

RESEARCH REPORT



Reclaiming Urban Neighbourhoods: Assessing
New Strategic Approaches to Security in
|| Canadian Social Housing Communities



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**Reclaiming Urban Neighbourhoods:
Assessing New Strategic Approaches to Security
in 11 Canadian Social Housing Communities**

Submitted to:

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation

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Chapter 1

OVERVIEW

1.1 Reclaiming Urban Neighbourhoods

Developing and maintaining safe and secure communities within Canadian urban centres has become one of the major challenges of the 1990s. Of particular concern are the significant crime-related problems faced by many neighbourhoods that provide housing to the economically disadvantaged - problems compounded by the absence of a comprehensive, practical and effective strategy for dealing with them.

The residents, property owners, public officials and other stakeholders concerned with security in low-income neighbourhoods will therefore find this report particularly timely and useful.

The report documents the results of a project funded jointly by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) and the Metropolitan Toronto Housing Authority (MTHA).¹ That project had two main foci:

- evaluating the security initiatives undertaken in 11 communities within MTHA, and
- preliminary testing to see whether the lessons learned in those communities are relevant to other social housing communities in Canada.

Evaluating the MTHA Safe Neighbourhood Initiatives

The project paid particular attention to evaluating the Safe Neighbourhood Initiative (SNI) that was launched within MTHA in March 1991.

1. Major parts of this report have been incorporated into a separate report submitted to MTHA. That report is titled, "Reclaiming Urban Neighbourhoods: An Evaluation of the MTHA Safe Neighbourhoods Initiative (SNI)."

The promising results of the SNI experience are important for two reasons. First, the 11² distinct communities of MTHA residents, housing authority staff and other community stakeholders demonstrated that it was possible for them to have a significant impact on safety and security in their own neighbourhoods. In short, what they did worked for them. Second, the SNI experience confirmed the value of an particular approach, the Strategic Security Framework, for other communities. It demonstrated the effectiveness of this set of strategies developed within MTHA to increase security in both public housing (and private) communities.

Applicability to other Canadian Communities

The current project also began to test the effectiveness of the SNI approach and its applicability to other public housing communities in Canada through a series of workshops in St. John; New Brunswick; Halifax; Nova Scotia; Winnipeg; Manitoba; and Edmonton, Alberta. We hope that further discussions and initiatives based on the results documented in this report will extend the benefits of the SNI approach to a much wider group of communities - both within MTHA and other housing authorities across Canada.

1.2 Format of the Report

This report presents the results of our evaluation of the SNI experience. However, these results are presented in a non-traditional format - one that reflects some of the key lessons learned from SNI.

First of these lessons is the importance of the particular overall approach to planning and managing security initiatives used by all communities.

During the past few years, the authors, working with MTHA staff and residents, developed the Strategic Security Framework (SSF). This framework has been used for planning, developing, managing and evaluating security initiatives within MTHA. However, the framework is equally applicable to other social and private housing neighbourhoods. The SSF provides the structure for this report and the standard against which we describe and evaluate the specific approaches of the SNI.

2. Although MTHA initially had identified 10 SNI communities, residents pointed out that one large community (i.e., Regent Park) was viewed by those who lived there as two distinct communities (i.e. North Regent Park and South Regent Park). Accordingly, the initial 10 SNI communities became 11 communities.

Three key principles of the SSF approach are:

- focusing on specific threats to security,
- involving all parts of a community ("Security is everybody's business") and all types of resources, and
- setting priorities according to effectiveness.

Chapters 2 through 4 relate directly to these principles and the lessons learned regarding each.

Chapter 1

begins with an overview of the objectives of the project and the format of this report. The chapter then describes the SNI and the methodology of this evaluation. The latter description also includes an overview of the SSF approach and the key lessons learned from the project.

Chapter 2

focuses on the specific size and nature of the security problems at the beginning of SNI. Any security approach must be flexible enough to deal with the considerable variation in problems that exists from one community to another and from one period to another. Whatever their specific needs, the communities did share a common concern about security.

The chapter also compares the security problems in the 11 SNI communities to those identified in the four public housing communities in other parts of Canada. Although those communities experienced a great variety of security problems, they had much in common with the 11 communities in Toronto.

Chapter 3

describes and critically examines the specific activities of the SNI initiative. Special attention is given to lessons learned relating to key principles of the SSF approach. These principles are the need for:

- direction and commitment, overall management, resources, organization and clear responsibilities, planning and operational security strategies, and administrative and technical support systems.

The chapter also considers whether the SNI security approaches are consistent with what the other four communities consulted would find appropriate for other Canadian social housing environments.

Chapter 4

provides evidence of the success of the SNI experience. Residents and staff the SNI communities not only tried the right approaches, but, faced with an extremely difficult challenge, also achieved commendable results.

