, it would appear, requires a more dramatic shift in strategy, one capable of breaking the cycle of reactive, incident-driven policing—of going “from call to call”—and strengthening the ties between the police and the communities they serve.

The officers we spoke with are aware that a more proactive form of policing would be ad-

vantageous. We heard this story from a general patrol officer:

You see a lot of the little kids, I'm talking little kids, and, you know, they enjoy seeing us, they enjoy talking with us. You know, you pull into a back lane and they're hanging off trees and an abandoned car and that's just what, there's nothing else to do, and they see us and don't know if they're going to be in trouble because all they hear is their parents saying, you know, "we hate the police" and stuff like that. And we line up and have them races and we're on the radio and just play with them for ten minutes. And you can just tell it makes a world of difference.

Several officers also saw the potential benefits of moving the service more toward a community policing direction. One commented that having community policing, where officers develop a relationship with the community "is a fantastic idea." Another remarked:

[Community policing] is essentially trying to bring us back to what policing used to be ... where you had the option where you could meet people and get to know what the heck was going on in the area, so that when something happened you could say, 'okay, this is probably where this is going to come from' ... as opposed to strictly what it's become is just reactionary, we're going here, we're going there, and there's no chance to get to know what's going on and get to know the people.

Realizing this shift would involve placing more emphasis than is now the case on long-term, preventative policing. Unless prevention is built more firmly into the inner-city policing strategy, police officers will remain on the treadmill on which they now find themselves. Chief Ewatski confirmed for us that proactive and preventative action is key:

I think it's clear, we have to understand that we have to use all of our public money that funds the police service much more wisely in terms of not just acting in a reactive manner but in a proactive manner and looking at some of the funding that we get as an investment into the future of public safety. That's why we put a high emphasis on crime prevention, and working with our partners within the community to try to prevent crimes because we realize that it's less expensive to try to prevent crimes than it is to try to respond to crimes. So there has to be a balance between having to deal with the reality of what is occurring in terms of public safety today, as well as looking forward to say, well, how do we prevent us from being in these types of situations too where we're at times overwhelmed by certain types of crimes.

The Chief adds that while the police service has the authority and responsibility for peacekeeping, "we can't do it by ourselves. We need the public to assist us and that starts with significant and sincere engagement with the community, and taking it right down to the neighbourhood level."

One of the ways in which this engagement with the community can occur is to fashion a different kind of "blended approach" to policing, one that replaces the current core of the inner-city policing strategy, which is reactive, incident-driven policing, with a form of community policing known as "community mobilization." In the concluding section, we elaborate on the potential for a community mobilization approach—a strategy in which the police work in close partnership with community-based organizations engaged in a wide variety of neighbourhood revitalization initiatives—for addressing issues of safety and security in Winnipeg's inner-city neighbourhoods.

IX. BRIDGING THE COMMUNITY-POLICE DIVIDE

We undertook this study because the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternative's *2005 State of the Inner City Report*, based on interviews conducted that year in three Winnipeg inner-city neighbourhoods, found that drugs, gangs, and violence were repeatedly identified by inner-city residents as a cause for concern—and even fear. That response arose without any prompting by interviewers. This current, follow-up study has confirmed the initial finding: we were told by inner-city residents in Centennial, Spence, and William Whyte neighbourhoods, by inner-city community workers, by police officers who work in the inner city, and by the Chief and a Deputy Chief of the Winnipeg Police Service, that drugs, gangs, and violence are a major problem and are cause for grave concern in Winnipeg's inner city. Of this, there can be little doubt; there is virtually no disagreement.

Beyond this finding, however, there is much disagreement. In particular, there are seriously differing perceptions and interpretations of the role played by the police in response to safety and security issues in Winnipeg's inner city. Based on our interviews, significant numbers of inner-city residents and community workers have one set of perceptions and interpretations, while the police have a different set of perceptions and interpretations.

The inner-city community respondents raised concerns not only about the general lack of meaningful police presence in their neighbourhoods but, more pointedly, about what a large proportion see as police mistreatment of inner-city residents, and about racial profiling, particularly of young Aboriginal and Black men. Many have stories to tell and anecdotes to relate to back up these claims. Many say they distrust, dislike, and even fear the police. Nevertheless, most say they want a greater police presence, especially in the form of community policing. And most are quite clear about what they mean by community policing: uniformed cops on the beat, who stay in a neighbourhood long enough to get to know people (and especially children) by name, and who work to develop relationships with, and earn the trust of, neighbourhood people and organizations.

