



Neighbourhood Mitigation Strategy

1. Agreements

The purpose of having agreements in place is to build trust and accountability between government organizations, social service providers, businesses, and residents.

Agreements (GNA's) are voluntary, negotiated document(s) between a social service provider, the City of Port Alberni, and the funding organization for the service and are designed to foster open communication, build positive relationships, and establish processes for addressing community concerns that may arise from the presence and operation of the social service.

ACTIVITIES

The agreements are designed to include:

- Interventions focus on reducing harm, preventing escalation, and addressing concerns promptly.
- Clear commitments, measurable outcomes, and transparent communication guide all actions.
- Creating safe and vibrant public spaces requires joint commitment from the city, service providers, businesses, and residents.
- Responses prioritize care, dignity, and inclusion over enforcement.

OUTCOMES

1. Agreements:
 - Trust-building through inclusive collaboration: Agreements foster respectful, transparent relationships between the City of Port Alberni, service providers, funders, and residents, grounded in trauma-informed and culturally safe principles.
2. Shared accountability and responsiveness:
 - All parties commit to clear, measurable actions that prioritize community well-being and uphold the dignity of individuals accessing services.
3. Integrated service delivery:
 - Agreements support coordinated responses across health, housing, and social services, reducing silos and improving outcomes.
4. Community empowerment:
 - Residents and businesses are engaged meaningfully in shaping safe, vibrant public spaces through culturally respectful dialogue and feedback mechanisms.

ESTIMATED BUDGET

Administrations time to complete and execute agreement.

COMMUNITY EXAMPLES

Good Neighbour Agreements

1. Yellowknife - A harm-reduction-focused GNA involving the City, RCMP, health authorities, and businesses to address safety, cleanliness, and community engagement.
2. Calgary [John Howard Society](#) - a city-led GNA process involving community associations, businesses, and police to support the development of a transitional housing facility.
3. Edmonton [George Spady Society & Radius Health](#) - a multi-agency GNA for supervised consumption services and medical detox, involving businesses, police, health services, and community organizations.

MOUs

1. [Prince George and BC Housing MOU](#) for a Heart/Hearth Homeless Encampment Action Response Teams/ Homeless Encampment Action Response & Temporary Housing.
2. [Nanaimo and BC Housing MOU](#) to build new housing on six sites in the community through the Heart/Hearth program.

NEXT STEPS

- Develop formal agreements to outline accountabilities, roles and responsibilities, and communications strategies, and publish them on the City’s website.
- Outline behavioural standards for clients/residents and staff responsiveness.
- Establish clear expectations on who is responsible for litter management (e.g., needle disposal, garbage pickup).
- Establish communication protocols (regular updates, designated contact person) with a “[who to call](#)” info sheet.
- Develop a Community Advisory Committee to share information, ask questions and work together to build a strong community.

2. Clean Teams (CTs)

The purpose of having CTs is to improve community pride, reduce safety concerns, maintain a welcoming environment for residents and visitors, and address immediate concerns about safety and cleanliness in shared spaces.

CTs are often referred to as clean ambassadors working on the front lines of cleanliness, responsible for basic street and sidewalk cleaning, litter removal (i.e. needles and garbage), graffiti removal, improving streetscape appeal, and maintaining shared spaces.

ACTIVITIES

- Participation in trauma-informed and cultural safety training and peer support development.
- Offer transitional employment program as a low barrier employment opportunity to people experiencing homelessness, substance use effects, or mental health challenges (HSM population).
- Conduct daily cleaning of public spaces including parks, sidewalks, and business districts with removal of litter, debris, and hazardous materials.
- Conduct graffiti removal on public property, and on private property with a signed waiver agreement.
- Engage with local residents and businesses to foster community relationships.

ESTIMATED BUDGET

Clean Team Budget Estimates	
Category	Estimated Cost (CAD)
Staffing	\$ 90,000.00
Insurance	\$ 2,500.00
Expenses	\$ 18,500.00
Administration Fee	\$ 9,000.00
	\$ 120,000.00

OUTCOMES

1. Improved cleanliness and aesthetics of public spaces, including removal of litter, debris, and graffiti.
2. Enhanced public perception of safety and community pride.
3. Reduced environmental hazards through timely removal of waste and hazardous materials.
4. Increased community engagement and support for beautification initiatives.

