



Violence Reduction Program Update – Q2 2022

Item 6

September 12, 2022

Community Safety Advisory Sub-Committee

Report: CSAC:2022-16

To: Community Safety Advisory Sub-Committee ("CSAC")

From: Acting Senior Director, Community Safety Unit

Date: August 15, 2022

PURPOSE:

This report provides an update on the progress and performance of the Violence Reduction Program for the second quarter of 2022.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that the CSAC receive this report for information and forward it to the Tenant Services Committee ("TSC") for information.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

On June 27, 2019, Toronto Community Housing's Board of Directors directed staff to operationalize the Violence Reduction Program ("VRP") at its meeting. This report provides an update on activities and performance.

BACKGROUND:

The VRP is focused on improving safety and security for tenants. It is a response to the disproportionate frequency of violence on Toronto Community Housing ("TCHC") properties, which is rooted in poverty, addiction, mental health needs and street-involvement present in the TCHC tenant population.

Due to the complex nature of Dan Harrison and the ten identified high needs communities, the VRP includes enhanced enforcement activity through dedicated, on-site Community Safety Unit ("CSU") presence, collaboration with the Toronto Police Service ("TPS"), as well as economic development and community and social supports in collaboration with the City of Toronto.

CSU STAFFING UPDATE

The CSU continues to ramp up its recruit training numbers and new staff will be assigned to VRP vacancies. This is not anticipated to fill all vacant positions in the VRP, but will reduce the existing vacancies.

A recent promotional process has advanced personnel into supervisor roles, and a selection process for designated Community Sergeants is underway, with successful candidates assuming this role in late June or July.

CSU Staff Supporting Revitalization Communities within VRP

Regent Park

The Regent Park Community has benefited from an increased CSU presence and interactions as a result of our central district office being relocated to Regent Park from the Moss Park Community. The Regent Park VRP team is presently staffed at approximately 75%, and routinely attend the weekly community safety meetings. With the lifting of Covid restrictions our VRP team is seeking new opportunities to engage with the Regent Park community in community events where our officers can make inroads with the community members. Q2 saw a slow improvement in this area. With consistent staffing we anticipate continued improvement in Q3.

Lawrence Heights

The Lawrence Heights VRP Team is also staffed to approximately 75%. Our officers continue to attend the community safety meetings and community events (most recently assisting with the "Lawrence Heights Food Distribution Program"). Bicycle patrols have also been implemented

to give the officers better accessibility and visibility to the neighborhood and its residents. Q2 has seen an uptick in CSU's involvement with community events, which will to expand in Q3.

CSC REGIONAL UPDATES

The East and West regions continue to function without a full complement of CSC staff for the majority of this quarter. The East region does not have a full complement of CSC's while the West region is still working to fill their Supervisor of Community Safety Role in addition to having a CSC vacancy. The central region was able to fill their Supervisory and CSC role in the later part of this quarter.

East Region

During Q2, east region VRP team continued to work to collaboratively with CSU, CSA's, Tenancy Management, Community Engagement, Community Stakeholders to deliver interventions and programs which address underlying factors contributing to community violence. For example, working closely with 42 & 43 Division TPS-NCO's has resulted in improved community policing relations with some residents of both the Danzig and Empringham communities.

Community Partnerships

In collaboration with TAIBU Community Health Centre, VRP staff developed an initiative entitled "Circle of Strength", specifically aimed at improving health and wellbeing for black woman residents in the Empringham community. In total, approximately 12 residents between the ages of 15-29 participated in an 8 week workshop series that was designed using Afrocentric wellness principles with the intention to improve participants overall health and wellness; particularly in relation to trauma healing.

Post Incident Crisis Support

During Q2, several VRP communities experienced incidents of community violence. On Wednesday, June 8th, a 24 year was unfortunately shot and

killed behind a plaza adjacent to 3847 Lawrence (Susan) Ave E. In response our team worked closely with the young man's family, City of Toronto's CCRP team, TPS, local partners and residents to support various post incident supports and interventions. On Saturday, June 10th, staff worked to organize a community vigil that was held to honour his life. In total, approximately 100 people attended the vigil to pay respects to the victim and family.