Chapter 5

discusses the more immediate policy and strategic implications of the results for CMHC and MTHA.

A second element of the SSF approach - one amply demonstrated by the SNI efforts - is that, given the pervasive and persistent nature of the security problem, security initiatives cannot be one-time projects but must be steps in an ongoing process. Similarly, the evaluation itself must be seen as only one step in the process. To be most effective, the evaluation should build on what has been done and should provide information in a format most useful to those stakeholders who will be taking the next step.

The evaluation report should not primarily serve the needs of external parties, but the people who will be most directly involved in improving SNI and similar communities in the future.

Therefore, we preferred a report focusing primarily on results. Although the project has provided MTHA and CMHC (and the individual SNI communities) with a wealth of quantitative and qualitative data and analysis, in this report we present methodology and supporting detailed statistical analysis only to the extent necessary to support key arguments.

The SNI experience also reaffirmed the SSF principle that community development must be a very significant part of most security strategies. Moreover, community development occurs most effectively if it is done not by specialists alone, but by every staff member, resident and other stakeholder in the community. This lesson applies equally to those undertaking evaluations. As will be seen the evaluation methodology was designed to ensure that the evaluation itself complemented and enhanced the community development efforts within the SNI neighbourhoods. Similarly, the format of this report should facilitate its use in future community development efforts in these 11 communities. It should help them set priorities to extend their efforts and assist other public housing communities initiate similar efforts.

The SSF approach and the SNI practical experiences also emphasize that we must create learning and management environments that encourage innovation and risk taking. But developing secure environments is an extremely difficult and complex undertaking. Innovative risk taking will not always result in immediate success. Therefore, we should treat well-intentioned and well-thought-out efforts that do not succeed as well as expected not as total failure, but as useful learning experiences.

The current report therefore concentrates on the lessons of the SNI experience, and documents specific problems only to emphasize the importance of those lessons.³

For similar reasons, the report does not provide separate evaluations of the efforts of each of the 11 SNI communities, (or those of the other four communities consulted) but concentrates on the more general lessons that emanate from the efforts of all.

1.3 An Introduction to SNI

1.3.1 SNI: One Step in an Ongoing Process of Improvement

A major principle of the SSF is that, whenever possible, "new" security initiatives should build on the positive initiatives, organizations and resident and staff resources that already exist in many communities. SNI demonstrated the importance of this at an operational level within each community, but also at a general strategic level. For instance, it is important to recognize that SNI is part of a larger recent initiative to improve the safety and security of MTHA communities.

In some instances, SNI adopted approaches that had already been used by the more innovative MTHA staff and residents at certain points over a number of years. A number of strategic studies that began in 1988 encouraged the use of those techniques within a more comprehensive framework and with the support of a broader range of senior staff. The initial products of this more recent, larger initiative was the commitment of the MTHA Board and senior management to a proactive role in developing safe and secure neighbourhoods and the communication of this commitment through a mission statement.

3. As will be noted later in this chapter, a number of additional supporting reports have been provided to each of the SNI communities. The key statistical results required to support the general conclusions in the current report have also been submitted as a separately.

This mission statement was followed with a number of "strategic principles" and "directions for change" that would provide general guidelines for future security efforts.⁴

The first test of these guidelines was a small number of community-based, innovative and extremely productive pilot projects (in Edgeley, Donmount Court and Dundas Gooch). In a number of ways, these pilots were "pilot SNI" projects.⁵

The next major step forward was the strategic planning⁶ that was undertaken prior to a restructuring and resourcing of the whole MTHA system of delivering security services. Operational changes resulting from that work included:

- a transfer of responsibility for security at the community level from a central security branch to property managers within those communities,
- significant reductions in the number of security officers hired on contract and a compensating increase in security officers and other staff (83) within a new MTHA Security Branch,
- the addition of security responsibilities in the job descriptions of a broad number of MTHA staff, and
- development of a new system of strategic and financial planning that had its roots in "site planning" teams in the communities.

4. See for instance:

Robert Hann, Kathryn Asbury and Clifford Shearing, "Metro Toronto Housing Authority Safety and Security Committee: Consultant's Report for the 1st Phase," MTHA, (1988), and Robert Hann, Kathryn Asbury and Clifford Shearing, "A Review of the Structure and Provision of Security Services in MTHA Projects," MTHA, (1989).

5. See for instance:

Clifford Shearing, "MTHA Safety and Security Mid-Pilot Review," MTHA, (1988).

6. That prior planning work produced a series of 6 reports, a model overview, and 5 other reports dealing with specific aspects of the new proposed system. See for instance:

Robert Hann and Kathryn Asbury, "Security Delivery System: Model Overview", Report #1, MTHA, (1989).

It is note worthy that the same SSF principles that guided the development of the Security Delivery System⁷ helped form the basis of the separate, but complementary, SNI. In fact, as we will demonstrate the SNI efforts represent a particularly faithful implementation of the SSF principles.

