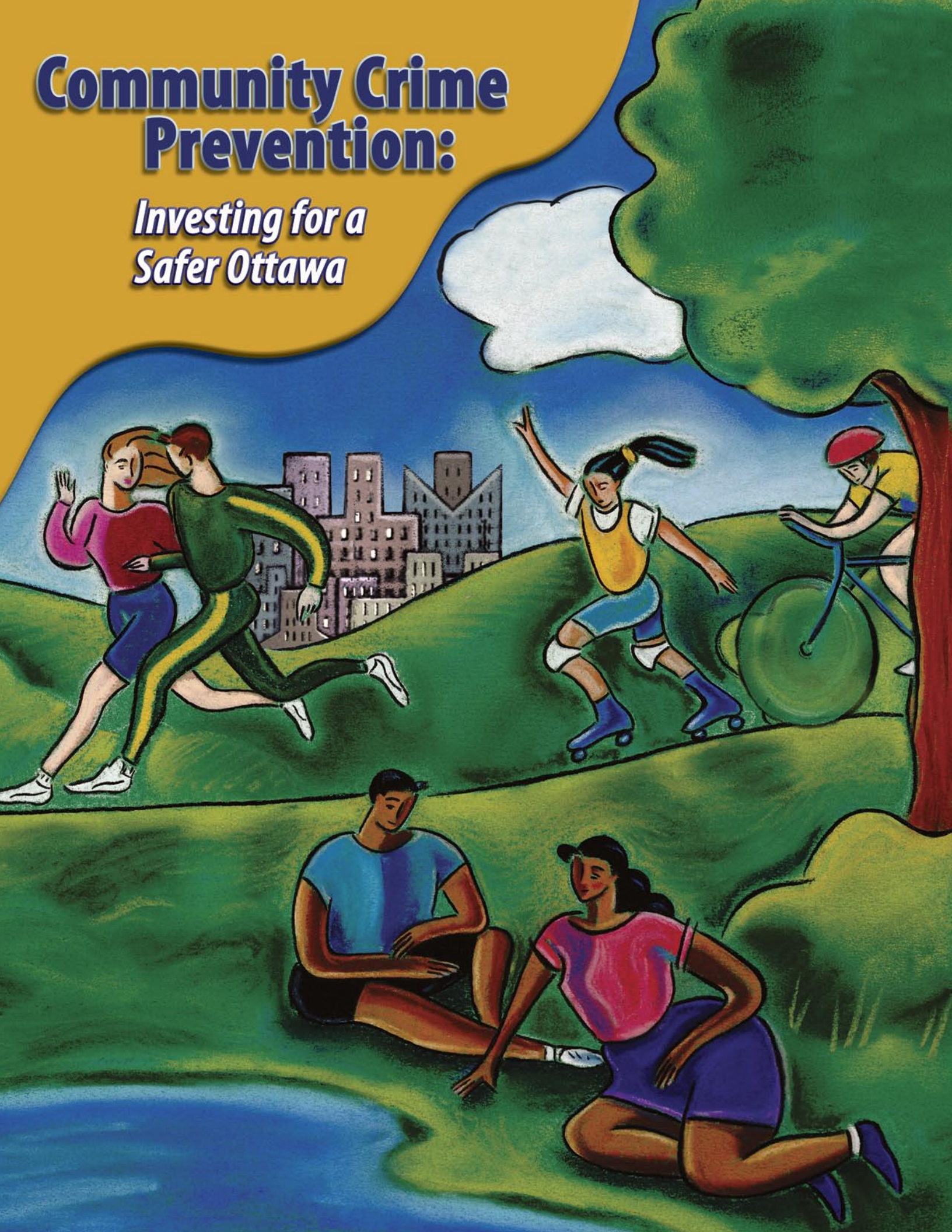


Community Crime Prevention:

Investing for a Safer Ottawa



Community Crime Prevention: Investing for a Safer Ottawa

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Ottawa 20/20 Growth Management Strategy recognizes that “it is always easier, cheaper, and more compassionate to prevent problems before they occur than to develop solutions after the fact”(Human Services Plan, p.44).

This is particularly true when addressing crime problems. By investing in families, children, and youth, crime prevention significantly cuts crime, is cost-effective and economically beneficial in the long run, and provides additional social benefits. It’s simply easier and cheaper to prevent crime from happening in the first place than to deal with it once it occurs.

With a rapidly changing City, a tight municipal budget, and a police budget that is continually increasing, it’s time for Ottawa to consider a different way of doing business when it comes to crime and community safety.

Even with increases in police budgets, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) points to a lack of apparent reduction in crime in Canadian communities over the past 40 years. To significantly reduce crime, FCM urges city leaders to create and support a municipally-led infrastructure to integrate local initiatives within a comprehensive crime prevention strategy.

CRIME AND VICTIMIZATION IN OTTAWA AND CANADA

- Ottawa’s crime rates, for most categories, increased in 2003
- Ottawa crime increased by 3% in 2003 compared to decreases elsewhere
- Many suffer from “hidden” crimes in silence (e.g., bullying, sexual assault, and family/spousal violence)

Ottawa may be a relatively safe city, but we still need to address the number of people being victimized each year. And why wait until things get worse? Now is the time to act.

PREVENTION CUTS CRIME SIGNIFICANTLY

Prestigious organizations worldwide – like the United Nations, World Health Organization, International Centre for the Prevention of Crime, and U.S. Surgeon General - stress that targeting the “root causes of crime” successfully cuts crime and victimization, and provides collateral social benefits. For example, improving parenting skills in high-risk families can reduce future arrests by up to 66% and cut child abuse by 62%-79%. Providing incentives for youth to complete high school can reduce arrests by up to 71%, and increase post-secondary education by 26%. “What works” in crime prevention is clear, compelling, and repeatedly recognized.