The police, by contrast, perceive what they are doing as being very positive: they are fighting crime, and therefore contributing to the betterment of the community. They entered policing as a profession, they told us, precisely because they saw it as a way to “do good.” In contrast to the viewpoints of many of the residents we interviewed, members of the WPS were of the view that racial profiling was not a feature of policing in Winnipeg. As well, the police see Operation Clean

Sweep and its citywide successor, the street crimes unit, as an appropriate and promising solution to inner-city safety and security concerns.

Thus, not only are there differing perceptions and interpretations of the role of the police in the inner city, there are differing prescriptions for solving the problems related to safety and security issues. There is, in short, a deep *divide* between the inner-city community and the Winnipeg Police Service. A central part of the explanation for this divide, we believe, is the character of the inner-city policing strategy, the core of which is what we have called reactive, incident-driven policing. We maintain that this strategy cannot, by its very nature, build bridges between the police and the inner city. It is a strategy that only serves to open up and, over time, to *deepen* the divide between the police and the inner-city community.

Nevertheless, our interviews with inner-city residents and community workers have revealed a way in which to bridge the divide that presently exists between the inner-city community and the police. Specifically, we found that inner-city residents and community workers think about inner-city issues in a *community-centred* way. They see inner-city policing through this lens, which leads them to favour an inner-city policing strategy in which the police become part of neighbourhood revitalization efforts. This standpoint is in harmony with comments made by Chief Ewatski about the need for proactive and preventative action, and his view that the WPS can't do it by themselves. We believe that these insights constitute the basis for building a bridge across the divide that now separates the inner-city community from the police.

In this concluding section, we elaborate further on what we see as the limitations of the current inner-city policing strategy, and then outline a proposal for a "re-blended" policing model, one that shifts the core of the inner-city policing strategy from reactive, incident-driven policing to a community mobilization form of community policing. In the process, we argue the need to re-

frame issues of safety and security. This re-framing involves locating problems of drugs, gangs, and violence as symptoms of deeper conditions confronting the inner city.

The Current Inner-City Policing Strategy

As described by Chief Ewatski, the current inner-city policing strategy involves a "blended approach." This approach is one that places reactive, incident-driven policing at its core, with other strategies—community policing, the School Resource Officer program, and specialized units (the street crimes unit, the arson unit, etc.)—at the periphery (see Figure 1 on page 64).

The general patrol officers told us that they spend 98 percent or more of their time responding to 911 calls, that in the last five years the backlog of calls has grown ever-longer, and that no matter how hard they try they cannot clear the backlog. They expressed their frustration with a system that often seems like a "vicious circle," and that means "we are chasing our tails a lot of the times." This explains the frequent complaints from inner-city residents about long wait-times when police are called. This is a strategy that, by its logic, can do nothing to contribute to the underlying causes of crime—it is reactive, not proactive—and that repeatedly and inevitably thrusts front-line general patrol officers into situations that are tense, conflict-ridden, and potentially dangerous.

The result of the heavy reliance on this form of policing is that the likelihood of the police being able to establish positive relationships with inner-city residents—despite what may be the best of police intentions—is small. With this form of policing, if an inner-city resident has any experience at all with the police, it is likely to be in a tense and conflictual situation. This is reflected in the many negative comments made by inner-city residents about policing—that they rarely see the police, and that when they do the experience is negative. Indeed, we were told repeatedly, by both inner-city residents and police officers, that

many youngsters in the inner city fear and dislike the police. This is an extremely worrisome trend but is, we believe, the inevitable by-product of reactive, incident-driven policing, the result of which is that the only experience that most young people have of the police is when the police arrest and remove their big brother or their uncle or their Dad. Stories about such incidents spread, and a culture of conflict and distrust emerges, making the job of policing—already extremely difficult—that much more so.

