



SMART ON CRIME

2015-2018

Making the Connection between Community Safety
and Community Vitality in Waterloo Region

me



A Message from Regional Council



Waterloo Region Crime Prevention Council (WRPCPC) has worked tirelessly since its inception to bring people together for a shared vision of a community where everyone has promise, everyone can be safe, and everyone can play a role in preventing crime before it happens. This is reflected in the new strategic plan Smart on Crime 2015-2018. The plan is grounded in strong connections to the community and is committed to engagement, good evidence, and innovation.

Regional Council has always supported grassroots efforts to prevent crime before it happens. By calling attention to root causes and advancing ideas and actions for change, the Crime Prevention Council has become a major player in helping to create a safe and healthy Waterloo Region.

On behalf of Regional Council, thank you to the members and staff of WRCPC and the Friends of Crime Prevention for all of your work. We wish you well as you move forward to implement this plan for action.

Ken Seiling,
Regional Chair



A Message from the Waterloo Region Crime Prevention Council



Building on **Smart on Crime in Waterloo Region 2010-2014**, the priority for the Waterloo Region Crime Prevention Council for 2015-2018 is to further grow the momentum of crime prevention through social development in our community and beyond. We thank all of you who responded to surveys by phone

or online, participated in group consultations, or otherwise contributed to getting us focused in our efforts.

We consulted with nearly 1,500 people in the community. It was gratifying to discover the root causes of crime is a concept that is generally well understood. Waterloo Region has become smarter about crime prevention.

We are encouraged by the observation that the public understanding about why crime happens and how it can be prevented translates into many local actions that contribute to community safety and vitality. Other municipalities across the country increasingly engage in crime prevention efforts, national polls show public appreciation that crime is a social and community issue, and provinces are looking beyond policing and corrections to integrated and comprehensive approaches to prevent crime. Being part of that momentum is a privilege.

Along with that privilege comes the responsibility to stay responsive to our community and collaborate whenever possible. You provided us with directions for alleviating poverty, homelessness, isolation, disengagement, discrimination and stigmatization. You expressed deep concerns about how mental illness and addictions put people at a disadvantage in so many areas of life including being overrepresented in corrections.

You also provided us with creative solutions for addressing the conditions that underpin crime and victimization. Your thoughtful and often strikingly compassionate ideas will inform our actions over the next four years. Those actions, which are beyond the scope of a Crime Prevention Council, will compel us to further align our work with others through dynamic partnerships.

Together we can continue to build a community that is safe and vibrant for all people living in Waterloo Region now and in the future.

We thank Regional Council for their continued support, for sharing our vision and, above all, for their trust in community. We are excited about the road ahead.

Chris Cowie, Chair
Waterloo Region Crime Prevention Council

Vision, Mission and Values

(updated 2015)



Our Vision

A safe and promising future for all people in our community.

Our Mission

We advance ideas and actions that alleviate root causes of crime and improve social well-being.

Our Values

Collaboration: We believe that community safety cannot be achieved by any one person or organization. It takes all of us working together in partnership.

Commitment: We believe that the creation of a safe and promising future for all in our community takes time and perseverance.

Compassion: We believe that a compassionate world becomes possible when everyone is treated with dignity, equity and respect (adapted from The Compassion Charter)

Courage: We believe in honest dialogue, challenging misconceptions, facing uncertainty and at times making bold decisions.

Why do we do this work?

We know that when the well-being of ALL people matters then social justice and positive change follow.

Our Mandate

We engage and connect citizens, decision makers and service providers in order to reduce crime, victimization and fear of crime through:

- Promotion of Partnerships
- Focused Problem Solving
- Support of Grass Roots Initiatives
- Capacity Building
- Information Sharing
- Public Education and Awareness Raising
- Evidence-Based Interventions
- Policy Development
- Advising Local Government
- Advocacy for Change



What You Said...

“I see poverty, unemployment, lack of access to higher education and marginalization all closely aligned with high risk behaviour and victimization”.

The consultation results show that our community generally understands the root causes of crime and victimization. The majority of people spoke of conditions that put people at a disadvantage and increase vulnerabilities, such as:

- Poverty, insufficient wages and other inequalities that reduce life opportunities
- Lack of affordable housing and homelessness and the vulnerabilities they create
- The link between problematic substance use and crime
- The prevalence of mental health challenges in the community
- Concerns about the victimization of the Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual and Trans (LGBT) community, racialized groups, newcomers, First Nations, Métis and Inuit (FNMI), persons with disabilities, older adults and others

The impact of exclusion and inequality is detrimental, not only for individuals and their families, but ultimately for our whole community.