COMMUNITY EXAMPLES

1. [Edmonton – Capital City Clean Up](#) a comprehensive program focused on litter reduction, graffiti prevention, and safe needle disposal.
2. [Regina – White Pony Lodge](#) - A volunteer-based organization that conducts weekly patrols in North Central Regina.
3. [Winnipeg’s Downtown Community Safety Partnership](#) blends security patrols with outreach workers to balance enforcement with support.

NEXT STEPS

- Identify funding sources (municipal, provincial, federal).
- Identify lead agency or department for Clean Team implementation.
- Develop partnerships with local organizations for staffing and training.
- Establish performance metrics and reporting mechanisms.
- Launch pilot program and evaluate impact after six months.

3. Diversion Outreach Teams (DOT)

The purposes of having a DOT is to provide mobile outreach, diversion services, and transportation to individuals facing homelessness, mental health challenges, or addictions; reduce the impact of these issues on the broader community by offering timely, compassionate, and coordinated responses; and divert individuals from emergency services and justice system involvement by connecting them to appropriate supports.

DOTs are teams designed to help people experiencing non-emergency crisis get to a safe place, freeing up police and emergency medical services to respond to more critical events. They contribute to addressing issues of poverty, mental health and addiction by helping people in crisis connect with the best available resources to support their needs.

DOTs provide a rapid response alternative to police or paramedics for non-criminal social issues (e.g., intoxication, mental health crisis, homelessness-related calls). DOT operates from a harm reduction philosophy, aiming to reduce the negative consequences of substance use and homelessness without requiring abstinence. They work in partnership with local shelters, harm reduction services, and treatment providers.

ACTIVITIES

- Daily outreach in high-need areas (e.g., parks, shelters, downtown core).
- On-the-spot referrals to housing, detox, and mental health services.
- Distribution of harm reduction supplies and basic necessities.
- De-escalation and crisis support in collaboration with police and health teams.
- Data collection and reporting on service gaps and community needs.

ESTIMATED BUDGET

Diversion Outreach Team Budget Estimates*		
Item	Low Estimate	High estimate
Outreach Workers (2)	\$ 140,000	\$ 160,000
Benefits (22%)	\$ 30,800	\$ 35,200
Vehicle Purchased or Leased (potential opportunity to utilize existing City vehicle dependent on final service model i.e. internal/external provider)	\$ 60,000	\$ 100,000
Fuel & Maintenance	\$ 6,000	\$ 8,000
Insurance	\$ 3,000	\$ 5,000
Training & Certification	\$ 2,000	\$ 4,000
Administration & Support Services	\$ 10,000	\$ 20,000
Supplies and equipment	\$ 5,000	\$ 7,500
Technology	\$ 1,500	\$ 3,500
Subtotal	\$ 258,300	\$ 343,200
Contingency 5%	\$ 12,915	\$ 17,160
Total	\$ 271,215	\$ 360,360
* The above costs reflect a full-service model. The City aims to identify opportunities to leverage and expand existing community services, which could lead to significantly reduced expenses.		

OUTCOMES

1. Reduced Pressure on Emergency Services
 - Fewer non-emergency calls to police and paramedics.
 - More efficient use of emergency resources for critical incidents.
2. Increased Access to Support Services through transportation
 - Transportation to housing, food, and mental health services.
 - Improved service navigation for individuals in crisis.
3. Enhanced Community Safety and Well-being
 - Visible presence in high-need areas contributes to public reassurance.
 - De-escalation of crises reduces potential harm and community disruption.
4. Trauma-Informed and Culturally Safe Interventions
 - Harm reduction approach supports individuals without requiring abstinence.
 - Outreach Workers apply trauma-informed practices that prioritize emotional safety, choice, and empowerment.
 - Services are delivered in ways that are culturally respectful and inclusive, recognizing the diverse identities and lived experiences of Port Alberni residents, including Indigenous communities.

