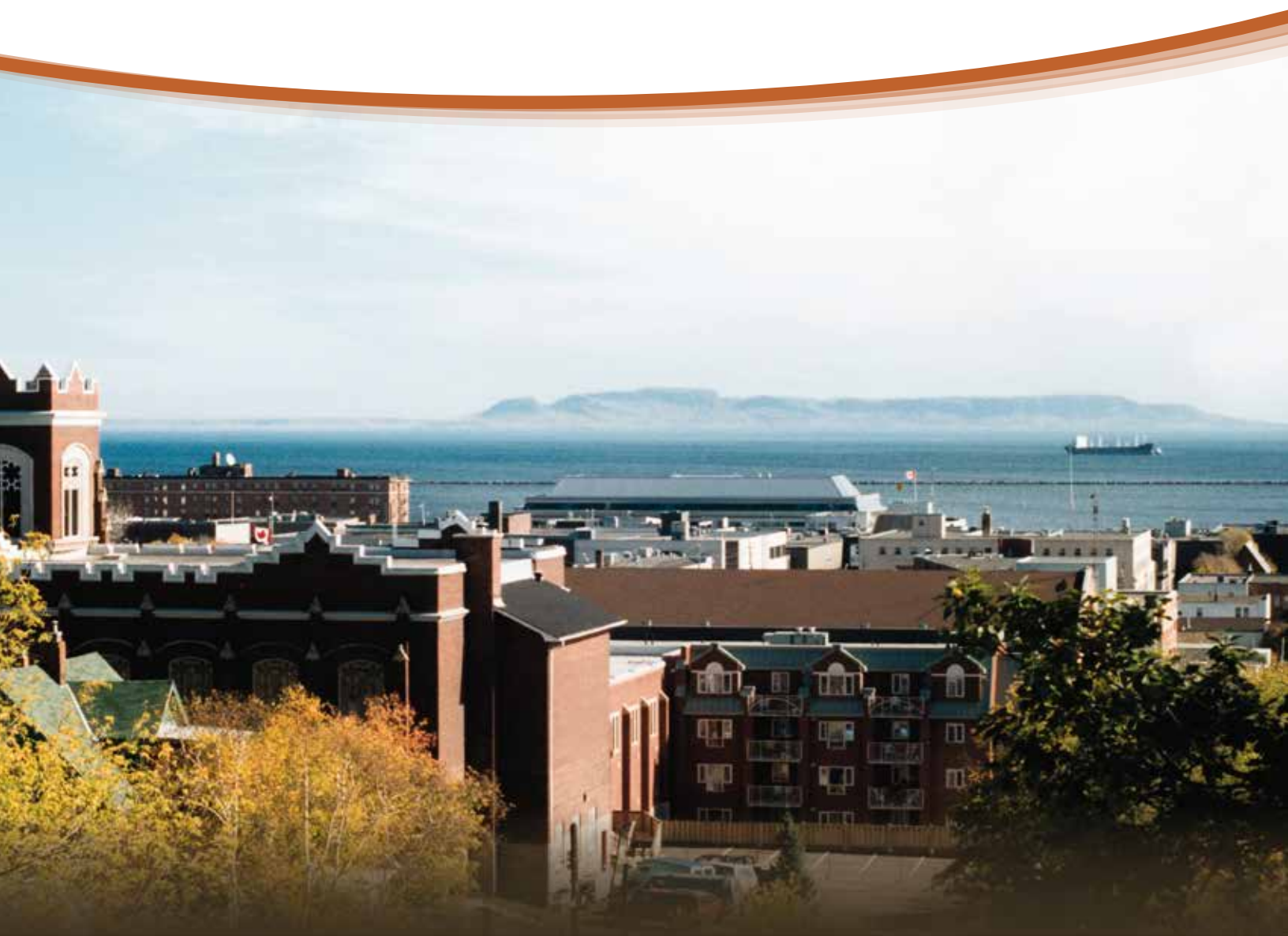


THUNDER BAY CRIME PREVENTION COUNCIL

2011-2014 COMMUNITY SAFETY & CRIME PREVENTION STRATEGY

Revised at November 2013



MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR



Thunder Bay has joined a growing movement to understand the root causes of crime at the local level and to mobilize around proven strategies that will reduce crime, victimization, and fear of crime and disorder.