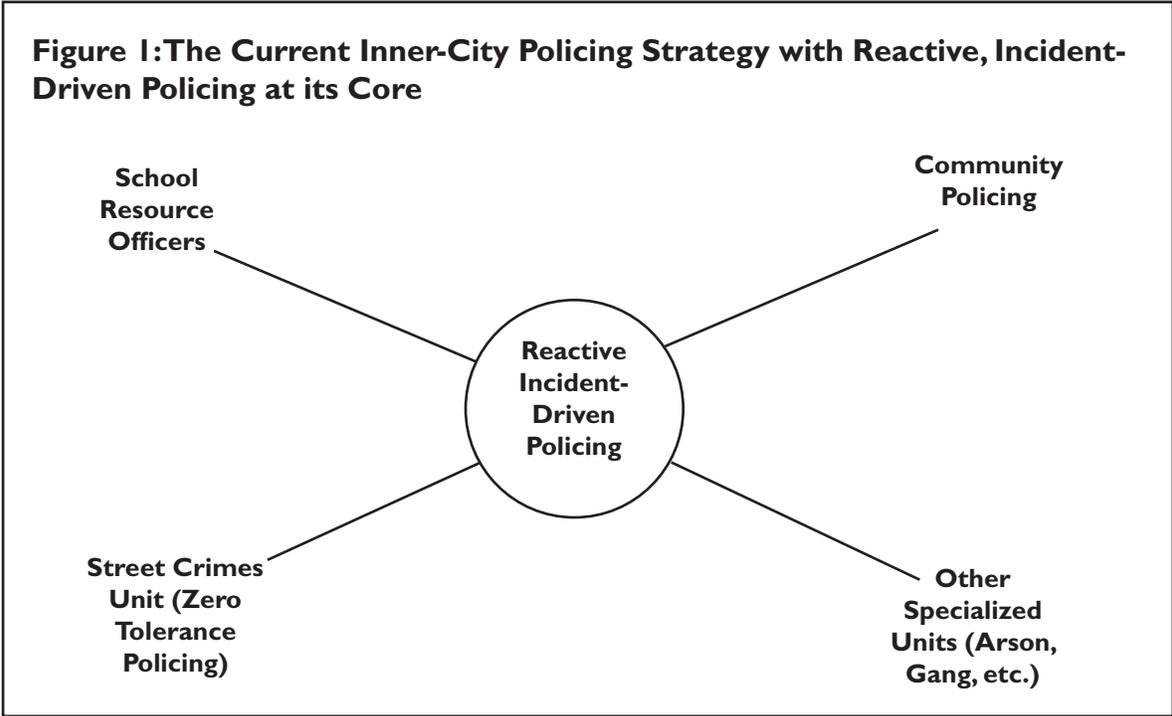
Clean Sweep and the Limits of Zero-Tolerance Policing

So long as the core of the inner-city policing strategy continues to be reactive, incident-driven policing, the problems of crime and violence will continue to worsen. The introduction of Operation Clean Sweep is evidence, we suggest, that the leadership of the Winnipeg Police Service knows this. They know that the backlog of incidents will necessarily and inevitably grow larger as long as they continue to rely so heavily upon reactive, incident-driven policing. The police officers that

we interviewed expressed great frustration with this situation. They say that they know who the (relatively small number of) people are who are dealing drugs and committing violent crimes, but that they can do nothing about it because they are driven by the relentless necessity to respond to 911 calls. They want to be proactive and to go out and arrest the perpetrators, but they cannot because of the logic of the policing strategy.

That is why police officers are so pleased with the introduction of Clean Sweep. Clean Sweep is not reactive. It is proactive. It is not driven by the dispatchers’ calls. It is driven by the desire to remove known troublemakers from a neighbourhood. Police can go to crack houses, pursue known drug dealers, and seize weapons. They can make arrests and thereby make neighbourhoods safer.

But Clean Sweep itself is a limited strategy. Our interviews suggest that criminal activities are simply being displaced. To the extent that this strategy has been successful in the West End, including Spence neighbourhood, it is because it has pushed the gang members, street sex workers,



and drug dealers to other neighbourhoods, whose situation is now worse as a result. Admittedly, this notion of the spatial displacement of crime is a contentious issue in the empirical literature. Nevertheless, while some research has found that displacement does not occur with respect to crimes such as home burglaries and car thefts (Ratcliffe 2002; Hesselting and Aron 1995), other offences such as drug dealing and prostitution have been found to be susceptible to displacement (Sherman 1990; Eck 1993).