5. Strengthened Partnerships and Coordination
 - Collaboration with shelters, health teams, and police ensures wraparound support.
 - Integrated response model improves outcomes for individuals and communities.
6. Reduction in Justice System Involvement
 - Diversion from arrest or hospitalization for non-criminal social issues.
 - Supportive pathways that reduce recidivism and long-term system involvement.

COMMUNITY EXAMPLES

1. [Edmonton's 24/7 Crisis Diversion Team](#) transports individuals in crisis to shelters, hospitals, or safe spaces rather than jail or ER.
2. [Vancouver's Carnegie Outreach Project](#) a street outreach team that provides additional support to those most marginalized in the community and the least likely to be accessing traditional social services. during late-night shifts.
3. [Alpha House Society – Calgary, Alberta - HELP Team](#) (formerly DOAP): A mobile diversion response team focused on street-level intoxication and homelessness.
4. [Victoria: Street Ambassador a program a program of street ambassadors who walk in the downtown care, wearing](#) shirts or jackets with the SOLID logo. They assist individuals living on the street to access services that are able to meet their immediate needs so that they are able to make steps to improve their wellbeing rather than simply being moved along.
5. [Toronto, ON: The Community Crisis Support Service \(CCSS\)](#) offers non-police mental health crisis response.

NEXT STEPS

- Identify funding sources (municipal, provincial, federal).
- Promote a partnership between social service providers, RCMP, Island Health, WCGH, and Indigenous service providers to connect people with appropriate care.
- Design a communications strategy about the DOTs.

4. Crisis Response Team

A Crisis Response Team (CRT) in Port Alberni is a collaborative, community-based initiative designed to provide urgent, coordinated support to individuals experiencing acute mental health, substance use, or social crises. It operates within the broader framework of Community Safety and Social Development, which emphasizes inclusivity, well-being, and proactive intervention.

ACTIVITIES

- Crisis intervention and de-escalation.
- Mental health and substance use assessments.
- Referral and navigation to appropriate services.

- Community outreach and engagement.
- Coordination with emergency services and health providers.
- Follow-up support and recovery planning.

ESTIMATED BUDGET

Crisis Response Team Budget Estimates*		
Item	Low estimate	High estimate
Personnel RNs/Social Workers/Mental Health Clinicians, Outreach Workers (3 FTEs)	\$ 200,000	\$ 240,000
Supervisor Clinical lead (1 FTE)	\$ 90,000	\$ 110,000
Salary subtotal	\$ 290,000	\$ 350,000
Employer benefits (22%)	\$ 63,800	\$ 77,000
Vehicle Purchased or Leased (potential opportunity to utilize existing City vehicle dependent on final service model i.e. internal/external provider)	\$ 60,000	\$ 100,000
Communications and Dispatch Integration	\$ 25,000	\$ 35,000
Community Outreach and Education	\$ 10,000	\$ 15,000
Insurance	\$ 5,000	\$ 7,500
Program Administration and Evaluation	\$ 10,000	\$ 20,000
Expenses subtotal	\$ 173,800	\$ 254,500
Salary and Expenses Subtotal	\$ 463,800	\$ 604,500
Contingency (5%)	\$ 23,190	\$ 30,225
Total	\$ 486,990	\$ 634,725
* The above costs reflect a full-service model. The City aims to identify opportunities to leverage and expand existing community services, which could lead to significantly reduced expenses.		

OUTCOMES

1. Timely, Coordinated Crisis Response
 - Individuals in acute distress receive urgent, compassionate support through a collaborative network of local health, housing, and social service providers.
 - CRTs operate within an integrated service model, reducing duplication and ensuring seamless transitions between supports.
2. Trauma-Informed and Culturally Safe Interventions
 - CRT staff apply trauma-informed practices that prioritize emotional safety, choice, and empowerment.
 - Services are delivered in ways that are culturally respectful and inclusive, recognizing the diverse identities and lived experiences of Port Alberni residents, including Indigenous communities.

