

## **SAFER MCCAULEY 2018-2019 REPORT BACK**

Dear McCauley Community Stakeholder,

Safer McCauley would like to provide you with the following Report Back regarding engagements and actions that have taken place throughout 2018 and 2019.

### **SAFER MCCAULEY SUMMER ENGAGEMENT**

Direct consultation with community members is the cornerstone of Safer McCauley. Only through ongoing consultation can we build a legitimate action plan for engagements and community-driven initiatives. Safer McCauley has been door-to-door this summer to exchange information with community members. We have distributed information about Safer McCauley and safety resources; and we have collected information about priority concerns and potential solutions. The information collected will help guide our steps in 2019-2020 and beyond.

Feedback from community members we met with has led to several findings:

Their top 10 identified safety-related concerns were, in order of priority:

- 1) Homelessness
- 2) Needle Debris
- 3) Trespassing and Loitering
- 4) Theft
- 5) Drug Activity (Use and Dealing)
- 6) Problem Properties
- 7) Garbage and Litter
- 8) Sexual Exploitation
- 9) Break & Enter
- 10) Speeding

The above concerns vary somewhat from the following list of priorities identified previously at Community Meetings and online at [safermccauley.ca](http://safermccauley.ca) (**priorities common to both lists are in red**):

- 1) **Problem Properties**
- 2) Increased Positive Street Level Activities (Neighbourhood Vibrancy)
- 3) **Concentration of Poverty**
- 4) **Drug Dealing**
- 5) Business Growth (and Diversity)
- 6) **Garbage**
- 7) **Needle Debris**
- 8) Proliferation of Pharmacies
- 9) **Break & Enter**
- 10) Gang Activity

Amongst participants, the key element that makes them feel safe is **knowing their neighbours**, followed closely by **target hardening** (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design; Self-defence). Next is the **presence of police**, particularly Beat Officers. While **many generally feel safe**, it is unfortunate that **many others do not**. **Several stated that the way to feel safe is to stay at home.**

The number one identified solution to safety concerns is **increased police presence and closer relationships with police personnel**. Many community members would like to see **improved services and housing for street-involved individuals**. However, an equal number would like to see **service agencies closed or relocated, and services for street-involved individuals reduced**. Many would like to see **increased involvement, action and legislation from all levels of government**; and an **improved response to needle debris**.

Safer McCauley's Summer Engagement was a component of our ongoing process of gathering community knowledge. This process promotes inclusion, participation, capacity-building, and most importantly, community leadership. The information collected allows community members to determine how and where we focus our efforts. We're now able to respond by planning Community Conversations and citizen-driven initiatives that address stakeholders' priorities.

Throughout 2019-2020, we will strive to facilitate engagements and actions that consider the concerns and solutions identified through community members' feedback. We will also focus on the desire for increased connectedness with one another and closer relationships with EPS and Bylaw.

## **SAFER MCCAULEY ONLINE:**

### **WEBSITE**

### **FACEBOOK**

### **"WHO TO CALL WHEN?"**

A website ([safermccauley.ca](http://safermccauley.ca)) and Facebook (@SaferMcCauley) have been developed to connect community members to news about engagements and actions.

- Website: <http://safermccauley.ca/>
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/safermccauley/>

Safermccauley.ca contains interactive exercises that invite stakeholders to collectively define a safer community, identify their priority concerns, and contribute ideas regarding solutions and citizen-driven initiatives. This allows stakeholders to participate at their own pace in their own space. If you haven't yet participated, please consider doing so:

- Community Priorities Survey: [https://www.surveymonkey.com/survey-taken/?sm=0LS7w0WJG4WFcsqtzV58aAF7x\\_2FrstI\\_2BKyGkPzx8XHZYt0J8aaFZwh4\\_2FdNzT634M3\\_2B3XsRdyDSXlx3DU48HDIL9ueHGq3v2zL2PHJpKLFLE](https://www.surveymonkey.com/survey-taken/?sm=0LS7w0WJG4WFcsqtzV58aAF7x_2FrstI_2BKyGkPzx8XHZYt0J8aaFZwh4_2FdNzT634M3_2B3XsRdyDSXlx3DU48HDIL9ueHGq3v2zL2PHJpKLFLE)
- Defining Safety Survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ZVCFBB5>
- Share Your Ideas: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ZJXHMx8>

McCauley Revitalization's annual "Who to Call When?" documents have been an asset to community members over the years. The latest information about McCauley safety resources and contacts has been made available at our website's Resources page. Direct contacts for EPS McCauley Beats and our Municipal Enforcement (Bylaw) Officer can be found there.