On behalf of my colleagues on City Council and the City of Thunder Bay, I'm excited by the creation of the Community

Safety & Crime Prevention Strategy. This comprehensive Strategy demonstrates that tackling crime in the City of Thunder Bay is a priority. The Crime Prevention Council worked with individuals and agencies along with provincial and local police to create a plan that would make Thunder Bay a safer place to live.

As Mayor, I look forward to seeing its implementation and results.

Change doesn't happen overnight. Dr. Irvin Waller, founder and director of the Institute for Crime Prevention, demonstrated that investing in evidence-based crime prevention is the most effective and efficient way to build safer cities, and that's what our Community Safety & Crime Prevention Strategy lays the foundation to do.

Every person, business and organization in the City plays a role in making Thunder Bay a safer place. With this Strategy, we are adopting a community-based approach to addressing the root causes of crime and fear of crime in the city. It's a progressive Strategy, and we are proud to be a part of it.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Keith P. Hobbs".

Mayor Keith P. Hobbs

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



Municipalities play a key role in crime prevention and building safe communities. They are the order of government closest to neighborhoods, communities and citizens. Municipalities provide many direct services and programs that enhance community safety, and foster an integrated approach to reduce and prevent crime and insecurity. Thunder Bay has

joined a growing number of municipalities across Canada in setting crime prevention as a top priority and, as a result, has adopted the City of Thunder Bay Community Safety & Crime Prevention Strategy.

The Strategy is the result of in-depth research, public consultation, and strategic planning, as well as a preliminary audit that examined crime trends in Thunder Bay and the complex factors behind them.

The Strategy is a living document that will evolve as we move forward on each initiative. It is designed to be sensitive to local needs, to respond to Thunder Bay's unique circumstances, to build on our strengths and successes, and to take a collaborative, community-based approach to reduce and prevent crime in the City.

Together we can develop solutions and use best practices to create a safer city for everyone. I believe this Strategy will make our city a better place to live, work, and play – a community we will be even more proud to call home.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tom Walters".

Tom Walters

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

There is a substantial and mounting body of evidence that clearly demonstrates preventative measures focusing on human and social development reduce the factors that lead to crime, victimization, social breakdown and lower quality of life.

Moreover, research by Dr. Irvin Waller, founder and director of the Institute for Crime Prevention, also shows that investment in preventative measures is by far the most cost-effective path to enhanced community safety and security. Crime prevention reduces not only the costs associated with criminal justice, but also those associated with health, education, policing, and other social services.

INVESTING IN SAFETY & CRIME PREVENTION

Given the success of this approach in cities in Canada and other countries around the world, Thunder Bay City Council on April 12, 2010, confirmed a decision to invest in safety and crime prevention by hiring a coordinator and creating a community-based Thunder Bay Crime Prevention Council.

The Thunder Bay Crime Prevention Council held its first meeting in December 2010. The Crime Prevention Council is comprised of citizens, youth and representatives of City Council and more than 27 different sectors and agencies in our community.

EVIDENCE-BASED POLICY

By March 2011, the Crime Prevention Council approved its working Terms of Reference, a document that details its mission, mandate, guiding principles and strategic directions, as well as governance and membership rules. The Crime Prevention Council's first guiding principle states that 'we believe effective action is based on knowledge, research and experience.' In other words, the Crime Prevention Council believes that evidence-based policy that responds to Thunder Bay's unique set of experiences and circumstances is the most effective and efficient way to prevent and reduce crime and fear of crime in our city.