3. Reduced Reliance on Emergency and Justice Systems
 - CRTs divert individuals from police, ambulance, and emergency departments by offering non-punitive, health-focused alternatives.
 - This reduces criminalization of mental health and substance use challenges and promotes community-based care.
4. Improved Access to Appropriate Supports
 - CRTs provide on-the-spot assessments and navigation to services such as mental health care, substance use treatment, housing, and peer support.
 - Individuals are connected to wraparound supports that reflect their unique needs and goals.
5. Strengthened Community Safety and Well-being
 - CRTs contribute to a visible, reassuring presence in the community, helping to de-escalate crises and reduce public disruption.
 - Outreach efforts are focused on building trust and engaging marginalized populations in a respectful and non-judgmental manner.
6. Support for Recovery and Long-Term Stability
 - CRTs offer follow-up care and recovery planning, helping individuals stabilize and build pathways to wellness.
 - Services are designed to be person-centered, empowering individuals to define their own recovery journey.
7. Data-Informed Service Improvements
 - CRTs collect and share data on service gaps, community needs, and crisis trends, informing continuous improvement and strategic planning.
 - This supports evidence-based decision-making and ensures services evolve to meet changing community needs.

Differences between a CRT and a DOT

Aspect	Crisis Response Team (CRT)	Diversion Outreach Team (DOT)
Area of focus	Mental health and substance use crises	Public intoxication, homelessness, non-emergency social issues, transportation to services
Response Model	Clinician-led, trauma-informed	Outreach worker-led, harm reduction
Hours of Operation	Typically, weekdays, 8:30 AM–4:00 PM	Extended hours, evenings and weekends
Partnerships	Health authorities, crisis lines, Indigenous organizations	Municipal services, shelters, outreach teams

COMMUNITY EXAMPLES

1. [Victoria, BC: The Integrated Mobile Crisis Response Team \(IMCRT\)](#) combines mental health clinicians, police, and outreach workers.

2. [Toronto Community Crisis Service](#) is a free, confidential, in-person mental health support from city-wide mobile crisis work teams, non-police-led, community-based, client focused, and trauma-informed.
3. [The Ottawa Hospital \(TOH\) – Mobile Crisis Team \(MCT\) – Community Based](#) an outreach team to provide rapid assessment of and stabilization for individuals in the community who are in crisis.
4. [The Ottawa Hospital \(TOH\) – Mental Well-Being Response Team \(MWRT\)](#) - callers to 9-1-1 experiencing a mental health issue may receive a medical assessment by a paramedic and a mental health assessment by a mental health professional who can provide resource referrals, a care plan, and arrange for follow-up mental health care.
5. [Ottawa Police Mental Health C.H.A.N.G.E Initiative](#) is focused on long-term, system-wide improvements that make police services more compassionate, effective, and connected to the needs of Ottawa’s diverse communities, and is built on the principles of fairness, accountability, and community trust.
6. [REACH Edmonton 24/7 Crisis Diversion Program](#) a program that helps people experiencing nonemergency crisis get to a safe place, freeing up police and emergency medical services to respond to more critical events, and contributes to the decriminalization of poverty, mental health and addiction by supporting people to connect with appropriate resources versus engagement with police, justice and corrections.

NEXT STEPS

- Review proposed budget and identify funding sources (e.g., provincial grants, UBCM, federal programs).
- Engage community partners (Island Health, CMHA, KUU-US, First Nations, RCMP) to co-design the CRT model.
- Pilot the CRT for 12 months with quarterly evaluation through BC Housing’s Heart and Hearth Program.

5. Security Ambassadors

The purposes of having security ambassadors are to enhance public safety while emphasizing de-escalation and community connection over enforcement, to address immediate concerns about safety and property damage, and implement neighbourhood agreements.

This proposal outlines a comprehensive security ambassador program for social service facilities such as food banks, shelters, and outreach centers. The goal is to ensure the safety of clients, staff, volunteers, and the surrounding community through trauma-informed, respectful, and professional security services. Ambassadors trained in de-escalation, trauma-informed practice, and Indigenous cultural safety.