People also spoke of solutions, such as:

- Employment, education and training
- Collaborative approaches to social problems
- Increasing engagement in community life
- Addressing the needs of youth and providing them with opportunities to reach their potential
- Increasing a sense of belonging and neighbourhood connections and engagement
- Strengthening families

Most people recommended addressing the root causes of crime through social services and improving economic, social and community conditions. Far fewer recommendations focused on longer jail sentences and increased arrests.

To review the full **Root Causes of Crime in Waterloo Region Consultation Report** please go to www.preventingcrime.ca.

“Ultimately, we need to create communities and neighbourhoods where people can afford to live, make a decent living wage, and have opportunities for social interaction and support when needed”.



What We Heard...

“By creating awareness and generating dialogue about the root causes, we can move toward action and engage the citizens in the solution.”

We took data from the surveys and focus groups and hosted a **Friends of Crime Prevention** meeting in March 2015 to explore what issues needed the most attention in our community. The Crime Prevention Council then reviewed a comprehensive summary of all consultation efforts, met with their sectors whenever possible, and set priorities for this plan. Staying true to what we heard was the imperative. Keeping it doable became the mantra.

PRIORITY AREAS

We heard that **youth** and **neighbourhoods** are important areas for preventing crime and improving community vitality. We agree.

- Building on the experiences from our neighbourhood engagement work, we made local solutions a clear priority
- Building on the knowledge from the inREACH Street Gang Prevention project, we decided to develop a strategic focus on youth and their potential

In setting these priorities, WRCPC is aligned with the strategic goals of other key stakeholders in the community.

Finally, many priority actions fall within the area of **growing the momentum for smart on crime** by moving ahead with current WRCPC actions and further immersing ourselves in existing or emerging Regional, Provincial and National efforts that support community vitality.

KEY APPROACHES

To accomplish this we will take the following key approaches:

- Balance knowledge with innovation
- Increase engagement of the community and its key actors
- Leverage dynamic partnerships for transformative change
- Advocate for equity and belonging

These approaches echo the strategic directions of our previous plan. In Smart on Crime 2015-2018, the priority areas – youth, neighbourhoods and growing the momentum for Smart on Crime - will take all four key approaches with the goal of achieving comprehensive and integrated outcomes.

It is at the intersection of **WHAT** we will focus on (priority areas) and **HOW** we will go about doing that (key approaches) that we created “mini visions” to tell us **what success will look like**.

“Consider the systemic issues and focus on community building and community collaboration.”



“Vision without action is merely a dream. Action without vision just passes the time. Vision with action can change the world.” (Joel Barker).

Principles that will guide us:

As a community based body that seeks to affect collective impact we need to balance forward thinking with staying responsive to current developments and trends. To assist us in this task we will adhere to the following principles:

- Focus on root causes and broader system change
- Put pressing problems into a long-term planning framework with commitment to accountability
- Take a holistic view of all issues
- Align with other community actors and avoid duplication
- Make the margins central to our planning and actions by listening closely to the voices that are often not heard
- Expect the unforeseen and prepare to deal with uncertainty
- Learn from mistakes as much as from successes
- Dream big and dive deep

(Adapted from “The big picture approach to collective community impact”)





Youth: Unleashing the Potential of ALL Youth

“Reduce the apathy [that] a socially neglected child has and future crimes will be reduced. If we can show them that they are a part of the world around them, then they will value their involvement in the community rather than fight against the world.”

Key Approaches	Actions
Base change in good evidence and innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop a longer term project to demonstrate that investments in early childhood prevent crime and victimization.
Expand reach through understanding and engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Collaborate with rural communities in promoting healthy inter-generational connections.• Infuse community safety efforts with the knowledge that youth engagement prevents crime and is a smart investment.
Lead side by side: leverage dynamic partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work with the community to develop and implement actions to engage youth, particularly those who are currently disengaged or hard to reach.• Improve outcomes for young people by building on their skills, talents and capacities.• Leverage the role of WRCPC as a national model to secure resources for youth in high risk situations.
Advocate for equity & belonging. Reduce marginalization & discrimination	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bring the “Roots of Youth Violence” report off the shelf and advocate for its implementation.