Accordingly, the main activities of the Crime Prevention Council to date have been two-fold: early efforts to educate its members and the broader public on the root causes of crime, and to lead an audit aimed at identifying the current state and long-term trends concerning crime and safety in Thunder Bay.

The audit documents the research base that shapes the actions to further our strategic directions and make progress on resulting priority areas. The key findings of the audit enable the Crime Prevention Council to refine its education and research activities and to facilitate collaboration around priority community-based actions.

COMMON FOUNDATION OF KNOWLEDGE

The Community Safety and Crime Prevention Plan is meant to be a living document—in other words it will continue to evolve as we build on our current knowledge and resource capacities. It provides a common foundation of knowledge for the Crime Prevention Council, including:

- Our Vision, Mission and Guiding Principles.
- Actions to implement our strategic directions and emerging priority areas for the next 1-3 years.
- A preliminary report on the audit that summarizes the current state of crime, victimization, and perceptions of safety (Summary of Preliminary Audit – Page 5).
- A list of the member organizations participating in Thunder Bay's inaugural Crime Prevention Council.



OUR VISION

Thunder Bay is a safe and welcoming city.

OUR MISSION

We will engage the community in the task of preventing crime, increasing safety and security, and fostering the well-being of everyone in Thunder Bay.

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

We:

- Believe effective action is based on knowledge, research and experience.
- Prevent crime through addressing its root causes.
- Build on the strengths and capacities of our communities.
- Collaborate with our communities on solutions and actions.
- Include a diversity of voices.
- Value respect and compassion in our attitudes and actions.
- Believe everyone has responsibility for making the city safe and welcoming.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP AND INTERACTION

1. Promote the attitude and belief that crime prevention is each citizen's responsibility.

- ACTION 1.1 Support Police in crime prevention activities such as the Aboriginal Liaison Unit, Beat Patrol, Community Services Branch, and Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) initiatives.
- ACTION 1.2 Implement Mayor's Community Safety Awards during Crime Prevention Week to recognize the contributions of citizens and groups who make our city safer and to share success stories.

2. Establish and maintain inclusive methods of interacting with our communities.

- ACTION 2.1 Support individuals involved (or who are at greater risk for being involved) in the criminal justice system to participate in Crime Prevention Council activities.

3. Collaborate with our communities in determining the priorities for the Crime Prevention Council programs, task forces, and activities.

- ACTION 3.1 Annually review and update membership of Crime Prevention Council to embody the diversity of our communities.
- ACTION 3.2 Invite relevant agencies, institutions and groups to participate in task forces and activities.
- ACTION 3.3 Develop an implementation plan for public feedback on the Community Safety and Crime Prevention Strategy and specific plans.

RESEARCH AND PLANNING

4. Establish a crime prevention profile for the City of Thunder Bay.

- ACTION 4.1 Update the crime and disorder audit annually to identify community strengths and weaknesses based on evidence to allow for priority setting.
- ACTION 4.2 Analyze long-term trends, context and circumstances concerning crime issues in the city.

- ACTION 4.3 Develop and provide a greater understanding of the criminal justice system and its responses to crime as it impacts local crime prevention efforts.
- ACTION 4.4 Maintain a 'web of support' which identifies and maintains liaison and partnership with existing agencies and programs for the purposes of putting crime prevention practices into action.

COMMUNICATIONS AND EDUCATION

5. Engage in advocacy and education that are consistent with our vision and guiding principles.

- ACTION 5.1 Work in partnership with the National Municipal Network on Crime Prevention and other relevant partners to raise the profile of crime prevention as the most efficient and cost effective way to reduce crime and victimization.
- ACTION 5.2 Partner with the Intergovernmental Liaison Committee and other relevant groups to advocate for policy change.
- ACTION 5.3 Advocate for better access and support for restorative justice measures in partnership with School Boards and Health Unit.