CITIES AS SPEARHEAD FOR EFFECTIVE CRIME PREVENTION

A City coalition with a high-level leader is crucial in gaining the support and participation of the key partners able to influence the root causes of crime. Under City leadership, a local crime prevention coalition can establish a clear community safety strategy based on the diagnosis of

crime problems, the elaboration of an action plan, the co-ordinated implementation of actions, and rigorous evaluation of process and impacts.

Without the leadership of the City, it's difficult to successfully rally all key stakeholders and complete these necessary steps. Ottawa needs an integrated, planned, and supported response to preventing crime by investing in "what works" for families, children, and youth. Other Canadian Cities, like Toronto, Montreal, Waterloo, and Winnipeg are already investing in evidence-based crime prevention and making significant contributions to community safety.

DOLLARS AND SENSE OF PREVENTION

Preventing crime before it happens is cost-efficient and also cost-beneficial, as healthy kids and youth make productive adults later on. For example, to reduce serious crime by 10%, you can either provide incentives for at-risk youth to complete high school – which also contributes to enrolment in post-secondary education – or spend over 7 times more in tax dollars per household to increase incarceration.

Crime prevention is not a matter of spending more, but of spending more wisely. By annually investing \$1.50 per resident in a crime prevention responsibility centre, Montreal has significantly reduced the City's levels of crime and victimization by up to 50%.

A SAFE COMMUNITY VISION FOR OTTAWA

Based on the evidence of "what works" to cut crime, it is possible to make specific short and long-term projections for a safer Ottawa. By investing in an integrated crime prevention strategy – that is by implementing best practices and incorporating successful services and programs already underway in Ottawa - victimization at home, on streets, at school and at work could be lowered by up to 50% in 2 to 5 years.

HOW DO WE GET THERE?

- Establish a permanent crime prevention responsibility centre to reduce crime and enhance community safety in Ottawa through evidence-based crime prevention.

1. Board of Directors

Establish a **Board of Directors** with strong links to the City of Ottawa and representatives from other key stakeholders:

- seats will be allocated for City representatives (e.g., Mayor and City Councillor), for a high-level City administrator (e.g., Deputy City Manager), for a high-level representative from the School Boards and from the Ottawa Police Service
- the *Panel for Community Crime Prevention* will name a **Nominating Committee** charged with proposing other Board Members according to set criteria
 - Nominees will represent key stakeholders able to contribute to community safety and influence the underlying causes of crime in Ottawa

2. Staff

Secondment of 2 full-time staff from the Community and Protective Services (CPS) department

- the Board of Directors will establish criteria for 2 full-time positions, and a competition will be held within the CPS department for 2-year terms:
 - 1 employee will serve as the centre's **Executive Director**
 - 1 employee will serve as the centre's **Community Development Officer**

3. Responsibilities of the crime prevention coalition

The coalition's responsibilities are centred on strategically developing and implementing a community-wide crime prevention plan, and monitoring and evaluating the process and impacts of this plan. Specific responsibilities include co-ordinating and mobilizing key players and resources, conducting strategic analysis of Ottawa crime and its causes, co-ordinating actions, providing expertise, resources, and capacity development, and reporting at least annually on activities, progress, and outcomes.

4. Funds and resources

The coalition will seek contributions and donations in-kind from key stakeholders for office equipment and other administrative necessities.

To get project-specific funding from other levels of government and additional funds from the private sector, core funding is needed to come up with an appropriate mandate and plan of action with specific targets and goals. The request from City Council is therefore a contribution of \$200,000 in 2005 and \$400 000 in 2006.

Although it is an added cost to this year's budget, this contribution will reduce the mounting financial costs of reacting to crime in Ottawa, and show that City leaders are dedicated to Ottawa's 20/20 vision for community safety and preventative action.

The best time to act would be 5 years ago. The second best time is now. The worse time is 5 years from now.

INTRODUCTION

With the economic and social future of Ottawa in mind, the City is working towards a **20/20 Vision** for sustainable development. The City's **Growth Management Strategy** outlines 7 Guiding Principles, including *A Caring and Inclusive City* characterized in part by *Personal Safety and Security*, where people feel safe in their homes and communities (City of Ottawa Official Plan, Section 1.3, p.2).

To this end, the City of Ottawa **Human Services Plan** outlines 5 strategic directions, including *Safe and Healthy Communities* and a *Focus on Prevention* (p.19).

An attractive City is one where residents feel safe on their streets, in their homes, at school, at work, and at play. To get there, the **City recognizes that “it is always easier, cheaper, and more compassionate to prevent problems before they occur than to develop solutions after the fact”**(Human Services Plan, p.44).

“Safe communities provide for a better quality of life, and enhanced opportunities for economic development, investment, and tourism”
(FCM, 2004).

This is particularly true when addressing crime problems. By investing in the well being of families, children, and youth, crime prevention¹:

- significantly cuts crime
- is cost-effective and economically beneficial in the long run
- provides additional social benefits (lower health costs, employment, paid taxes...)

When it comes to crime, it's simply easier and cheaper to prevent it from happening in the first place than to deal with it once it occurs.

Although municipal law enforcement taxes cost about \$175 per capita in Ottawa every year², the overall societal costs of crime and victimization in Ottawa are around \$1.16 billion annually (National Crime Prevention Centre, 2003³). This represents the costs associated with crime, such as, injuries, insurance, private security measures. Not to mention the loss, fear, trauma, and long-term physical injury that crime and victimization can inflict on victims.