What is more concerning, however, is that Clean Sweep is potentially dangerous. It is a variant of zero-tolerance policing. In zero-tolerance policing, law enforcement officers have increased powers to stop and search people suspected of committing crimes—even minor offences. It is reasonable to fear that this is a slippery slope to the kind of racial and spatial profiling that many people in the inner city argue is already prevalent. The result would be that the police would, even more than is already the case, be seen as an occupying force from the outside, and thus as the “enemy.” The conflict or divide that already characterizes so much of inner-city community – police relations would grow.

While it might be argued that the streets are made safer because more people are in jail, the jails are already full to capacity and this appears to be solving nothing. When people are released from jail their chances of finding employment are likely to be even less than when they went in, and their gang contacts are likely to have deepened. They are likely to resume their criminal activities, for lack of alternative opportunities.

To the extent that Clean Sweep and the new street crimes unit are modeled on the kind of zero-tolerance policing initiatives pursued in Rudolph Giuliani’s New York City, we would be wise to exercise due caution given the results of careful empirical studies of that experience. As we discussed earlier, reductions in crime rates in New York City were paralleled by similar declines,

and in some cases steeper declines, throughout the United States, and the reduction in New York City’s crime rates began three years prior to Giuliani’s arrival. In addition, the number of uniformed police officers in New York City grew from 27,000 in 1993 when Giuliani arrived, to 41,000 in 2001—an increase of 14,000 officers in eight years. The size of the New York City police force grew by more than 50 percent. This represents a massive public expenditure to achieve results little different from those achieved elsewhere with different policing strategies. It is not likely that Winnipeg could afford a 50 percent increase in the size of our police force, even if such were warranted.

What New York City did achieve under Giuliani was a considerable increase in the incidence of police misconduct and abuse charges, claims made to the Civilian Complaint Review Board regarding police brutality and misconduct, especially by African-Americans, and civilian complaints about general patrol incidents. Whether similar consequences will follow from the new street crimes unit is a matter of empirical investigation. However, given what we know about Winnipeg’s inner city, and the concerns expressed to us by inner-city residents about racial profiling, any policing strategy rooted in an aggressive, zero-tolerance approach is likely to create as many problems as it solves, or more.

Community Policing in the Current Strategy

There is community policing in some parts of Winnipeg’s inner city now, but it is a minor part of the overall inner-city policing strategy, and its strength is repeatedly depleted when community officers are called away to perform other duties. When interviewed, the Chief and Deputy Chief advanced several reasons why community policing should not or could not be made a greater part of the overall inner-city policing strategy, but these reasons do not hold up under close scrutiny. For

example, the Chief and Deputy Chief contend that there are not enough resources to introduce community policing on a citywide basis. We maintain that community policing does not have to be instituted throughout the city. A cop on the beat is, in fact, not likely to be an appropriate policing strategy in Winnipeg's sprawling suburbs. But a cop on the beat is perfectly appropriate in most inner-city neighbourhoods. The School Resource Officer program is a precedent for this tailoring of the policing strategy to the varying forms and levels of community need.

The success of the School Resource Officer (SRO) program—enthusiastically acknowledged by the Chief and Deputy Chief of the WPS—is a model of what is possible if the WPS were to shift a significantly larger share of resources toward community policing in inner-city neighbourhoods. As Chief Ewatski put it, referring to the SRO program:

It isn't sort of a blanket approach that we should have a police officer in every school. I don't think the need is there. I don't think the want is there, the desire is there. But in some schools, yeah, the need is there and we're supportive of it. I'm supportive of it. I think if it's structured properly it has tremendous benefit to public safety not only within the school but outside of it. Because these are the kids that are going to become parents one day, that we're counting on them to be able to instill the character and the virtues and the principles into the kids that they're going to have too, so it's, we're starting that process and to me that's a positive signal.

Chief Ewatski is extolling a community-policing model that is applied in certain schools where it is needed, but not in all schools in the city. The same logic ought to apply to community policing. Community policing ought to be adopted in those inner-city neighbourhoods where residents, community workers, and businesspeople have

said they want and need it, precisely as has the SRO program.