In addition to prior security efforts another foundation of SNI was a more general review of the MTHA mission, mandate and corporate direction beginning in 1990 ("Rising to Meet the Challenge" RMC). That initiative resulted in additional recommendations for change not only in security matters, but throughout MTHA.

In summary, on the one hand, it is clear that the incentive for SNI came from the MTHA Board and senior staff in 1990 and 1991, and that the SNI effort went far beyond previous efforts, especially in the area of resident involvement and the incorporation of a community development approach in all activities. On the other hand, the success of SNI also depended on an infrastructure that existed as a result of earlier resident and staff efforts.

Similarly, MTHA is trying to build on the lessons learned and infrastructure created by SNI. Whether that building will occur under the name "SNI" or under the umbrella of the current Continuous Quality Improvement initiative is immaterial. What is important is the commitment within the individual SNI communities and the Board and senior management of MTHA to continue and broaden the security improvement process as exemplified by SNI.

1.3.2 The SNI Communities

SNI focused on safety and security problems in 11 (of the over 100) communities within MTHA. Those communities were:

- Alexandra Park
 - Edgeley Village
 - Jane Falstaff
 - Lawrence Heights
 - Lawrence/ Susan
 - North Regent Park
 - Parma/ O'Connor
 - South Regent Park
 - Warden Woods
 - Willowridge, and
 - Yorkwoods
- North Regent Park and Lawrence Heights had the largest number of units (1,357 and 1,069, respectively); Lawrence Susan, Willowridge and Parma Court/ O'Connor had the smallest number of units (210, 228 and 233, respectively).

7. The extent to which these and other principles embodied in the Strategic Security Framework have been reflected in the development and operations of the Security Branch and the broader MTHA "Security Delivery System" will be the subject of a separate review.

- Population per community ranged from 5,836 in North Regent Park to 920 in Lawrence Susan.
- Together, the 11 communities accounted for a total population of 28,034 and 6,086 units.
- The communities represented a variety of building forms that included highrises, low-rises, townhouses and mixtures of those building types.
- The communities were located in both downtown and suburban locations, in six districts spread across Metropolitan Toronto (an area of over two million people).

1.3.3 The SNI Effort

The next three chapters describe SNI in detail. A more complete description of the SNI initiative in each community can also be found in a special MTHA publication, Safe Neighbourhood Initiatives: Making our Neighbourhoods Safe (MTHA, August 1992).

Key features of the SNI efforts include:

- SNI was a community-driven initiative in contrast to other initiatives undertaken by headquarters staff or outside groups. Residents and staff identified security threats developed and were involved in the response and participated fully in this evaluation.
- The SNI initiative also required the active support of the MTHA Board and headquarters staff.
- In certain communities other stakeholders also played an important role (e.g., community centre staff and the police).
- The types of security measures employed varied with the specific problem, but usually included a mix of:
 - physical security (e.g., locks, intercoms, video cameras, lighting, landscaping and removal and/or erection of physical barriers),
 - direct security (e.g., mobile security, staff and contract personnel foot patrols, lobby guards, and bicycle patrols by the public police), and
 - community development (from Kool Aid Parties, newsletters, murals and fairs to community development workers).
- The program required a reallocation of 6.2 million of existing internal resources. This amount does not include the considerable volunteer time contributed by many residents and staff.

1.4 Objectives of this Project

As noted earlier, the work on which this report is based was jointly supported by CMHC and by MTHA. Although each of these organizations had their own objectives for the work, there was sufficient overlapping of interests to support a strategic alliance between them.

1.4.1 CMHC Objectives for the Project

The objectives of CMHC for this study were:

- to help develop a CMHC policy statement regarding security within public housing communities and (more specifically to collect information on:
 - the actual and perceived levels of security in a range of public housing communities in Canada,
 - the relative effectiveness of different types of security initiatives,
 - the factors that inhibit and enhance the effectiveness of different initiatives, and
 - the policies and strategies that should guide future efforts to improve security in public housing communities).
- to learn about the MTHA SNI experience;
- to assist MTHA gather information on security of use to other public housing communities, and of interest to all urban communities, and
- to open a dialogue among Canadian public housing communities regarding the experiences and lessons learned.

1.4.2 MTHA's Objectives for the Project

MTHA's objectives for the project were more operational but consistent with those of CMHC. They included:

- to evaluate SNI within the 11 designated MTHA communities;
- to provide feedback to residents and staff in each community - and to others - about what the communities did and how well they did it;

- to identify the general and specific strategies that should guide MTHA's ongoing efforts to provide safe and secure environments
 - at the community level; and
 - at the district and headquarters levels;
- to identify aspects of the way MTHA does business that should be encouraged or improved;
- to share information on security experiences among MTHA communities;
- to reinforce those aspects of the SNI experience that have been most productive; and
- to assist CMHC develop information on security that would be of interest to other urban communities, especially public housing communities.⁸

In addition, as the project progressed, MTHA, CMHC and the consultant project team realized more and more the potential benefits of using the evaluation process itself as a community development vehicle. Section 1.5.2 following will discuss how this additional objective became an important consideration throughout the project.