Despite the criminal justice system's important role in community safety, there has been little apparent reduction in crime by investing in more police and prisons over the years. It makes no sense to keep paying for and relying on more of the same to reduce crime (FCM, 2004).

As one of the fastest growing cities in Canada, Ottawa faces many challenges in the years to come. The number of immigrants living in Ottawa is expected to double by 2020, and new Canadians are 4 times more likely to be unemployed than any other group. Other social factors related to crime – like the gap between high and low income families, the need for child protection services involvement, the number of lone-parent families, and lack of affordable housing - are also consistently climbing and expected to escalate in Ottawa over the next 5 to 10 years⁴.

The Ottawa **Human Services Plan** recognizes that “a number of programs and services are in place to serve families and children in Ottawa...however, a number of service gaps continue, particularly with respect to meeting the needs of children aged 6-12” (p.29-30).

Since teens aged 15-19 years are at greater risk of being both crime victims and offenders⁵, an expected increase of 24% in youth aged 10-19 over the next 10 years in Ottawa⁶ also points to the need for preventative action now.

With the changing and broadening scope of policing, the Ottawa Police Service notes that it's becoming increasingly difficult for municipalities to continue to fund increasing police budgets⁷. To continue running its 3-5 year operating plans, the Ottawa Police Service will require additional funding in the range of \$10-11 million annually in both 2005 and 2006⁸.

To put a stop to the increasing costs of reacting to crime - and reduce the need to hire more and more police officers over the next 2-5 years - the City of Ottawa should be investing in what is proven to reduce the levels of crime and insecurity: preventing crime by strategically investing in families, children and youth.

Ottawa needs an integrated and coordinated municipally-led strategy for community safety and crime prevention. Many prestigious international organizations – like the International Centre for the Prevention of Crime, United Nations, and World Health Organization - stress the critical role that local governments play in ensuring the success of community safety through strategic crime prevention¹.

Crime prevention is successful when entities that are able to address the multiple causes of crime and violence – local government, social services, schools, youth agencies, parents, sports organizations, etc. – are responsible for diagnosing and tackling the problem (*International Centre for the Prevention of Crime, 1999*).

Here in Canada, the *Canadian Forum for Crime Prevention (CFCP)* hosted the First Forum on *What works: the power of prevention* in the Waterloo region in December of 2003, gathering over 125 policy-makers, practitioners and researchers nation-wide. The Forum's Final Declaration urges municipal governments to create and support a permanent local crime prevention entity with strong ties to the City⁹.

In February of 2004, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' (FCM) *Big City Mayors Caucus* endorsed and adopted the CFCP's Final Declaration¹⁰. The *Large Urban Mayors Caucus of Ontario (LUMCO)* did the same in April of 2004¹¹. City leaders all over Canada are either calling for municipally-led crime prevention, or are already investing to make it happen.

The message is clear and consistent: without the commitment and leadership of the City, it is virtually impossible to rally all key players and resources capable of making crime prevention happen. The City holds the key to many of the agencies and services that are essential in addressing the local underlying links to crime (housing, youth employment programs, police, infrastructure, etc.).

Without the leadership of the City, various agencies and services operate in a vacuum, with no clear common focus, strategy, or goal. A coordinated strategy for community safety and crime prevention can integrate resources and provide Ottawa residents with long-term stability, safety, and success.

These concepts aren't new. The City of Ottawa **Human Services Plan** recognized the importance of investing in families, children and youth to help them attain their fullest potential. It also emphasizes the need for partnerships and long-term preventative action. That is exactly what strategic crime prevention is all about.

“It is in City Council’s approval of its annual budget and its long-term financial plan that the commitment to the direction in the **Human Services Plan** will be realized” (HSP, p.69).

The recommendations in this report represent the specific actions needed to respond to the *City of Ottawa’s 20/20 Vision for A Caring and Inclusive City with Safe and Health Communities*. This is the plan to put the Ottawa 20/20 Vision for community safety in motion.

FCM calls for municipal leadership for crime prevention

Since Canadians see personal safety as one of the key factors in their quality of life and identity as Canadians, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities insists that crime rates in Canada remain far too high¹².

With tight municipal budgets and no apparent reduction in crime by increasing police spending, FCM urges municipalities to consider a different way of doing business.

Municipal leaders in certain Canadian Cities are doing just that. Halifax, Montreal, Toronto, Waterloo, Mississauga, Regina, Winnipeg and others are all investing substantial City resources into a co-ordinated crime prevention strategy to tackle the underlying causes of crime by investing in families, children, and youth.

It’s Ottawa’s turn to step up to the plate.

Through its *Policy Statement on Community Safety and Crime Prevention* (2004), **FCM “encourages municipalities to establish an infrastructure, such as a local crime prevention council, to integrate initiatives within a comprehensive crime prevention strategy”** (p.6).

CRIME AND VICTIMIZATION IN OTTAWA AND CANADA

Although Ottawa’s crime challenge may not seem as alarming as in other Canadian cities, many Ottawa residents are still being victimized every day.