In late June, the VRP team supported a community memorial event for 17-year old year old Danzig resident who was who fatally shot in 2019. Working with the young man's family, CSU, TPS, CSC Engagement and CCRP the memorial event was attended by over 200 friends and family who still mourn the tragic loss of this young man's life.

Youth Engagement

Collaborating with TAIBU Community Health Centre, VRP staff supported a boxing-centred health and wellness program for black youth aged 14-25 in the Empringham community. This eight-week program brought approximately 15 youth participants together every Saturday for two hours of physical fitness and health and wellbeing workshops about various relevant topics, including learning skills to cope and navigate social and emotional challenges about exposure to community violence.

Engaging youth in capacity-building activities is a focal point of VRP engagement. This quarter, staff worked closely with Flemingdon Health Centre (FHC) to deliver a Youth Violence Prevention program for youth from Flemingdon and Thorncliffe Park. This Youth Violence Prevention Program is facilitated by FHC and held every Monday in the Flemingdon Park community. The Black Youth Circle is a safe space for youth to attend and participate in meaningful discussions with caring adults and learn emerging violence prevention strategies such as discussing the importance of making healthy choices, becoming a leader and community voice for their youth issues and promoting respect, empathy amongst family and friends. Youth participants will work alongside staff to identify emerging safety concerns and issues impacting youth residents concerning violence.

Central Region

Throughout Q2 of 2022, the Central VRP team worked with community partners to develop and support violence prevention and intervention strategies. Working closely and collaboratively with CSU, Community Safety Advisors ("CSA"), Tenancy Management, Tenant Resolution Office, Community Engagement staff and community stakeholders, our programs and initiatives addressed underlying factors contributing to community safety and security concerns.

The various staffing transitions experienced by the Central VRP team have resulted in slower than usual tenant touch points, but since June, the team has been running with a full staff complement that is refocusing on establishing processes for housing unit takeovers and harm reduction initiatives based on data from Toronto Public Health.

Community Engagement

The Central VRP team held several community meetings from the beginning of June 2022. These meetings were set up so tenants could come out, meet the VRP team and be educated on the initiatives that the VRP team are involved in which focuses on improving tenants' safety, wellbeing and security. The two sessions that have been completed were held at Moss Park and Dan Harrison. Approximately 20 people attended each of the meetings, and tenants were better informed about how the initiative and activities the VRP team will be implementing and supporting. The team received good feedback about specific areas of the tenants' concerns and some of the steps they can take to address them as they did with the Paramedic services initiative. This initiative responded to tenants expressing their desire to have health-related services in their community and pointed out the lack of family doctors, motivation to leave their apartments and other mobility-related issues that prevented health checks from being conducted

Meet and greets are planned for the remaining VRP communities for late summer and early fall. The VRP team will coordinate with the Engagement CSC's to attend scheduled events and initiatives. As spaces are becoming more and more activated, the VRP team wants to make sure that interactions have more impact on community members. As a result, the team has planned multiple summer events such as BBQs, back-to-school

events, training and social coffee/tea events for Q2/3 in response to tenants showing they would like to interact with TCHC staff on specific issues that are of concern (Safety, Mental Health & Addiction, Physical wellbeing and more).

The VRP team hosted its first-ever safety BBQ for the DHC community on Wednesday, July 28, which coincides with the onboarding of a new partner agency, Street Health Community Nursing, which will launch a Harm Reduction program. The program will provide once-a-week drop-in services for people to access harm reduction supplies, information and support, referrals, and advocacy. This service is a joint initiative of the Fred Victor Partnership, which includes Street Health, PASAN, Sanctuary Toronto and City of Toronto Public Health. The goals for the BBQ include getting the community together after the pandemic, educating tenants about the VRP, and allowing staff who provide services to the DHC area to introduce themselves to the community members in attendance.