- Resources: <http://safermccauley.ca/resources/>

## **EPS MUNICIPAL ENFORCEMENT (BYLAW) REPORTING**

Direct relationships with EPS and Bylaw are valued by community members. Both EPS and Bylaw have regularly attended Safer McCauley Community Meetings; and both have expressed a willingness to work alongside community members for increased safety and well-being.

Community members often express frustration regarding reporting crime and disorder. However, reporting remains essential. Resources can not be allocated to situations that go unreported. Safer McCauley has arranged with our EPS Beat Officers and Municipal Enforcement (Bylaw) Officer to make their direct contacts available to you. This special arrangement provides you with the means to report concerns directly to them. It also promotes closer relationships between community and enforcement resources. **Our EPS Beats and our Bylaw Officer want to hear from you.** Visit [safermccauley.ca](http://safermccauley.ca) for their contact information:

- Resources: <http://safermccauley.ca/resources/>

## **COFFEE WITH A COP**

In keeping with community members' desire for closer relationships with EPS, Coffee with a Cop has been established in McCauley. At May's Community Meeting, we asked those present whether they felt Coffee with a Cop would be a worthwhile program to pursue in McCauley; and the response was almost unanimously positive.

Coffee with a Cop brings community members together with EPS Beats – over coffee – to build closer relationships and share information with one another. Our Municipal Enforcement (Bylaw) Officer is also committed to attending. The first event took place on July 10 at Zocalo, bringing together 37 stakeholders.

## **THE MCCAULEY LITTER SQUAD**

Community members have identified litter and garbage as a priority concern. A March Community Meeting brought 28 stakeholders together to design a citizen-driven response to litter in our community. The outcome is the McCauley Litter Squad. The first two Litter Squad one-hour "blitzes" brought out an average of 22 participants and removed 45 bags of litter and approximately 125 needles from our streets. Together with the Mustard Seed/Revitalization needle pick up program, the Litter Squad is also helping to address the identified concern of Needle Debris.

The Litter Squad exemplifies a collective approach to community wellness. Capital City Clean Up has provided Litter Kits. MINT Health and Drugs has supplied sharps boxes. Revitalization and Safer McCauley have shared food expenses. For May's blitz, Revitalization arranged for the disposal of full bags at the City's Big Bin event. June's blitz was coordinated alongside the E4C/MCL Annual Community Clean Up. Several service agencies have made a commitment to participating, to looking at opening their dumpsters for future blitzes, and to increased clean up activity around their facilities. BGCBigs has suggested that their kids could participate. MLA Janis Irwin and an altruistic group called Redemption Icon have given generously of their time to pitch in. And participants have gone away feeling positive about their contribution.

This initiative addresses an identified community priority, promotes shared responsibility, and builds stronger relationships between community members - and with external resources. There is potential

for the activity to gather useful information to pass along to Bylaw, EPS, the Mustard Seed needle clean up crew and others.

**The Litter Squad will activate again in coordination with the City's September 14 Big Bin Event.** Please consider taking part.

Throughout this spring and summer, numerous actions and groups have addressed litter and garbage in McCauley, including:

- 2 McCauley Litter Squad blitzes
- 2 large item pick-up days coordinated by McCauley Revitalization
- Ongoing, as-needed large item pick ups coordinated by Revitalization
- the E4C/MCL Annual Community Clean Up
- the Mustard Seed/Revitalization regular litter clean up in Chinatown
- Downtown Proud
- Redemption Icon
- the Bissell Centre's regular clean up along the LRT tracks
- 2 City of Edmonton Big Bin Events
- a Capital City Clean Up litter event

The ever-increasing number of activities taking place to address litter and garbage in McCauley demonstrates that our community has an acute issue that demands an enhanced response.

### **NEEDLE CLEAN UP PARTNERSHIP**

Needle debris has been a concern for some time in McCauley. Participants in Safer McCauley's summer engagement identified it as their number two concern. The City of Edmonton's Capital City Clean Up responds to stray needles only on public property. In McCauley, we are fortunate to have an additional service, staffed by community members from the Mustard Seed and supported by McCauley Revitalization. On their regular rounds of McCauley, this crew is also picking up litter in Chinatown. Earlier this year, Revitalization invited Safer McCauley and the McCauley Community League to join - and provide support for - this partnership. We look forward to contributing to the strengthening of this partnership and improving the collective response to needle debris.