Crime in Ottawa

Ottawa crime rates have been relatively stable over the past 4 years. However, police reports for 2003 show that:

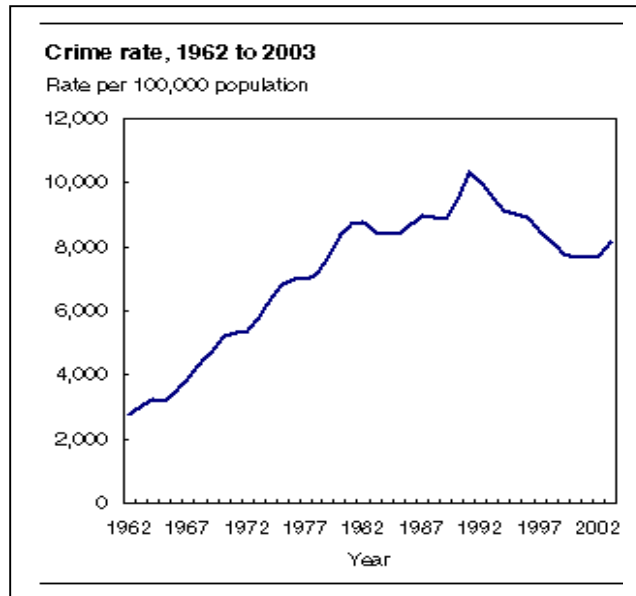
- despite being the 7th safest Census Metropolitan Area in Canada, Ottawa’s crime rates increased for most categories¹³
- Ottawa’s crime rate increased by 3% compared to decreases elsewhere

- despite decreases in theft and fraud, commercial and residential break-ins are up by 6.5%

Trends in Canada

- 1 out of every 4 Canadians 15 years and older will be victimized each year by a common crime such as break and enter, car theft, or assault¹⁴
- about 5% to 10% of teens aged 15 to 19 years account for as much as 50% to 70% of all juvenile offences in Canadian communities.¹⁵
- despite decreases in the 1990's, violent crime rates reported by police in Canada are still 3 times higher than in the 1960's, and rates of property crime are still twice as high¹⁶
- only 37% of all crimes are ever reported to the police, down 5% from the early 1990's
- 77% of crimes against youth in general, and 82% of personal thefts and sexual assaults against youth are never reported to the police

Graph 1. Overall crime trends in Canada (police reports).



This means a substantial number of people, especially youth, are being victimized in silence. This is also common with bullying and spousal violence, because these types of victimization often remain hidden. Reliable attempts to capture the frequency of these crimes show that:

- 1 in every 4 kids are being bullied at school¹⁷
- 1 in every 12 non-Aboriginal women and 1 in every 4 Aboriginal women in Canada report being the victim of spousal assault each year¹⁸

Ottawa may be a relatively safe city, but the number of people being victimized each year within the City still needs to be addressed. With rapidly changing demographics and increasingly challenging social conditions, Ottawa should be focusing on how to effectively prevent crime before it happens.

PREVENTION CUTS CRIME SIGNIFICANTLY

Many prestigious organizations, in recognition of the evidence of “what works” to prevent crime, have reached a clear consensus: crime rates can be significantly lowered through well-planned crime prevention¹⁹.

An accumulation of research shows that certain factors are associated with crime and victimization¹:

- *social factors* - such as poverty, lack of parental supervision, exposure to family violence, and school drop-out – are consistently linked to a higher likelihood of criminal activity later on
- *situational circumstances* - like poor urban design and poor surveillance - can also increase the risk of crime and victimization

Often called the “root causes of crime”, various projects targeting these factors have been successful in cutting crime. They also provide collateral social benefits, like lowering the incidence of child abuse and increasing post-secondary educational attainment.

What works in prevention repeatedly recognized

- Australia
 - National Report on Violence, 1990
 - National Crime Prevention Centre, 2001
- Canada
 - Parliamentary Reports, 1993 and 1997
 - National Crime Prevention Council, 1996
 - International Centre for Prevention of Crime, 1997/99
- England and Wales
 - *Audit Commission, 1996
 - *Home Office and Treasury, 1997
 - British Inspectorate of Police, 1998/2001
- USA
 - *Report to US Congress, 1997/2002
 - *Washington State Public Policy Institute, 1997/2002
 - Surgeon General, 2001
- United Nations
 - World Health Organisation, 2002
 - UN Congresses, 1995, 2000 and 2002

**Evidence-based comprehensive spending reviews*

Below are examples of “what works” to prevent crime. These examples show that well-planned projects and programs based on evidence of effective practice produce significant reductions in crime, as well as other benefits for the participants and the community as a whole.

Successes with families, children and youth

- **Frequent home visits by nurses/health care professionals**
 - provide parent training and support for at-risk families with newborns
 - ✓ reduces youth arrests by 66% through to age 15
 - ✓ reduces child abuse and neglect by 62% to 79%²⁰
- **Improving parenting skills and child social skills**
 - for disruptive children aged 7-9 years and their caregivers
 - ✓ lowers police arrests by 67% for participating kids once they reach ages 13-15
- **Anti-bullying program in schools**
 - an “information and involvement” initiative to co-ordinate efforts between parents and teachers (e.g., Norway)
 - ✓ decreases bullying by 50% after 2 years
 - ✓ reduces other antisocial behaviours by 15% after 2 years
- **After school activities and graduation incentives for at-risk youth**
 - to encourage disadvantaged teens to complete high school
 - ✓ reduces youth arrests by 71%
 - ✓ increases attendance at post-secondary education by 26%

- **Youth Inclusion Program**
 - target the 50 most at-risk youth ages 13-16 living in high-crime neighbourhoods
 - provide them with activities ranging from sports and recreational opportunities to skills training (literacy, anger management, dealing with gangs and drugs)
 - ✓ reduces school expulsions by 27%
 - ✓ reduces youth arrests by 65% and overall crime in neighbourhoods by 16% to 27%²¹

- **Ottawa Project Early Intervention**
 - for kids aged 6-12 in two high-risk social housing complexes
 - offer skills training, sports and recreation, a homework club, and individualized counselling and support through a local partnership (police, local orgs and agencies...)
 - ✓ reduces calls for service and formal charges by almost 50% in one of the target housing projects (halfway through its 3-year term)²²