Active Living has been a great support in helping TCHC navigate some of the logistical pieces and will have YouthWorx staff supporting the event. CSU Special Constables will also be on-hand, lend their support, and interact with tenants and program partners.

Community Partnerships

This summer, the VRP team is going to continue to work closely with the co-chairs of the Regent Park Safety Network to look at ways to increase tenant participation within the network. One idea the team is exploring is having 2 or 3 socials that tenants can attend, be amongst other community members and get vital information on the RPSN and how they can participate. Since the last report, the VRP team has resolved some issues between TCHC staff and a member of the SDP (Social Development Planning Committee) through a mediation meeting and has re-evaluated their presence in the sub-committee meetings. They have issued invitations to TCHC staff from other teams as there is currently no other TCHC personnel in attendance.

The City has once again re-started its ISCT scrum meetings. For this year, communities are being grouped in zones rather than individually. Zone 4 includes Moss Park and Regent Park. The Central VRP team has attended

these meetings and will continue to cooperate and collaborate with the stakeholders designated to the zone 4 team.

Some Swansea Mews tenants were transferred to Regent Park temporarily. This is a developing situation and will require much cross-department collaboration and day-to-day awareness. The Central VRP team may be asked to support the transition plan and closely monitor how new families' impact on Regent Park is being operationalized.

The Paramedics program at DHC has proven itself a much-needed service within the community. Tenants have been coming to get their basic health needs looked after and request that the service remains in the community. The average tenant participation has risen steadily, with 30-40 visitors regularly attending the space and have reported that they are happy to have healthcare professionals on-site and can advise on any further steps to be taken concerning their health.

The VRP team has sat on the Steering Committee for Youth Empowering Youth. This Committee has members who work for different agencies within the Regent Park community. Through the VRP central involvement, TCHC staff aims to better understand the deep-rooted issues affecting our youth and look at ways of providing sustainable support for the youth. An opportunity that the Central VRP Team is currently exploring is to see if resources could be found and released to the Committee since a previous external grant opportunity did not come to fruition.

West Region

For this quarter, the West VRP team focused on supporting program development, delivery and capacity building. 31 division continues to report that so far there has been limited gun violence incidence in the broader Jane and Finch and Islington St. Andrews VRP-designated communities. Despite this good news, the team continues to work with the community and the CED (Community Economic Development) team to address community economic development opportunities through some training, including food handlers. Demand for the "Seniors Breakfast Program" has increased, so the program will be offered at 35 Shoreham, bringing the total communities the program is provided to three. The program happens every other week over eight weeks and educates participants on topics ranging

from isolation and substance abuse and to sexual health and Unit Takeovers.

Community Partnerships

The team brought back the "Ice Cream Truck Tour" which tenants reported really appreciated as it allowed them to connect with TCHC staff and learn about upcoming and ongoing initiatives. TPS and CSU played a pivotal role in making the tour a success this summer. The tour was able to visit some of the displaced residents from Swansea who are currently at York University. The VRP team used the opportunity not only to connect with tenants but also to update their contact list.

The support for the "Stop the Bleed" program continues to grow as staff were able to support the training of the City's Towards Peace staff in the northwest. Additionally, TCHC got a resident and four CSU officers trained as a trainer for the program. The trained CSU staff will be able to provide the training internally to all interested TCHC teams, and the resident will be contracted by Sunnybrook in a paid capacity.

The team formed a relationship with the Harriet Tubman Centre and started referring families to them for culturally relevant counselling services. So far the feedback from the families has been good, and they have been active and engaged with their respective sessions.

Regional Breakdown of CSC data

Table 1: Q2 2022 Regional Breakdown of CSC Activity

Measure	West	Central	East	Q2
Number of successful Adult referrals to agencies or programs (mental health, education, employment, food security)	12	20	246	278
Number of successful Youth referrals to agencies or programs (mental health, education, employment, food security)	12	4	305	321

Number of safety related initiatives supported, lead or initiated (community safety meetings, audits etc.)	16	84	65	165
Number of tenants who participate in VRP activities	1019	69	329	1417
Number of tenants who participate in YVRP activities	200	10	406	616

CSU UPDATE IN THE HIGH NEEDS COMMUNITIES¹

VRP Special Constables continued to attend their weekly Integrated Team Meetings (ITM) in Dan Harrison, Bleecker/Wellesley, Moss Park, Regent Park, Lawrence Ave East and monthly ITM for 2195 Jane Street. Officers continue to work alongside of their external and internal partners within the VRP community.