6. Change attitudes to and awareness of causes and perceptions of crime and disorder.

- ACTION 6.1 Establish community dialogue through hosting videos, speakers, film screenings, learning cafes and public forums. Focus on criminalization of racialized poverty and the negative social effects of racism in our city.
- ACTION 6.2 Hold editorial board meetings with local media and include media in communications planning.

7. Assess public views on priority issues.

- ACTION 7.1 Deploy diverse outreach tools such as surveys, focus groups, public forums and social media to generate public input and assess views.

8. Inform the public on trends, contexts and circumstances concerning crime in the city.

- ACTION 8.1 Include an education component at each Crime Prevention Council meeting.
- ACTION 8.2 Train and support Crime Prevention Council members to be Crime Prevention Ambassadors.

9. Share knowledge of new and existing crime prevention, safety and security initiatives in Thunder Bay.

- ACTION 9.1 Develop a comprehensive communications strategy including a social media component that is reviewed, maintained and updated annually.
- ACTION 9.2 Create and maintain a Crime Prevention Council website for information about the Community Safety & Crime Prevention Plan, crime profile information, success stories on crime prevention activities, results of surveys, how the public can get involved, tools and resources.
- ACTION 9.3 Develop a media strategy in consultation with local media that supports balanced and accurate reporting on crime and crime prevention initiatives.
- ACTION 9.4 Investigate and develop a library of evidence-based practices for crime prevention appropriate to our communities.

PRIORITY AREAS

10. Support Strong Neighbourhoods.

- ACTION 10.1 Pilot a two-year Neighbourhood Support Program (2012-2013) to foster neighbourhood cohesion and social development.
- ACTION 10.2 Develop and promote a neighbourhood toolkit that educates citizens and businesses on how to prevent crime. Focus on tools to create vibrant and active neighbourhood spaces through block parties, walking tours, streetscapes, etc.

11. Support the Drug Strategy.

- ACTION 11.1 Support the Drug Strategy Coordinator in the development of an implementation plan for specific crime prevention actions contained in the Drug Strategy.

12. Support for Children, Youth, Families, and Seniors.

- ACTION 12.1 Offer support in the development of an implementation plan to achieve Result One and Two of the Healthy Communities Strategy (March 2011): 'All children and youth have optimal success and health,' and 'All citizens are included and connected to their community.' This includes investigating avenues for collaboration with the Youth Services Committee, the Youth Strategy, school boards, and the City of Thunder Bay's Recreation and Culture division.
- ACTION 12.2 Engage community partners to investigate the development of a safe housing facility for street-involved youth.
- ACTION 12.3 Participate in the development of the Age-Friendly Plan with respect to safety and perceptions of safety.
- ACTION 12.4 Develop a greater understanding of mental health issues in Thunder Bay and consider what role the Crime Prevention Council might play in facilitating support for identified needs.

13. Support for Aboriginal populations.

- ACTION 13.1 Offer support to urban and regional Aboriginal partners and community organizations to develop a welcoming strategy for Aboriginals migrating to Thunder Bay.

14. Address Violence Against Women

- ACTION 14.1 Identify and address emerging trends with regards to sexual assault and intimate partner violence.
- ACTION 14.2 Revisit gendered violence response protocols between police and other service providers.
- ACTION 14.3 Reduce barriers to reporting for women who fear personal or systemic re-victimization.
- ACTION 14.4 Engage key political leaders to acknowledge the issue and champion these efforts.
- ACTION 14.5 Educate the public on the prevalence of gendered and racialized violence using a local fact sheet and publicity campaign.