Successes in community design

- **“Cocoon” Neighbourhood Watch (NW) program** to reduce repeat residential burglaries
 - create a local multi-agency partnership that includes police and other partners, which differs from more traditional NW programs run solely by the police²³
 - gather neighbours and encouraged them to watch out for each others’ property
 - improve the physical security of the area, by installing locks and lights, etc.
 - work with social and probation services to help high-risk offenders in the neighbourhood make positive choices
 - ✓ reduces residential burglaries by 41% to 58% after one year, and 75% over four years^{20, 24,25}

- **Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)**
 - reduce the opportunities for crime and victimization within the built environment
 - ✓ this is a strong point for **Ottawa**: the City uses CPTED principles in its review of applications for the development of public infrastructures⁶
 - **Ottawa Crime-Free Multi-Housing Program**: partnership between Police and Minto Developments to reduce crime in rental communities
 - ✓ reduces calls for service by 70% in some of the 30 certified Minto buildings²⁶
 - ✓ by integrating these initiatives into a wider, more comprehensive Ottawa strategy for community safety, the Ottawa approach to crime prevention could be top of the line.

- **“Secure Housing by Design”**
 - provide housing project developers with a CPTED manual and allocate a special police label of approval for housing that meets the various manual criteria
 - ✓ after one year, reduces property crime by 70% for participating housing²⁰

Successes through strategic policing

- **“Hot Spot” Analysis and Problem-solving**
 - use police crime data to identify local challenges and crime “hot spots”
 - engage high-risk neighbourhood residents in planning and implementing proactive solutions
 - ✓ Edmonton Police Service: reduces overall crime by 41% and violent crime by 31% over 4 years, which is much greater than in any other Canadian city during those years (1991-1995)²⁷

- **Respond to domestic violence calls with both a police officer and a social worker**
 - provide immediate assessment, intervention, and follow-up in crisis situations (e.g., the London (ON) police service teamed up with the Family Consultant Service)
 - ✓ decreases the number of repeat calls for service
 - ✓ reduces physical and verbal family violence
 - ✓ dramatically decreases delinquency and emotional problems among youth of participating families²⁰

- **Strong partnership between the police and the business community** (e.g., Netherlands)
 - reduce commercial robbery by improving situational prevention measures (limit access to cash, improve surveillance, etc.)
 - create a tracking system for robbery offenders
 - support community-based youth employment and educational initiatives
 - ✓ produces a 26% drop in commercial robberies
 - ✓ doubles the rate of solved robberies

- **“Safer City”:** combine problem-solving policing with social programs for at-risk youth
 - reduce access to drugs and firearms through strategic and targeted police action
 - mobilize social programs to help youth in difficulty complete school and gain meaningful employment
 - ✓ various US cities: reduces violent crime by 44% to 67% over 5 years²⁸

In 2002, the **United Nations** produced the **Guidelines for the Prevention of Crime**, urging all levels of government to assume responsibility for “what works” to reduce crime and victimization. The first of 7 key strategies in the UN Guidelines stresses the need for a permanent and funded responsibility centre for crime prevention at all levels of government, and particularly at the **local level** where direct impacts on citizens are most evident. (Source: Waller et al. (2004). *A Handbook on the Implementation of the UN Guidelines*. Manuscript in preparation. University of Ottawa and National Crime Prevention Centre.)

CITIES AS SPEARHEAD FOR EFFECTIVE CRIME PREVENTION

Research consistently shows that long-term community safety depends on the ability of City officials to take the lead and integrate local initiatives into a comprehensive crime prevention strategy (FCM, United Nations, International Centre for the Prevention of Crime, etc.).

Because funding for community projects and programs often ends abruptly, it is hard to sustain community initiatives that are making a difference. A lack of collaboration between local agencies can also lead to a duplication of services, and services are not always delivered where

they are needed most. Without a common agenda, agencies and community groups often find themselves fighting over funding rather than working together¹².

Over the years, research and national/international conferences gathering municipal leaders, city associations and crime prevention organizations have reached the same conclusion. To effectively reduce crime, an elected official (especially the Mayor), visible public figure (i.e., City Councillor) or designated coalition must take a leadership role in analysing, promoting and coordinating community safety through crime prevention¹.

A City coalition with a high-level leader is crucial in gaining the support and participation of the key partners who will be able to influence the many risk factors linked to crime. To ensure targeted, coordinated action, agencies responsible for housing, social assistance, and youth employment, as well as police, schools, social, family, and health services, community groups, businesses, and the community must come together in responding to crime problems in their City¹.

Role and responsibilities of a municipally-led crime prevention coalition

As illustrated in the figure below, a crime prevention coalition is charged with recruiting key partners and providing leadership in establishing a clear strategy for community safety based on:

- the diagnosis of local crime problems and assessment of available data/info systems
- an evidence-based action plan with clear priorities, targets, actions and resources
- the co-ordinated implementation of that plan, with support for key players
- the evaluation of process and outcomes, with feedback from partners and the community

Figure 1. International consensus: Key elements for effective crime prevention.



(Source: International Centre for the Prevention of Crime (1999). *Crime prevention digest II*. Adapted from p.70.)

A municipally-led crime prevention coalition allows local agencies, groups and services to:

- work with a common purpose and focus, resulting in better use of resources
- share information and other data on the nature and extent of local crime challenges
- direct resources to areas with the greatest need to maximize impacts

- ensure the early recognition of crime problems before they get too serious
- enjoy a continuity that is crucial to building long-term success
- access provincial and federal resources otherwise off limits to some

Without the leadership of the City, these necessary and beneficial steps are difficult if not nearly impossible to achieve. Ottawa needs a coordinated, planned, and appropriately supported response to preventing crime by investing in “what works” for families, children, and youth.