### **PROBLEM PROPERTIES**

Problem Properties have been a pervasive and persistent concern in McCauley for years. Through our initial engagement to identify safety-related priorities – as well as our ongoing online engagement – community members identified Problem Properties as their top concern.

The Residential Living Governance Committee (RLGC) is the organization currently leading the response to the issue of Problem Properties. The RLGC is a multi-agency model, including leadership and frontline staff from Alberta Health Services, EPS (R2CU), Government of Alberta (Occupational Health and Safety, and Sheriffs), and City of Edmonton (Fire Rescue Services, Safety Codes Compliance, Community Standards, and Housing and Homelessness). It also includes the Residential Inspection Safety Compliance Team (RISC), which conducts on-site inspections.

On May 15, Safer McCauley hosted the RLGC to speak about its work. Community members were joined by MLA Janis Irwin and Councillor Scott McKeen. The RLGC described its process and reported an increase in the number of inspections they undertake. Attendees had many questions. Councillor McKeen expressed the need for information about who the committee reports to and a means for

citizens to contact the committee. Both he and McCauley Community League President, Greg Lane expressed the need for public oversight and more outward communication about the committee's work and its successes. Several in attendance saw the need for enhanced legislation to hold owners responsible for what takes place at the properties. All attendees wanted to know what citizens can do to be a part of the solution.

Lack of permanent city-wide supportive housing is sometimes cited as a factor contributing to the issue of Problem Properties, as well as to the concentration of poverty in core neighbourhoods. Since May's Community Meeting, City Council's Urban Planning Committee moved to amend zoning bylaws to allow permanent supportive housing to be built in more neighbourhoods across the city. Councillor McKeen successfully forwarded a subsequent motion to the amendment aimed specifically at addressing the pervasive issue of slumlords. The motion requests that "Administration provide a report on the efficacy and performance measures associated with the Residential Living Governance Committee's work to date, including the Residential Living Governance Committee's reporting structure, as well as its lessons learned about **possible legislative, bylaw or resourcing gaps that may impede the ability of the Committee to deliver on its intended outcome.**" Administration was given 12 weeks to report back to council. This action by Councillor McKeen is a significant outcome of his experience attending our May Community Meeting.

## **SAFETY THROUGH VIBRANCY**

### **RECOVER**

#### **ABUNDANT COMMUNITIES**

*"Many studies show that there are two major determinants of our local safety. One is how many neighbours we know by name, and the second is how often we are present and associated in public – outside our houses."* (John McKnight and Cormac Russell)

If you want a space to be safe, you need to use it. Community members have expressed an interest in increasing neighbourhood vibrancy and safety through activating spaces. At our March meeting - in addition to discussing a response to litter - we brainstormed around increasing positive street level activities to add vibrancy to McCauley. The conversation resulted in a large list of possibilities, including a dog walkabout, small-scale do-it-yourself infrastructure (garbage sheds, planters, Little Free Libraries....), night markets, corner concerts, street games, and activating alleyways. The focus was on achievable, manageable, and sustainable projects that might influence other conditions such as safety, connectedness and cleanliness. This list is available upon request.

In May, Safer McCauley, the McCauley Community League and McCauley Revitalization joined in a similar conversation around neighbourhood vibrancy, hosted by the City of Edmonton Recover Urban Wellness Plan. Recover develops and tests small solutions (or prototypes) to improve urban wellness. There, active alleyways were also discussed.

The conversation was picked up again at our June Community Meeting, with a focus on alley activation. A community-driven plan for an alley event was sketched out. And now, collaboration between community partners is activating a back alley, with support from Recover. This event has the potential to give a boost to the Abundant Communities program - and increase awareness of some of the resources it makes available to the public in collaboration with the McCauley Community League.

## **DOG WALKABOUT**

McCauley community members have made a clear statement about the importance of knowing – and watching out for their neighbours. The dog walkabout once brought people together for a regular “eyes on the street” event. If revived, this once-popular activity will be a fun way to promote connectivity, vibrancy and safety. Get some exercise; get to know new corners of the community; and get to know your neighbours!

## **PHARMACY INVENTORY**

McCauley community members have expressed a desire for increased business growth and diversity. The proliferation of pharmacies has been identified as a concern that conflicts with that desire. The issue is discussed often in the community. While community members don't have an issue with pharmacies fundamentally, they do see the proliferation of pharmacies as opportunistic, predatory, and unnecessary. They are asking questions like, “How many pharmacies does one community need?” and “Why are there no regulations regarding the proximity and location of pharmacies?”