Reframing the Issue and the Shift to Community Mobilization

The particular way in which we frame an issue can lead to particular ways of seeing and interpreting it, and thus particular kinds of prescriptions for its solution. If we follow the current trend of the neo-conservative, 'law and order' ethos and frame the key problems confronting inner-city communities as the high incidence of drugs, gangs, and violence, then what logically follows is a move in the direction now being taken by the Winnipeg Police Service: the shift to a zero-tolerance approach as embodied in the street crimes unit, and as justified by the experience in former Mayor Giuliani's New York City. If, by contrast, we resist the turn to neo-conservatism and instead frame the issue as being about the social and economic conditions that lead to drugs, gangs, and violence, then we see these dangers as *symptoms*, and we are led to seek deeper, more lasting solutions beyond 'fighting crime.' In particular, we are led to the conclusion, expressed by Chief Ewatski and also by the Chief of the Toronto Police Service, William Blair, that the police need to build bridges across the divide that separates them from the inner-city community, and work in cooperation with the community.

In his interview with us, Chief Ewatski made the case for a blended inner-city policing strategy that places more emphasis than is now the case on long-term, preventative policing. He made the case, we maintain, for a shift of resources to community policing. More than that, we believe that he made the case for what can be called "community mobilization"—a policing strategy in which the police work in close partnership with community-based organizations engaged in a wide variety of neighbourhood revitalization initiatives. Chief Ewatski acknowledged the need to move in this community mobilization direction when he

told us: “we can’t do it by ourselves, we need the public to assist us and that starts with significant and sincere engagement with the community and taking it right down to the neighbourhood level.”

It is significant that Toronto Chief of Police William Blair, in an interview with us in late June 2006 about Toronto’s Regent Park, made precisely this argument. Regent Park, Canada’s oldest and largest public housing project, has historically had a high incidence of crime and violence, much of it drug- and gang-related, and tenants there have had a very troubled relationship with the police (Ward Associates 1996; Toronto Legal Aid Plan 1994; Toronto 1985). Charges of overly aggressive policing tactics and racial profiling have been commonplace. In recent years the police have moved in a community policing direction, and representatives of the Regent Park community have attempted to reach across the police-community divide to work more co-operatively with the police. The results have been positive to date, as evidenced by our interviews with many community workers in Regent Park, and with Chief William Blair.

Chief Blair describes community policing as being about building relationships with the people of a community, and with community organizations and institutions. It is, he argues, not a “soft” approach. It is very hard work. It is about uniformed police officers walking the beat, getting to know people and the community, developing relationships, using conflict resolution and problem-solving skills, earning the trust of people. The result of doing so is a detailed understanding of a community. It makes possible a sophisticated intelligence-gathering system. It enables the police to become a part of community-based efforts to build healthier neighbourhoods. Chief Blair adds, echoing Chief Ewatski: “there is, I think, a growing realization in policing that the police can only achieve so much,” and so they have to

develop the trust of, and work closely with, the community.

Blair uses the concept “community mobilization,” by which he means police working *with* the community, a mobilized community, to collectively build safer and healthier neighbourhoods. In community policing and community mobilization, the uniformed officer on the beat gets to know, builds relationships with, and works with not only residents, but also school principals, teachers, community health workers, social workers, youth workers, business associations, and community-based organizations of a wide variety of kinds. They are all mobilized to do together the preventative work of keeping a neighbourhood safe. Chief Blair concludes: “community policing, and I think what is the next stage of community policing, which is community mobilization, helping the community to become stronger and more capable of keeping itself safe, is ultimately the goal that we have to work towards.”

Clearly, policing alone cannot solve inner-city problems. But policing *can* be part of a long-term solution. This would happen if the core of the inner-city policing strategy were to shift from reactive, incident-driven policing, to community policing and community mobilization. With a greater proportion of resources committed to community policing, with community policing taking a community mobilization form, and with a corresponding shift in the philosophy of the Winnipeg Police Service as a whole, policing would begin to contribute directly to the revitalization of Winnipeg’s inner city and thus, over time, to a reduction in the incidence of crime and violence.