To facilitate this process, FCM has published a *Primer on Municipal Crime Prevention* (1999) that is based on international evidence of “what works” to prevent crime. Using a community problem-solving model, this guide provides municipalities with detailed step-by-step instructions on how to build a council and get through every stage of Figure 1 (p.13).

Other Canadian Cities invest in crime prevention

Recognizing the important role that local governments play in ensuring community safety through crime prevention, City leaders across Canada have taken these matters into their own hands:

City of Toronto

- *Mayor Miller* adopted a *Municipal Community Safety Plan* in 2004 balancing enforcement and prevention to address increases in gun violence and youth crime
- a *Mayor’s Advisory Panel on Community Safety* was created - comprising the Mayor, city councillors, school board officials, provincial and federal representatives, the Attorney General of Ontario, judges, business people, youth, citizens, media - to coordinate a multi-sector strategy to tackle the root causes of crime in Toronto
- at-risk neighbourhoods will benefit from increased resources and support, and efforts will focus specifically on guns, gangs, and increasing economic opportunities
- a *Community Safety Secretariat* will co-ordinate, implement, and evaluate the Panel’s plans and initiatives²⁹

City of Montreal

- since 1982, the City annually invests \$1.50 per resident for *Tandem Montreal*, a city agency that integrates, coordinates, and financially supports local crime prevention initiatives based on “what works” to prevent crime
- with a current budget of around \$1.5 million, Tandem focuses on improving home security and safety for children, youth, women, and the elderly, with particular attention to at-risk neighbourhoods
 - ✓ Tandem’s success has been exemplary in Canada, with a 50% drop in home burglary in Montreal since 1982
 - ✓ Tandem funded and supported “Little Burgundy’s Neighbourhood Coalition”, which reduced overall crime by 46% and violent crime by 45% for that particular high crime neighbourhood³⁰.

Waterloo Region

- a local multi-sector group was successful in gaining approval, support, and commitment from municipal leaders, including the active participation of the Mayor, for *Waterloo's Community Safety and Crime Prevention Council (CS&CPC)*
- with a population of about 450,000, the CS&CPC receives over \$300,000 in funding from the Region's Council, with plans to reach over \$400,000
- for every dollar invested by the Region, the CS&CPC receives \$3 in return in funds and resources in-kind (e.g., 34% of CS&CPC's budget comes from Federal grants)
- the Council coordinates and evaluates local initiatives, including new programs such as a "Safe & Sound" initiative for four high-risk neighbourhoods where local residents are engaged in strengthening their neighbourhood "from the inside out"³¹.

Municipalities abroad are legislated to implement effective crime prevention

Comprehensive spending reviews in the United Kingdom (UK) revealed that money spent on police and corrections was not being effective in reducing escalating crime problems (e.g., *Misspent Youth*, Audit Commission, 1996). In 1998, the UK adopted the landmark **Crime and Disorder Act**, requiring every local government to establish a permanent committee jointly chaired by a senior manager from the city and the police service. The committee must create a permanent centre responsible for bringing together police services, municipal government, schools, social services, public health, and so on, ensuring a multi-sector approach to community safety. The committee must examine crime problems faced by the city and come up with an appropriate strategy to prevent them.

The leaders of many other Canadian cities, such as Halifax, Mississauga, Regina, and Vancouver, have taken their own crime prevention initiatives. Others like Winnipeg are in the process of negotiating a tripartite agreement for community safety between all levels of government.

With all these other Canadian cities committed to improving community safety through effective crime prevention, **how is it that Ottawa is lagging behind?**

Our City should be at the forefront of ensuring personal safety for its residents, not at the bottom of the barrel. Ottawa should be striving to live up to international consensus on how to ensure community safety, showing that it is in tune with international research and standards.

DOLLARS AND SENSE OF PREVENTION

Crime can be prevented without any overall increase in costs. In fact, based on program evaluations, preventing crime before it happens is significantly more cost-effective than current policing, judicial, and especially correctional practices¹.

For example, to reduce serious crime by 10%, you can either provide incentives for at-risk youth to complete high school, or spend over 7 times more in tax dollars per household to increase incarceration¹.

"...a holistic, interagency approach [is] the most effective and resource-efficient way to address issues of community safety, health and well-being"
(*Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police, 2002*).

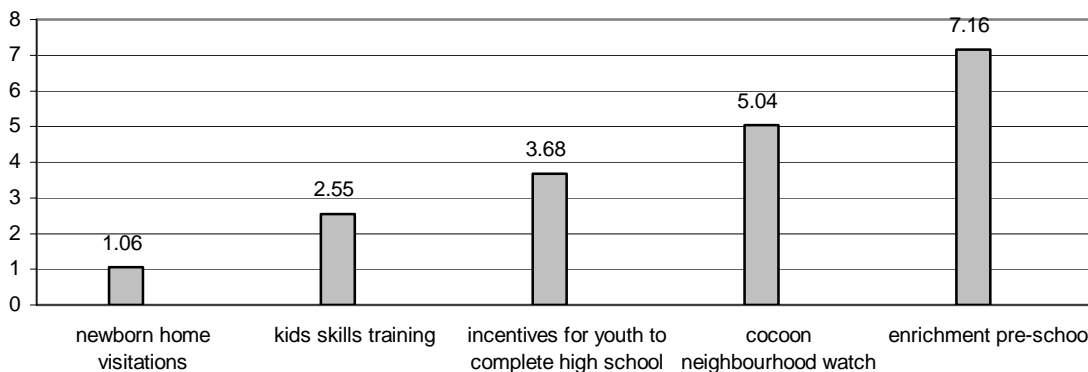
It's clear that crime prevention can produce a lot of impact at a very low cost. As seen with *Tandem Montreal* (see p.14), an annual investment of \$1.50 per resident has significantly reduced the City's levels of crime and victimization by up to 50%.