SUMMARY OF PRELIMINARY AUDIT

SUMMARY OF PRELIMINARY AUDIT OUTLINING CRIME AND SAFETY ISSUES AND TRENDS IN THUNDER BAY

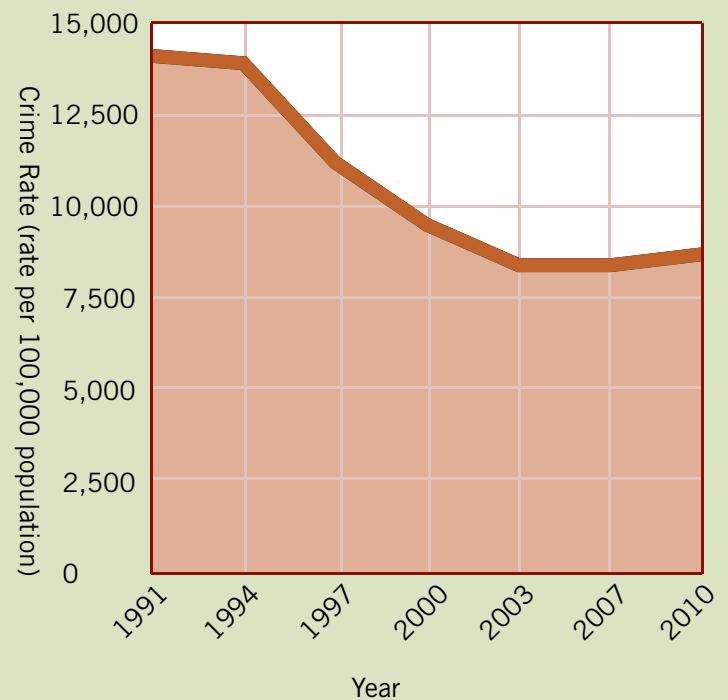
This summary report was developed from Thunder Bay Police and Statistics Canada crime and victimization data, the 2011 Citizen's Survey, focus groups and interviews with Crime Prevention Council Members and Thunder Bay residents, and supplemented with secondary reference material including peer-reviewed studies and local media analyses. It aims to provide evidence-based information on crime in the city, and a preliminary sketch of key challenges based on the research conducted thus far, and guidance for further research on causes of crime and fear of crime in the city.

The audit is broken down into five key areas, summarized below:

Crime and Victimization Trends By all measures, the crime rate in Thunder Bay has been on the long-term decline (FIGURE 1), not unlike most other cities in Canada. Youth crime comprises a small percentage of Thunder Bay's crime rate, and has remained stable over time. In 2010 for instance, youth (aged 12-17) comprised only 11% of all persons charged in the city.¹ Most crime, whether property or violent in nature, occurs in the home. Offenders and victims are likely to know each other. Like elsewhere in Canada, stranger to victim crime remains extremely rare.

- According to both police and victimization data, property crime comprises the vast majority of all crime in the city. Property crime rates are three times higher than violent crime rates (FIGURE 2), a ratio comparable to other cities in Canada.²
- The Crime Severity Index is another means of measuring crime, based on severity. Combining police-reported crime data with sentencing data, the index creates a system of weights for each offence. Thunder Bay generally ranks among the top five in the Crime Severity Index. In 2010, for instance, it was behind only Regina, Saskatoon, Winnipeg, and Kelowna. In recent years, Thunder Bay has ranked higher than the national average (FIGURE 3).³

FIGURE 1: Thunder Bay's Crime Rate (excluding traffic violations) 1991-2010. This graph shows the long-term decline of the Crime Rate in Thunder Bay.



Factors Influencing Crime Research shows that individuals in conflict with the law typically have histories of childhood abuse and neglect, and very low education and employment levels. Most also live in extreme poverty, and many suffer from mental illness, and chronic substance use. For instance, close to 50% of incarcerated individuals in Ontario correctional centres report problems with substance use. Thunder Bay Police report that many crimes such as break and enters, domestic violence, and robbery are linked to substance use.

- In Thunder Bay public intoxication is the leading cause of arrest, comprising approximately half of the total arrests made by police.⁴ While the majority of drug trafficking charges in Thunder Bay stem from the possession and sale of cocaine and cannabis, opiate-based prescription drug trafficking also appears to be climbing.