Safer McCauley has compiled an up-to-date inventory of the pharmacies located within McCauley boundaries, or within a three-block radius of the community. Between March 2018 and July 2019, the number increased from approximately 29 to 38. This information has been shared with community partners and Councillor McKeen's Office.

## **SAFER MCCAULEY COMMUNITY MEETINGS**

The first Safer McCauley Community Meeting invited approximately 15 select individuals, most of whom were resources external to the community. With REACH Edmonton's hiring of a McCauley Community Convener to support Safer McCauley, the process has become increasingly inclusive and representative of community. The Convener is a 16-year resident of McCauley. His job is to promote involvement, collaboration and communication; raise awareness of community services; and convene engagement opportunities. Now 250 stakeholders receive email invitations, with broader community invited through social and print media. Over the past year, between 22 and 47 stakeholders have attended each meeting.

Community Meetings have built and reinforced connections – both within the community and between the community and external supports. They have convened residents, community groups, service agencies, business, EPS, REACH, City Departments, City Councillors, MLA's and invited resources.

In order to create a legitimate action plan, Safer McCauley began collecting community knowledge at meetings. Community members have formally identified safety priorities and collectively defined a safer community. The data collected has directly determined the focus of subsequent meetings and led to the creation of citizen-driven initiatives. Meetings have connected community members to information-sharers around such topics as Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED), Supervised Consumption Services, Community Asset Mapping, and Problem Properties. And they have led to the development of initiatives such as The McCauley Litter Squad, McCauley Coffee with a Cop, Back Alley Activation, and the McCauley Dog Walkabout.

Please visit [safermccauley.ca](http://safermccauley.ca) for individual meeting summaries.

## **SAFETY WORKING GROUP**

With a concerted effort to move to action, there is a need to build a McCauley Safety Working Group that will meet regularly to plan engagements and initiatives.

The responsibility for overseeing a Safety Working Group in McCauley has shifted over the years, with both the McCauley Community League and Revitalization taking the lead at times. Most recently, the Revitalization Steering Committee oversaw a sub-committee of community members known as the McCauley Safety Council. On their own accord, the most recent iteration of the McCauley Safety Council chose to disband. Subsequently, Revitalization chose to partner with Safer McCauley to maximize positive outcomes around safety.

In order to continue to turn community input into citizen-driven safety initiatives, Safer McCauley, the McCauley Community League and McCauley Revitalization have discussed the re-building of an independent Safety Working Group, driven by community members. For as long as is necessary, the group will receive direct support from the Safer McCauley Community Convener, along with the resources available through his employment at REACH Edmonton Council for Safe Communities.

The Safety Working Group will be a mechanism for designing actions and initiatives - and would ideally meet monthly.

## **COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS**

Fully inclusive, public Community Meetings will be rebranded as Community Conversations. They will continue to connect stakeholders with information-sharers; and will be an opportunity to provide feedback to the Working Group. Ideally, Community Conversations would take place quarterly.

All stakeholders will continue to receive invitations to participate in Community Conversations and citizen-driven initiatives. We will continue to facilitate engagements and actions that are guided by the concerns and solutions identified by community members. And we will focus on the desire for increased connectedness with one another and closer relationships with resources such as EPS and Bylaw.

## **SAFER MCCAULEY - MCCAULEY COMMUNITY LEAGUE - REVITALIZATION COLLABORATIVE**

Positive and functional relationships between community organizations are integral to a harmonious community. In the past, obstacles have at times hindered the development of such relationships in McCauley. The relationship between Safer McCauley, the McCauley Community League, and McCauley Revitalization is as healthy, collaborative and transparent as ever.

The relationship can be seen as a collaborative, with each group working towards the common goal of increased well-being in McCauley. Representatives of each group are in communication almost weekly. They attend each others' meetings and events; and information is shared freely. Whatever the circumstances are regarding boosting safety and vibrancy in the community, you will most likely see a collective representation from all groups.

## **RESOURCE CONNECT**

In November 2017, Safer McCauley hosted the McCauley Community Gathering and Resource Fair. Rebranded as Resource Connect, the gathering has become an annual event. On February 9, Resource Connect 2019 brought together over 70 Social Service Agencies to share information with one another, students, potential staff and volunteers, and with the general public.

Planning has begun for Resource Connect 2020, to take place (tentatively) next February at Santa Maria Goretti Centre. The main objective of Resource Connect is now to build a more connected community of practice of Edmonton service agencies. A Resource Connect website has been created, with the intention of promoting connectivity through year-round information-sharing.