Investing in families, children, and youth is clearly a smart way to reduce local crime problems.

Investing in crime prevention is also cost-beneficial. Unlike more traditional forms of crime control (i.e., police and corrections), crime prevention provides collateral financial benefits, through residents' continued education, successful employment, lower child protection needs, lower health care costs, paid taxes, and so on¹. Investing in children and youth means they will be productive adults later on.

For every dollar spent towards crime prevention, an investment return is often present. As shown in the graph below, a \$7.16 return was gained on every dollar originally invested in an enrichment pre-school program for at-risk children and their families.

Graph 2. Cost-benefit ratio for crime prevention programs³².



This evidence is clearly strong enough to invest more in what is cost-effective and cost-beneficial and less in what is not. **It's not a matter of spending more, but of spending more wisely.**

A SAFE COMMUNITY VISION FOR OTTAWA

To achieve *A Caring and Inclusive City* characterized in part by *Personal Safety and Security*, (Guiding Principles, OP, p.2) Ottawa's **Human Services Plan** outlines 5 strategic directions, including "*Safe and Healthy Communities*" and a "*Focus on Prevention*" (p.19).

Safe and Healthy Communities are central to Ottawa's 20/20 long-term goals of building a city of distinct, livable communities. Ottawa neighbourhoods must benefit from a **quality of life** that is reflected in a **sense of personal safety**, and social, financial, physical and emotional well being (HSP, p. 36).

The **Human Services Plan** calls for "a focus on prevention and public education and alternative methods of intervention as a means of promoting public safety and quality of life with programs tailored to specific communities..." (Policy Statement, p.53).

We have already seen that certain crime prevention programs are very effective in reducing particular crime problems (see “Prevention cuts crime significantly” on p.10). This evidence lets us come up with specific short and long-term projections for a safer Ottawa.

Other successful services and programs already underway in Ottawa could surely be integrated into a more comprehensive municipal crime prevention strategy. This would increase co-ordination and collaboration among existing services, increase accessibility for those who need it most, and further contribute to overall crime reduction impacts.

Although separated into different tables for practical purposes, the impacts of these proactive approaches are not limited to one category, and contribute to many aspects of community safety and well-being.

Safer homes

Home safety is threatened by internal factors such as domestic assault and child abuse, and external threats like vandalism and burglary. It is important for Ottawa residents, young and old, to feel safe within their own home. Based on the evidence of “what works” to prevent crime^{20,25}, the following table provides examples of how the City of Ottawa can ensure safer homes both in the short-term and over time.

<u>Goal</u>	<u>Achievable targets over 2-5 years</u>	<u>Possible actions</u>	<u>Also contributes to:</u>
Safer Homes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> significantly reduce the incidence of domestic assault increase co-operation between police and mental health services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ police/social worker teams ➤ anger management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ decrease in delinquency and emotional problems among youth of participating families
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> reduce child abuse and neglect by at least 50% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ home visits by nurses for high-risk families with newborns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ at least 50% reduction in youth arrest over 15 years for participant kids
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> reduce burglaries by at least 50% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ multi-agency “cocoon” style Neighbourhood Watch program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ friendlier neighbourhoods ➤ decrease in insurance costs
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> reduce calls for service and arrests in high-risk social housing communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ “Project Early Intervention” model 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ inclusiveness ➤ increase co-operation between police and community services

Safer streets

Safety on Ottawa streets is increasingly being threatened by some types of crime (see “Crime in Ottawa” on p.8).

Since a small proportion of teens aged 15 to 19 years account for as much as 50% to 70% of all juvenile offences in Canadian communities, investing in children and youth before its too late seems essential. The following table provides example of what Ottawa could be doing to increase safety on our streets.

<u>Goal</u>	<u>Achievable targets over 3-5 years</u>	<u>Possible actions</u>	<u>Also contributes to:</u>
Safer Streets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reduce youth arrest rates by at least 50%, including for property crime • reduce overall crime in neighbourhoods by 15%-30% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ improve parenting skills and child social skills for disruptive children ➤ provide help and incentives for disadvantaged youth to complete high school ➤ include most high-risk youth in positive activities and skills training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ decrease in school expulsions ➤ increase levels of post-secondary education
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reduce violent crime by at least 20% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ all of the above ➤ strategic policing: use crime data to identify and problem-solve with residents and businesses of crime “hot spots”, using proactive solutions ➤ strategic policing: use crime data to analyse local drug and weapon problems, and use problem-solving to implement and evaluate targeted solutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ improve relationship between police, residents, and businesses of high-risk neighbourhoods

Safer schools

Bullying in schools has recently received a lot of attention nation-wide. To ensure the greatest impact where it is most needed, the various anti-bullying initiatives underway in Ottawa could be integrated into a more global and inclusive strategy for community safety. Schools already benefiting from anti-bullying initiatives could share lessons learned and further benefit from increased resources.

As a focal point for intervention, schools could also surely benefit from information on the most common risk factors found in Canadian children and adolescents. Data sources, like Canada’s ongoing National Longitudinal Survey on Children and Youth - created by Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) and Statistics Canada in 1994³³ - can be very useful in this regard.

Programs that have worked elsewhere could also be considered. For example, the Norwegian “information and involvement” anti-bullying initiative to co-ordinate efforts between parents and

teachers decreased school bullying by 50% and other anti-social behaviour by 15% within 2 years of operation (see p.10).

Safer workplaces

Commercial areas and businesses are at-risk of being victims of vandalism, theft, robbery, and so on, which can leave some feeling unsafe in their workplace. Through increased strategic communication and collaboration between businesses, law enforcement, various City services, and the community, businesses could benefit from significant decreases in threatening incidents and a better working relationship with the police.