- It is important to remember that poverty, mental illness and substance use **do not cause crime**. Rather, evidence shows that individuals affected by one or more of these factors are at higher risks for crime and victimization, particularly in the absence of adequate support structures.
- Another significant factor affecting crime in Thunder Bay is the long-term legacy of colonial policies such as land dispossession and residential schools. This legacy, combined with ongoing racial discrimination entangles many Aboriginals in a complex web of social challenges. The unique challenges faced by Aboriginals helps explain their overrepresentation in the criminal justice system—both as victims and offenders. According to the most recent data from Statistics Canada, Aboriginals accounted for 22% of federal prisoners, while comprising just over 3% of the national population.⁵ Aboriginals are twice as likely to be victims of violent crime as non-Aboriginal people.⁶

Neighbourhood Characteristics Certain areas of Thunder Bay experience higher rates of crime and victimization than others. Crime is concentrated in the Fort William and Port Arthur downtown cores and surrounding

residential areas. Like many other cities, crime rates in Thunder Bay gradually diminish further from the city centres, toward suburban and rural areas.⁷

Fear of Crime and Perceptions of Crime Most Thunder Bay residents feel safe in their neighbourhoods (74%) and in their city (68%), though perceptions of safety appear to be lower than the national average (93%).⁸

Perceptions of safety also differ depending on where you live, how much you earn, your age and your gender. Residents of Neebing and McIntyre wards feel most safe in their neighbourhoods, while residents of McKellar ward feel least safe.

- Regardless of where you live, households with higher incomes are more likely to feel safe in the city. Age also affects perceptions of safety: those between the ages of 18-34 are most likely to feel safe in the city, despite the fact that they are most likely to be victims of crime. On the other hand, those aged 55+ feel the least safe, even though they are least likely to be victims of crime. Men feel safer than women, even though rates of victimization for both groups are relatively equal.⁹

FIGURE 2: Thunder Bay's Property Crime Versus Violent Crime Rate, 1998-2010. Property Crime comprises the vast majority of crime in Thunder Bay. Rates of property crime are three times higher than violent crime rates.



- Fears and perceptions of crime are complex phenomena. On the one hand, personal experiences with crime and victimization will profoundly alter one's perceptions of crime in the city and feelings of safety. On the other hand, fear and perception are also greatly impacted by media discourses about crime at various scales (local, regional, international), as well as through discussions with neighbours, friends and family. Fear of crime in Thunder Bay reflects this phenomenon.
- While victims of crime tend to have a heightened fear of crime, feelings of safety also appear to be strongly related to misperceptions about crime and victimization trends - a confusion between crime problems as defined by the criminal code and social issues such as homelessness, mental illness, and addictions. Racial and class discrimination also strongly contribute to misperceptions about causes of crime in the city.