Throughout Q2, VRP Special Constables led or participated in various events such as:

- June 11, 2022 VRP officers attended the Toronto Police 31 Division Open house, meeting with residents, community stakeholders and specialized police members.
- In June 2022 four members of CSU's VRP program were trained and qualified as "Stop the Bleed" instructors, allowing them to teach members of the Falstaff Community these life-saving skills in a community session on June 18th. Further sessions are expected in the future.
- June 25th, 2022 saw the second annual Edgeley Village "Safeplay" celebration organized by members of the VRP and with local business owners/operators contributing volunteers, food and entertainment. \$1800 was also raised by the VRP for the Driftwood Boys and Girls club.

¹ Including Broader Dan Harrison

CSU PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT AND ANALYSIS

CSU activity in the high needs communities (including broader Dan Harrison) *Refer to Table 3, 3a, b, c & d for statistical data.*

1. CSU Calls for Service

CSU's volume of calls for Service at VRP sites has increased by 274 calls compared to Q2 2021. The 6% increase can be attributed to an increase in calls for service primarily in the Lawrence and Falstaff communities. There were increased calls for Parking Violations, Trespass, Cause Disturbance and Neighbour Disputes in these communities. Table 3a below further shows calls for Service by the VRP community.

2. Crime on TCHC Property and CSU's intervention

In Q2 2022, there was a decrease of twenty eight (28) incidents (38%) of crimes against persons compared to Q2 2021. The decrease is primarily due to a decrease in assaults and assaults with a weapon.

For crimes against property, we saw four (4) less incidents when compared to Q2 2021.

Table 3b & 3c shows a further breakdown of crimes against persons and property in VRP communities by seniors and family portfolio (includes revite).

The reduction in crimes against persons is attributed to many aspects, including the continued work and presence of CSU's VRP program and the decrease in the reported "assault with a weapon", "robbery" and "discharge firearm" incidents (Q2 2021 – Q2 2022). CSU intervenes in various ways to address the crime at the VRP sites; through community engagement, relationship building and enforcement and conducting wellness checks. Wellness checks are performed by request and when officers recognize vulnerable tenants that may need additional attention.

Furthermore, crime is also addressed by the issuance of eviction notices by TCHC's Legal department. In addition to the N6 (illegal acts) and N7 (health and safety) shown in Table 3, TCHC also issues N5's (Interfering with others, damage to property and overcrowding – Anti-Social). There were 7 notices issued for anti-social.

Shooting Incidents Occurring in VRP Communities

At our previous committee meeting it was recommended that CSU breakdown gun violence incidents by community as well as report on gun violence incidents prior to 2018 to identify the trend of gun violence.

The Community Safety Unit is currently working with Toronto Police to provide the shooting data so that the information is more accurate.

It is important to note the limitations of CSU's data when it comes to shootings. Most people call the police when a crime occurs, not the CSU. The CSU may come to know about the incident a few ways; a call to attend from police, a call from a citizen or the CSU officers will happen upon the police presence as they are patrolling our property. Often times, the CSU will be advised about the incident due to the fact that the police require video of the incident for evidentiary purposes. This may occur on the day of the incident but quite often it will occur at a later time.

The gun violence (shooting) stats collected by CSU is done manually. There is currently no way in the records management system to pull out incidents related to gun crime. Every month the reports are reviewed and any reports involving a shooting are manually entered into an excel sheet so that we are able to report on shootings that we have recorded in our records management system.

This manual data entry allows room for human error; incidents may be missed and/or recorded incorrectly in the excel sheet. This is why the CSU data collection of criminal incidents is less accurate than the TPS data.