For example, creating a strong partnership between the business community and law enforcement to come up with and implement proactive solutions can produce a 25% drop in commercial robberies and double the rate of solved commercial incidents (see p.11).

HOW DO WE GET THERE?

Through leadership and accountability for the safety of Ottawa and its residents, the City can promote community ownership for safety: preventing crime is everyone's business!

The following recommendations outline the steps needed to put Ottawa's 20/20 vision for community safety in motion.

➤ **ESTABLISH A PERMANENT CRIME PREVENTION RESPONSIBILITY CENTRE**

1. Board of Directors

Establish a **Board of Directors** with a strong link to the City of Ottawa

- To ensure effectiveness and sustainability, this report shows the importance of having a responsibility centre with strong ties to the City:
 - allocate 2 seats for City representatives (e.g., Mayor on ex-officio basis, and City Councillor)
 - allocate 1 seat for a high-level City administrator (e.g., Deputy City Manager)
- Other institutions are also key in tackling the underlying links to crime:
 - allocate 1 seat for a high-level representative from School Boards
 - allocate 1 seat for a high-level representative from the Ottawa Police
- The *Panel for Community Crime Prevention* will name a Nominating Committee charged with proposing other Board Members according to set criteria:
 - Nominees will represent key stakeholders able to contribute to community safety and influence the underlying causes of crime, such as:

- housing, social services and public health
 - federal and provincial agencies
 - community agencies for families, children , youth, and well-being
 - victim services
 - community groups
 - business sector
 - academics
 - media
 - community members
 - immigrant groups
 - women’s groups
- Total number of Board Members = 12
 - the Board of Directors will report to the City of Ottawa’s Health, Recreation & Social Services (HRSS) Committee, which ultimately reports to City Council

2. Staff

Secondment of **2 full-time staff** from the Community and Protective Services (CPS) department to the new crime prevention responsibility centre

- the Board of Directors will establish criteria for 2 full-time positions
- a competition will be held within the CPS department for both positions:
 - 1 employee will serve as the centre’s **Executive Director**
 - 1 employee will serve as the centre’s **Community Development Officer**
- employees will initially serve a 2-year term, with the possibility of renewal or replacement
- employee salaries will come directly from the CPS budget (by secondment), and are separate from the contribution requested below
- the Executive Director will report directly to the centre’s Board of Directors

“Providing administrative resources, including a coordinator’s position, can make economic sense for a municipality if the resulting community activity improves the effectiveness or efficiency of existing resources” (*FCM Municipal Drug Strategy Pilot Project, 2003*).

3. Responsibilities of the crime prevention coalition

- Vision: To reduce crime and enhance community safety in Ottawa through evidence-based crime prevention.
- Broad goals:
 - To strategically develop and implement a community-wide crime prevention plan to reduce crime and enhance community safety in Ottawa.
 - To monitor and evaluate on an ongoing basis the process and impacts of plans and implementation.

- Terms of reference:
 - co-ordinate and mobilize key players and resources
 - develop a clear mandate with specific priorities and targets
 - conduct strategic analysis of Ottawa crime and its causes
 - develop and implement an action plan
 - provide expertise, resources, and capacity development
 - evaluate process and outcomes
 - get additional funds to make it happen
 - from other levels of government (project-specific funds)
 - from key stakeholders
 - from private sector
 - improve quality of Ottawa crime and victimization data and information
 - gain community involvement and conduct public consultations
 - develop a communication strategy for community awareness and education
 - report at least annually on activities and progress

The section titled “Cities as spearhead for effective crime prevention” (p.12) and accompanying diagram (Figure 1 on p.13) provide an overview of the role and responsibilities of a crime prevention coalition.

4. Funds and resources

- sources will be needed for office equipment and other administrative necessities:
 - contributions and donations in-kind will be sought from key stakeholders
- To get project-specific funding from other levels of government and additional funds from the private sector, core funding is needed to come up with an appropriate mandate and plan of action with specific targets and goals:
 - request from City Council: contribution of \$200,000 in 2005 and \$400,000 in 2006

With a rapidly changing City and a steadily increasing police budget, investing in preventing crime before it happens is the way to put a stop to the mounting financial costs of reacting to crime in Ottawa.

The added cost to this year’s budget to fulfil the current recommendations will therefore significantly lower the City’s climbing crime-related costs in years to come, and demonstrate the City’s dedication to its 20/20 Vision for community safety.

The best time to act would be 5 years ago. The second best time is now. The worse time is 5 years from now.

Endnotes

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- ⁵ Statistics Canada (2001). Children and youth in Canada. Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics Profile Series: Ottawa. Online at: www.statcan.ca/english/freepub/85F0033MIE/85F0033MIE01005.pdf
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- ¹⁰ FCM Big City Mayor's Caucus (2004). Item 15: Motion BCMC.2003-2004.02.15.
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- ²² National Crime Prevention Centre (2002). Project early intervention: Interim project findings, 2001. Online at: www.prevention.gc.ca
- ²³ Due to various factors - like a general unwillingness to co-operate with police/authority - traditional Neighbourhood Watch programs run solely by police have experienced difficulties in gaining the active participation of residents in at-risk neighbourhoods where the program may be needed the most. See: Sherman et al. (2002). Evidence based crime prevention. New York: Routledge.
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- ³² Adapted from International Centre for the Prevention of Crime (1999). Crime prevention digest II. Montreal: Author. (p.44-45)
- ³³ Visit Statistics Canada at: <http://stewwww.statcan.ca/english/sdds/4450.htm>