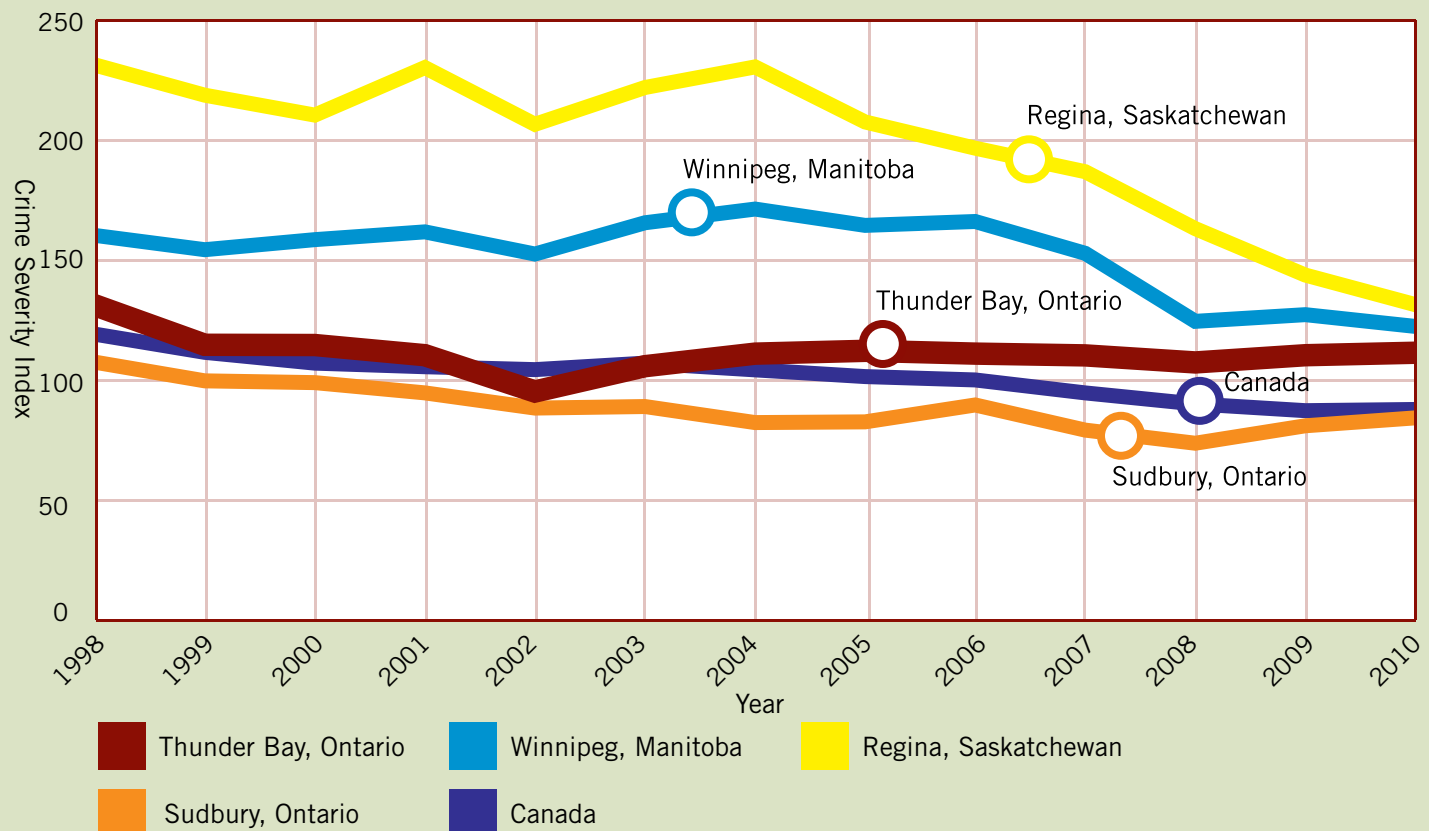
Gaps in Services Preliminary research identified gaps in Thunder Bay's social service net that appear to disproportionately affect four populations in the city. These populations are: youth ages 16-18, particularly those living in poverty with unstable or non-existent family structures; chronic substance users; mentally

ill individuals; and Aboriginal migrants to Thunder Bay. Many of these populations are geographically concentrated in certain areas of the city, lack access to affordable and/or supportive housing, and have limited means of transportation and mobility. This has resulted in place-based gaps in social and physical infrastructure in the city. As such, opportunities to provide neighbourhood-based improvements in key areas can succeed in better serving these populations, thereby decreasing their risks of coming in conflict with the law.

- Another important gap emerging from the audit appears to be a lack of an effective medium to build and strengthen community-based knowledge of crime and fear of crime, as well as the causes of and solutions to these issues, and to build capacity for citizens to get involved in the city. An opportunity exists for the Crime Prevention Council to better assist citizens in understanding crime statistics and long-term trends; to determine the specific contexts and circumstances that contribute to crime and victimization; to host a library of crime prevention 'best practices'; and to build capacity for citizens to get involved in creating a safer city for everyone.