We will know we have succeeded when...

- We are making a significant contribution in Waterloo Region to the wider evidence base for prevention.
- Youth have a strong and empowered voice as partners for positive community change.
- Stakeholders share a focus on youth success and create timely approaches for preventing youth from coming into conflict with the law.
- Youth who have been disengaged and underserved experience a greater sense of belonging.

“Rural youth do not have the population numbers to warrant expensive youth centres and programs. What role [do we have] in ensuring equity across Waterloo Region regarding services and opportunities for youth?”





Neighbourhoods: Building Local Capacity for Change

“A strong sense of belonging in a neighbourhood or community will go a long way to preventing crime.”

Key Approaches	Actions
Base change in good evidence and innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Highlight increased risks through mapping crime and related social conditions for the purpose of focusing resources.• Advocate for longer term investments in neighbourhood interventions rooted in good evidence and community experience.
Expand reach through understanding and engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mobilize the Friends of Crime Prevention and neighbourhood leaders to strengthen communities.• Decrease the isolation of older adults and persons with disabilities by drawing attention to the effects of victimization and fear of crime.
Lead side by side: leverage dynamic partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Counter the stigmatization of mental illness and addictions and promote empathic neighbourhood responses.• Support understanding of the Truth and Reconciliation Committee Report (TRC) in the context of local community and crime prevention efforts.
Advocate for equity & belonging. Reduce marginalization & discrimination	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Share the WRCPC position on prostitution laws with key decision makers and monitor the impacts of legislative changes on the local community.• Increase opportunities for the successful reintegration of persons who have been incarcerated.



“More places in the community where people facing stigmatization or who are excluded can go, can be accepted and welcomed.”

We will know we have succeeded when...

- Neighbourhoods across Waterloo Region have a strategy for community safety.
- People feel connected to their neighbours and their community.
- Community champions grow and sustain community strengths.
- Communities accept people for who they are (“my neighbourhood includes ALL people”).

“At the end of the day, it is people who care about their neighbours who will make the difference.”





Smart on Crime: Advancing the Momentum

“Root causes are hard to single out. The interrelationship of risk factors needs to be considered...”

Key Approaches	Actions
Base change in good evidence and innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advance the reach and impact of WRPCPC as a clearinghouse and catalyst for community safety.• Monitor and report on trends in violence in Waterloo Region to maximize prevention efforts.• Increase understanding of the root causes of crime and victimization and how reducing conditions such as poverty and inequality strengthen community safety.
Expand reach through understanding and engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase participation in the Friends of Crime Prevention program in numbers and in all aspects of diversity.• Increase the impact of the WRPCPC sector round tables in social and community development for crime prevention.• Expand the anti-bullying THINK campaign into additional settings.• Support the longer term objectives of the Integrated Drugs Strategy.
Lead side by side: leverage dynamic partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work with the National Municipal Network to grow the number of municipalities engaged in crime prevention through social development across Canada.• Work with the Waterloo Region Economic Development Corporation in connecting economic development with equity and community safety.• Play a key role in promoting restorative practices as a first response in human interactions.
Advocate for equity & belonging. Reduce marginalization & discrimination	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mobilize interventions which decrease the risk factors for crime and victimization with a special focus on inequality, exclusion and stigmatization.• Address hate crime by supporting efforts to action the report “Breaking the Silence on Hidden Violence”.• Actively include and to advocate for the inclusion of people with lived experience in planning and intervention efforts.



We will know we have succeeded when ...

- The community and its leaders use and support promising practices in crime prevention.
- The language of root causes of crime is increasingly common in system conversations.
- New and inclusive partnerships work for systemic changes that are critical for community vitality.
- We pursue the well-being of everyone and do not settle for the well-being of most.

“Strategies should be informed by research but also informed by community knowledge and action together.”



⑩ When I say
“CRIME PREVENTION”..
BATMAN (25) ROOT CAUSES
SAFETY COMMUNITY



Together We Can Make a Difference....



Whenever a consultation is completed there is the inevitable excitement about what we heard coupled with the daunting task of doing it justice. We hope you see yourself in the pages of this plan because it is your plan as much as ours. It is a road map through which together we can further unlock the power of prevention.