CSU will be working with Toronto Police to provide more accurate shooting data.

3. CSU Crime Prevention Efforts

CSU continues to conduct safety audits in the ongoing effort to reduce and prevent crime on TCHC property, particularly at the VRP sites. Recommendations are made for site staff to implement to make the neighbourhood safer for tenants. During these audits, CPTED principles (Crime Prevention through Environmental Design) are applied, and CSU makes recommendations through these principles.

CSU patrols help to proactively deter crime and, in many cases, help build relationships with tenants, site staff and stakeholders. These patrols are either on foot, mobile or on a bike. On average, the CSU conducts more than 4,000 patrols every quarter. Patrols are conducted based on VRP officers' availability, TPS availability and Community Needs.

The Community Safety Advisors initiate various engagement activities. In Q2, there was an increase of 48 engagement activities conducted compared to the previous quarter. The CSA activities include community events, presentations, safety meetings, tenant management meetings, tenant visits, etc. Staff continue certain engagement activities to improve communication and engagement on safety issues. Note, table 3 below does not include activities that our Special Constables were involved in or potentially initiated.

Tenancy Management - CSU involvement

This is a critical component of CSU operations. Improved communication with CSAs and other internal stakeholders sees an improvement in both the quality of documentation and the escalation of incidents impacting the residents of our communities. A process that CSU is improving amongst field staff and organizationally.

Table 3: Actions taken in High Needs Communities (including broader Dan Harrison) (Q2/2021 to Q2 2022)²

VRP ACTIVITY	Q2/21	Q3/21	Q4/21	Q1/22	Apr-22	May-22	Jun-22	Q2/22
Request for Service (dispatched or on-site)								
Calls for service - VRP (note: one call can have multiple incidents reported below)	4305	3683	4250	4308	1620	1599	1363	4582
Crime on TCHC Property								
Crimes Against Property (*) - VRP	132	104	118	133	39	51	38	128
Total Crimes Against Person (CAP) - VRP	102	110	71	69	23	25	26	74
CAP- Serious Violent Incidents -VRP	55	53	26	29	6	12	15	33
CAP- Other Incidents - VRP	47	67	45	40	17	13	11	41
Reactive Work/Intervention								
Arrests VRP	82	91	92	67	27	30	25	82
Tenant Arrest	25	23	18	10	12	6	8	26
Non-Tenant Arrest	57	64	70	55	14	22	14	50
Not Specified	0	4	4	2	1	2	3	6
N6 & N7 issued by Legal (evictions for H&S and Illegal Acts)	18	23	0	0	10	2	1	13
Wellness check (Assist Resident - Check Welfare) - VRP	299	239	327	265	91	85	56	232
Mental Health Act - VRP	17	31	22	25	10	9	5	24
Narcan Administered - VRP	6	3	6	1	1	0	1	2
Trespass Incidents -VRP	251	154	273	259	88	77	58	223
CCTV (FOI, Legal, OU, TPS) - VRP (vast majority are for TPS)	119	128	130	105	41	44	51	136
VRP ACTIVITY	Q2/21	Q3/21	Q4/21	Q1/22	Apr-22	May-22	Jun-22	Q2/22
Proactive Work								
Safety Audits - All TCHC	9	30	27	27	9	9	0	18
Patrols - VRP	4704	4267	4878	4407	1424	1318	1215	3957
Patrols CSU mobile/Foot/Initiated/focused	4629	4196	4770	4347	1403	1293	1191	3887
Patrol - Joint CSU and TPS - VRP	75	71	108	60	21	25	24	70
Engagement Activities (**)- VRP	77	83	87	125	26	57	83	166
Referrals of vulnerable tenants (***) - VRP	14	17	23	35	19	26	8	53
Fire Incidents								
Fire - Equipment Malfunction - VRP	18	21	15	26	16	6	8	30
False Fire Alarm VRP (accidental, perceived emergency)	202	167	215	137	34	36	37	107
Malicious Intent/Prank - VRP	11	16	17	26	8	18	8	34
Fire - VRP	27	23	32	50	13	27	17	57

² Does not include activities that Special Constables were involved in, or potentially initiated.