– Amy Siciliano, PhD, Coordinator – Thunder Bay Crime Prevention Council

FIGURE 3: Crime Severity Index - Canada and Selected Cities, 1998-2010. The Crime Severity Index measures crime based on severity by using police data to rank different offences. In recent years, Thunder Bay has ranked higher than the national average.



FOOTNOTES

- 1 Thunder Bay Police, “Incident-based Crime Statistics, 1998-2010” (Thunder Bay Police, unpublished data).
- 2 Statistics Canada, “Crime Rates, Selected Census Metropolitan Areas, 1998-2009) CANSIM database, accessed July 22nd, 2010; Brennan S, and M. Dauvergne, “Police Reported Crime Statistics in Canada, 2010”, Catalogue No: 85-002-X, (Statistics Canada: July 2011).
- 3 Brennan, S. and M. Dauvergne, “Police Reported Crime Statistics in Canada, 2010” Catalogue No: 85-002-X, Statistics Canada: July 2011).
- 4 Thunder Bay Drug Strategy, Roadmap for Change Toward a Safe and Healthy Community (Thunder Bay Drug Strategy: March 2011).
www.thunderbaydrugstrategy.ca
- 5 Perreault, S. “The Incarceration of Aboriginal People in Adult Correctional Services”, Catalogue No: 85-002-X (Statistics Canada: March 2009).
- 6 Perreault, S. “Violent Victimization of Aboriginal People in the Canadian Provinces, 2009” Catalogue No: 85-002-X (Statistics Canada, Juristat, March 2011); Perreault, S. and S. Brennan, “Criminal Victimization in Canada, 2009”, Catalogue no. 85-002-X (Statistics Canada, Juristat, Summer 2010) 30:2.
- 7 Savoie, J. “Neighbourhood Characteristics and the Distribution of Crime: Edmonton, Halifax and Thunder Bay”, Catalogue Number 85-561 M2008010 (Statistics Canada: March 2008).
- 8 Ipsos Reid, City of Thunder Bay Citizen Satisfaction Report (City of Thunder Bay, March 29, 2011).
www.thunderbay.ca/yoursay; Statistics Canada “Criminal Victimization in Canada, 2009” Catalogue Number 85-0020-X (Statistics Canada, Juristat: 2010) 30:2.
- 9 Ipsos Reid, City of Thunder Bay Citizen Satisfaction Report (City of Thunder Bay, March 29, 2011).

THUNDER BAY CRIME PREVENTION COUNCIL

Two Citizens

Two Youth

Thunder Bay City Council - Mayor and Two Councillors

Aboriginal Interagency Council

Children's Aid Society of the District of Thunder Bay

Children's Centre Thunder Bay

City of Thunder Bay's Recreation and Culture Division

Conseil scolaire de district catholique
des Aurores boréales

Dennis Franklin Cromarty High School

District of Thunder Bay Social Services
Administration Board

Dilico Anishinabek Family Care

Downtown Business Zones

Elizabeth Fry Society

Fort William First Nation

John Howard Society of Thunder Bay

Lakehead District School Board

Lakehead Social Planning Council

Métis Nation of Ontario

Nishnawbe-Aski Police Service

Ontario Provincial Police

Shkoday Abinojjiwak Obimiwedoan: Thunder Bay
Urban Aboriginal Strategy

St. Joseph's Care Group

Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board

Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce

Thunder Bay Counselling Centre

Thunder Bay District Health Unit

Thunder Bay Drug Strategy

Thunder Bay Indian Friendship Centre

Thunder Bay Police Service

Thunder Bay Sexual Abuse & Sexual
Assault Counselling & Crisis Centre

Union of Ontario Indians

**TOGETHER WE CAN MAKE THUNDER BAY
A SAFER AND MORE WELCOMING CITY.**

www.thunderbay.ca/crimeprevention