Any road will take twists and turns. At such times new challenges and opportunities no doubt arise and it is important to stay focused on the overall vision of a community where everyone is safe and everyone can have a promising future. Becoming smart on crime is only a first step. What creates momentum is our collective willingness to act on that knowledge and community wisdom. Simply put, a plan remains just a plan unless we have the commitment and the courage to act on it. Fortunately in Waterloo Region we can build on a vibrant history in which many individuals and groups do just that, work as partners and practice compassion.

This next part of the journey has just begun and we invite you to be part of it. You can do so in many ways. You may wish to become a **Friend of Crime Prevention**. Being a friend of crime prevention makes you part of the **Smart on Crime** momentum and supports investment in what works. You can

do so through directly linking to the work of the Council or you can use your knowledge in your own places of influence: your home, your neighbourhood, your work, your community groups, your faith groups and more.

We thank Regional Council and the Regional Municipality of Waterloo for their steadfast support of crime prevention through social development and for the chance to work in such close proximity to our community. It affords us unique capacities for affecting lasting change.

We are keen to welcome everyone to our new location at the historic Governor's House on Queen Street in Kitchener. The symbolism of a crime prevention community office calling the former residence of the warden of the Waterloo jail (gaol) its home is hard to miss. Often we can only see progress when we look back in time and realize that as time moves on our community solutions move along with it.

We look forward to seizing this chapter in our evolution as a team charged with supporting one of the longest standing crime prevention councils in Canada. And we hope to do so alongside you and the many individuals and community partners we have come to appreciate. Thank you for all you do! Together even the seemingly most elusive goals can be realized.

Christiane Sadeler, Executive Director
On behalf of the WRCPC Staff Team



Waterloo Region Crime Prevention Council 2015

Regional Council: Jane Mitchell and Helen Jowett

Rural and Urban Representatives: Denise Squire and Shayne Turner (Vice Chair)

Local Police: Doug Thiel

Education – JK to Grade 12: John Shewchuk and Peter Rubenschuh

Education – Post Secondary: Dr. Michael Beazley

Restorative Justice: Chris Cowie (Chair)

Mental Health: Don Roth

Addiction: Jennifer Mains

Neighbourhood Development: Laurie Strome and Courtney Didier

Community Development: Christine Bird

Family Support: Pari Karem

Community Health Centers: Bill Davidson

Domestic Violence Response: Mary Zilney

Business: Andrew Jackson

Focus Populations

First Nations, Meti & Inuit: Derek Haime

LGBT: Judith Lodi (vacant as of July 2015)

Persons with Disabilities: Sharon Ward-Zeller

Youth: Marla Pender

Older Adults: Irene O'Toole

Community-at-Large: Frank Johnson, Joe-Ann McComb, Barry Cull and Dr. Felix Munger

Research and Evaluation: Dr. Mark Pancer

Ex-Officio and Alternates

Regional Chair: Ken Seiling

Chief of Police: Bryan Larkin, Alternate: Michael Haffner

Commissioner of Community Services:

Douglas Bartholomew-Saunders

Medical Officer of Health: Dr. Liana Nolan,
Alternate: Sharlene Segwick Walsh

Executive Director of Family and Children Services:

Alison Scott, Alternate: Karen Spencer

Chair of Waterloo Region Police Services Board:

Tom Galloway, Alternate: Peter Ringrose

Crown Attorney's Office: Andre Rajna (until September 2015), Mark Poland

Warden of Grand Valley Institution for Women:

Nancy Kinsman (vacant as of July 2015),
Alternate: Liz Vitek (acting warden as of July 2015)

Manager of Legal Services Waterloo-Wellington:

Angela Vanderheyden

Lifetime Honourary Members: William Wilson (Past Chair), Peter Ringrose and Irene O'Toole



Special Thanks To...

The nearly 1,500 participants in the consultation, focus groups, phone and online surveys. Unless otherwise indicated the quotes used throughout this plan were provided by these participants.

Overlap Associates and the Strategic Plan Development Steering Committee: Dr. William Walters (Chair), Nancy Kinsman, Dr. Felix Munger, Doug Thiel, Shayne Turner, and William Wilson.

Mackenzie Eckert, a young Cambridge artist who we commissioned to create the Smart On Crime cover in acrylic paint.

Photo contributors: Region of Waterloo, Matt Riehl, WRPC staff and inREACH youth

To view the plan online, or request alternative formats, visit www.preventingcrime.ca or www.smartoncrime.ca

Contact us:

73 Queen Street North
Kitchener, ON N2H 2H1
Tel: 519-575-4400 ext 3474

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