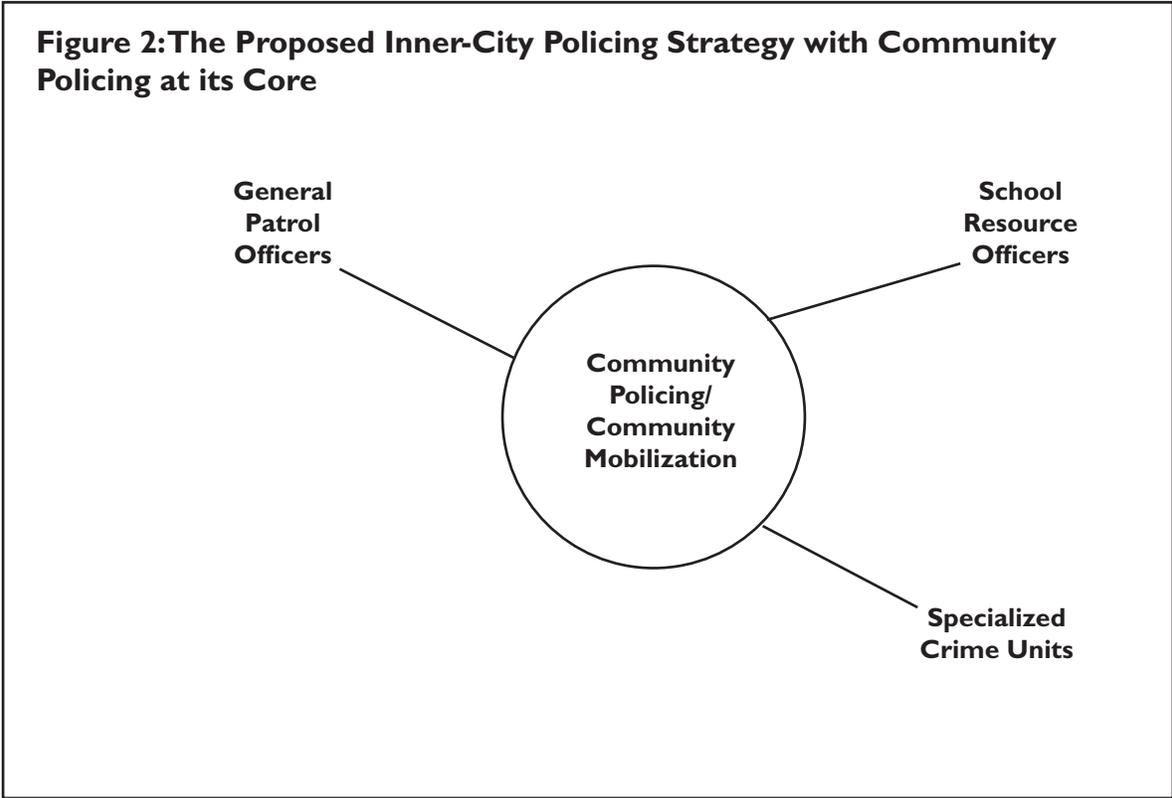
Even given such a shift, there would be a continued need for a strong force of front-line, general patrol officers whose job would continue to be to respond to 911 calls and, when warranted, to make arrests, because each of us has the right to feel and to be safe and secure in our homes and our communities. But reactive, incident-driven

policing should not be the heart of the inner-city policing strategy, because it keeps the front-line officers of the WPS on a treadmill of never-ending calls, unable to act in a proactive fashion. Because it constantly places police officers in emotional and conflict-laden situations, it adds to the on-going tension between the police and large parts of the inner-city community, thus further fueling the very problems to which the police must respond.

The proposed inner-city policing strategy that follows logically from the results of this study would still be a blended inner-city policing strategy. But the blend would change. A problem-solving, community-focused form of policing would be the core of the strategy; reactive, incident-driven policing, while still important, would be subsidiary to the new core of the strategy. We can represent this shift diagrammatically, as shown in Figure 2.