ACTIVITIES

- Patrolling downtown and high-traffic areas to provide a visible, reassuring presence.

- Engaging with vulnerable individuals to offer support and referrals.
- Assisting with wayfinding and information for residents and visitors.
- Reporting safety concerns to appropriate authorities.
- Supporting community events and initiatives.

ESTIMATED BUDGET

Security Ambassador Program Proposed Annual Budget		
Item	Low estimate	High estimate
Security Ambassadors (4 FTE)	\$ 160,000	\$ 180,000
Benefits (18%)	\$ 28,800	\$ 32,400
Uniforms and Gear	\$ 12,500	\$ 17,500
Training and Certification	\$ 2,500	\$ 3,500
Bikes/escooters/small equipment	\$ 7,500	\$ 10,000
Insurance/WSBC/overhead	\$ 5,000	\$ 7,500
Subtotal	\$ 216,300	\$ 250,900
Contingency (5%)	\$ 10,815	\$ 12,545
Total	\$ 227,115	\$ 263,445
* the above costs reflect a full service and could be significantly lower if the resources are shared amongst non-profit social services organizations.		

OUTCOMES

1. Enhanced Public Safety Through Compassionate Presence
 - Security Ambassadors provide a visible, reassuring presence in high-traffic areas, contributing to a sense of safety without relying on enforcement.
 - Their presence helps prevent escalation of safety concerns through early, respectful engagement.
2. Trauma-Informed Engagement with Vulnerable Populations
 - Ambassadors are trained to recognize signs of distress and respond using de-escalation techniques that prioritize emotional safety and dignity.
 - Interactions are guided by empathy, non-judgment, and respect, reducing the risk of traumatization.
3. Culturally Safe and Inclusive Practices
 - Ambassadors receive training in Indigenous cultural safety and inclusive communication, ensuring respectful engagement with diverse community members.
 - The program supports relationship-building with Indigenous organizations and cultural leaders to ensure services reflect local values and histories.
4. Strengthened Community Connections
 - Ambassadors assist with wayfinding, information sharing, and support at community events, helping residents and visitors feel welcomed and informed.
 - They act as liaisons between the public and service providers, helping individuals access resources in a non-threatening, supportive manner.

5. Responsive and Coordinated Safety Support
 - Safety concerns are documented and reported to appropriate authorities in a timely and respectful manner.
 - Ambassadors work in alignment with existing Agreements and local service networks, contributing to a coordinated response to community needs.
6. Support for Social Service Environments
 - Ambassadors stationed at facilities like shelters, food banks, and outreach centers help ensure the safety of clients, staff, and volunteers through respectful monitoring and engagement.
 - Their presence helps reduce property damage and disruptive behavior while maintaining a welcoming atmosphere.

COMMUNITY EXAMPLES

1. [Vancouver: Downtown Vancouver Business Improvement Association's \(DVBIA\) Community Safety Ambassadors Program](#) a program to alleviate crime prevention for downtown business by identifying and reporting crime-related incidents, illegal behaviour, vandalism, graffiti and environmental and safety hazards. They employ licensed security guards, trained in first-aid, mental health first aid, Indigenous awareness, and conflict resolution.
2. [Nanaimo Community Safety Officer Program](#) focus on providing municipal supports and responses to the community and vulnerable citizens on issues including public disorder, homelessness, addictions and mental health challenges.
3. [Edmonton: Capital City Clean Up and Community Outreach Teams](#) is a litter reduction and graffiti prevention program that coordinates with individuals, communities, social enterprises and professional contractors to showcase Edmonton as Alberta's beautiful capital city.

NEXT STEPS

- Identify funding sources (municipal, provincial, federal).
- Promote a shared service through social services providers to use their existing funding to support a security initiative at their location.
- Create a Community Safety Hub to allow for real-time communication (through a shared app or radio) between businesses, ambassadors, and RCMP.
- Consider integration with Diversion Outreach Team and Crisis Response Team for holistic coverage.