Table 3a: Calls for Service by VRP Community (Q2/21 to Q2/22)

VRP Calls For Service (note: one call can have multiple incidents)						
Community	Portfolio	Q2/21	Q3/21	Q4/21	Q1/22	Q2/22
Bleecker/200 Wellesley	Family	973	720	739	801	894
Dan Harrison / William Dennison	Family	588	453	585	610	504
Dan Harrison / William Dennison	Senior	36	24	53	28	36
Edgeley Village	Family	89	91	85	124	98
Edgeley Village	Senior	42	14	26	24	23
Flemingdon Park/Glenyan Manor	Family	137	129	106	84	73
Flemingdon Park/Glenyan Manor	Senior	17	20	17	17	12
Islington/St. Andrews	Family	43	43	73	52	98
Jane/Falstaff	Family	309	182	334	330	452
Lawrence	Family	590	586	563	597	700
Lawrence Heights	Family	287	330	264	243	306
Lawrence Heights	Senior	17	9	11	17	21
Moss Park	Family	644	519	801	811	662
Regent Park/Gerrard River	Family	465	435	512	478	581
Regent Park/Gerrard River	Senior	14	15	15	24	20
Victoria Park/Chester Le Blvd	Family	54	113	66	68	102

NOTE: Numbers for Q2/21 to Q1/22 have been adjusted to exclude calls for Meeting - Community Engagement and Patrol Focused - Bike reports that were inadvertently included in the CFS numbers. These Event Types were new to the RMS (CORA) in 2021. Queries have been adjusted to exclude these incidents in CFS moving forward.

Table 3b: Crimes against Persons and Property in High Needs Senior Communities (Q2 2021 to Q2 2022)³

Crimes against Persons and Property (Senior)	Q2/21	Q3/21	Q4/21	Q1/22	Q2/22
Total Crimes against Persons	3	1	1	0	4
Less Serious Violent Incidents	2	0	1	0	1
Serious Violent Incidents	1	1	0	0	3
Total Crimes against Property	2	2	1	5	10

³ This includes seniors' portfolio within the Lawrence Heights and Regent Park revite communities.

*Table 3c: Crimes against Persons and Property in High Needs **Family** Communities (Q2 2021 to Q2 2022)⁴*

Crimes against Persons and Property (Family)	Q2/21	Q3/21	Q4/21	Q1/22	Q2/22
Total Crimes against Persons	100	111	70	69	70
Less Serious Violent Incidents	46	59	44	40	40
Serious Violent Incidents	54	52	26	29	30
Total Crimes Against Property	129	104	115	128	118

Table 3d: Proactive Work in High Needs Revite Communities (Q2 2021 to Q2 2022)⁵

Revite Proactive Work	Q2/21	Q3/21	Q4/21	Q1/22	Q2/22
Patrols CSU mobile/Foot/Initiated/focused	1738	1499	1189	1079	862
Patrol - Joint CSU and TPS - VRP	15	13	8	3	12
Engagement Activities (**)- VRP	21	53	16	19	29
Referrals of vulnerable tenants (***) - VRP	9	3	0	5	7

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS:

The CSU collects great data when it comes to nuisance type calls such as Cause Disturbance, trespassing or disputes. CSU can also provide good data on patrols of TCHC addresses. However, when it comes to criminal activity and gun violence (shootings), the Toronto Police would have more accurate data collection.

With the gun violence information not always being reported to CSU directly and the stats needing to be collected manually, there is greater risk of inaccurate reporting when it comes to shooting stats on TCHC property.

CSU will be working with Toronto Police to provide more accurate shooting data.

⁴ This includes seniors' portfolio within the Lawrence Heights and Regent Park revite communities.

⁵ These stats represent the communities of Lawrence Heights and Regent Park. It does not include activity that the Special Constables were involved in or initiated.

SIGNATURE:

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