The real strength of community policing lies in its working in partnership with neighbour-

hood revitalization efforts, as part of a process of community mobilization. We have seen in Spence neighbourhood that where strong, community-based organizations like the Spence Neighbourhood Association (SNA) work consistently over time, and involve the people in the neighbourhood in their efforts, improvements gradually begin to appear. Derelict houses are removed and new or renovated housing takes its place; community activities are planned; lighting is improved; strategies are developed to find jobs for young people; neighbours get to know each other. People become part of a collective process that is having visible and positive effects. Among these effects is improved safety. Most of those that we interviewed in Spence believed that safety has improved in recent years. This may be partly because Clean Sweep has 'swept' criminal activity into other neighbourhoods—Centennial, for example. But most in Spence believe, and we believe, that this is because of the good work being done by community-based organizations like the



SNA in working *with* the community to build a better and safer neighbourhood.

Community policing and community mobilization would bring the Winnipeg Police Service, through their beat officers, directly into partnership with such efforts, and with the SNA and other such community-based organizations. The police would become a part of this positive process of neighbourhood revitalization. They would work hand-in-hand with the community. This is community mobilization. As part of a process of community mobilization, community police officers would know where the problems are, and who is doing what, and would be able to intervene, at least in some cases, *before* problems occur. They would work in positive ways with young people in a neighbourhood—working to build recreational and employment opportunities, for example, and being able, because of the trust that they would develop, to direct young people onto positive paths as opposed to paths characterized by crime and violence. Over time, as the result of such relationships, young inner-city people, including growing numbers of Aboriginal peoples, would be much more likely to consider a career in policing. Policing would become not an outside force engaged in conflict, but a community force engaged in rebuilding.

In these terms, the police would become a part of a process of ‘asset-based community development’ (Kretzmann and McKnight 1993). Asset-based community development identifies and builds upon a neighbourhood’s strengths or assets, unlike the more traditional approach to inner-city neighbourhoods, which is to see them through a ‘deficit lens’—that is, to see inner-city neighbourhoods solely in terms of problems. Inner-city people told us repeatedly in interviews of the strengths in the inner city—recall the woman who told us that “there are some amazing teenagers who live within the North End, and they’ve accomplished so much you wouldn’t believe it.” With reactive, incident-driven policing, officers

are focused, of necessity, on the problems of the inner city. They miss its strengths. Community policing, by contrast, enables the police to become a part of the process of working with, and building upon, the strengths of the inner city.

The importance of how we frame an issue—of the lens through which we see and interpret, and thus develop a solution for, a problem—can be seen in the way in which many inner-city residents and community workers that we interviewed interpreted the problem of gangs. We found that many of the inner-city people that we interviewed have a nuanced and sophisticated view of the presence of gangs in the inner city. None condone gang activity; some fear it. But many argue that it is often the case that those young people identified as gang members are not in fact gang members, but rather disaffected youth with not enough to do and with no meaningful job prospects. In the absence of meaningful job prospects, the seemingly omnipresent trade in illegal drugs becomes, not surprisingly, an attractive and potentially lucrative alternative for some, and leads inexorably to a host of serious safety and security concerns. Many of those inner-city people that we interviewed expressed fears about their own children being drawn into gang and related illegal activity, while at the same time expressing a deep understanding of why this happens to the youth in their community, and a compassion for youth growing up in the midst of the harsh realities and limited opportunities that characterize inner-city life. This more subtle and sophisticated framing of the issue of gangs, drugs, and violence—a framing that arises out of a close and intimate relationship with young people who are, or are seen by others to be, members of gangs—leads logically, we believe, to a shift in Winnipeg’s inner-city policing strategy, away from a blended approach at the core of which is reactive, incident-driven policing, toward a differently-blended approach, at the core of which is community policing and community mobilization. While not ignoring the need to

make arrests and 'get tough' when necessary, this latter approach acknowledges and builds upon the strengths of inner-city neighbourhoods.

It is this different framing of the issue that enables us to understand the paradox mentioned earlier—that so many inner-city residents and community workers distrust and dislike the police, but want more police in the inner city. What they mean is that the problems are real, but they want different solutions. They want community policing, and they want the police to be part of a process of community mobilization. We believe that they are right. A policing strategy centred on reactive, incident-driven policing is bound to fail. A policing strategy infused with the philosophy of community policing and community mobilization offers hope.

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