1.4.3 Evaluating the Strategic Alliance

From the outset this project was designed, funded and managed as a strategic alliance between CMHC and MTHA. The experience demonstrated unequivocally that such strategic alliances can be to the advantage of both parties. The alliance also achieved results that are of benefit to the wider community interested in urban and public housing security issues, results that probably would not have been possible if the parties to the alliance had attempted the task independently. The current project team would certainly recommend that CMHC and MTHA continue to explore the opportunities for similar alliances in the future.

8. Note that within MTHA this project is only one of a number of evaluations being conducted. MTHA's planned evaluation of its "Security Delivery System." Further, while the current evaluation is focusing on strategic and general lessons to be learned, a separate evaluation is focusing on the relative effectiveness and efficiency of technological components of SNI. For example, a design subcommittee is evaluating card access systems (including software), maglocks and camera equipment in the SNI communities.

1.5 Methodology

1.5.1 Dealing with complexity, diversity and uncertainty

Most evaluations in the security area are faced with a very complex set of activities, decisions and situations to describe and assess. The complexity stems from many sources. For example:

- The behaviour causing threats to security is usually the result of a complex interaction of many socio-demographic, economic and psychological factors, the influence of most of which is, at best, only partially explained by available criminological research.
- The different reactions of those who are threatened and those who take action against threats are equally complex and poorly understood.
- There are usually serious problems regarding the quality and scope of both available quantitative and available qualitative data on security problems and solutions.
- There is usually a wide range of opinion on security threats and the responses that have (or could be) implemented.

Therefore, one must adjust one's expectations for an evaluation of a security initiative. Searching for statistically pure, precise and unequivocal answers will be unproductive and wasteful.

On the other hand, the current project has amply demonstrated that it is indeed possible to design an evaluation that provides evidence for making decisions at both the policy and operational levels decisions that will result in improvements to the safety of neighbourhoods similar to the SNI communities.

The design decisions for this project were consistent with a number of principles contained in the SSF. They include:

- Where at all possible, obtain information on specific issues using as many types of information collection techniques as possible. Major conclusions should be supported by corroborating evidence collected using more than one technique.
 - The current project collected information on key issues using a multitude of techniques, including:
 - workshops
 - questionnaires
 - key person interviews
 - direct observation, walk abouts
 - selective review of the literature and statistical reports
 - original analysis of automated occurrence and incident report files maintained by MTHA
- All major stakeholders threatened by security problems or involved in security solutions should be consulted. Again, major conclusions should be supported by corroborating evidence collected from more than one stakeholder group.
 - The current evaluation provided ample opportunity for all major stakeholders, especially residents and staff, to have their views recorded and discussed. For Example:
 - Workshops were held in each of the 11 communities. These workshops were four to eight hours long, were publicized and open to all interested parties, and often attracted more than the target 20 participants. A significant number of both staff and residents attended each of the workshops. Other stakeholders also attended (e.g., community centre workers and the police).
 - Workshops and a number of individual interviews were also held for MTHA headquarters personnel.
 - Questionnaires were administered in each of the 11 communities and were completed by 571 residents and 104 staff.⁹

9. An additional 22 respondents to the questionnaire did not indicate whether they were residents or staff. Although individual communities were given the opportunity to adapt these questionnaires somewhat to reflect their specific concerns, all questionnaires contained a common core set of questions and covered the same general areas. Communities were also given some leeway to tailor the procedures for administering the questionnaire in their own communities. The procedures used in each community are documented in the separate community reports. In general, however, the procedures used would be sufficiently random to preclude misleading results. Nonetheless, throughout this report we have been very conservative in drawing conclusions from the questionnaires and have only quoted results that are supported by the results from a strong majority of the communities, or are based on statistics that very strongly support a particular hypothesis.

(continued...)

- The automated security data base contained data on 24,113 incidents that occurred between January 1, 1991 and August 31, 1992.¹⁰
- Ensure that opportunities are provided to collect and offer information on all areas that could be relevant.
 - The agendas for all workshops, the questions in the questionnaires and the background document reviews covered a range of areas that included:
 - basic characteristics of each community
(e.g., physical environment, community development, direct security, profile of residents, staff and other stakeholders);
 - incidence and nature of security problems
(e.g., specific risk-creating activities, priority level of each activity, most frequent types of victims, most frequent types of offenders, timing, location):
 - consequences: before and after SNI
(e.g., overall level of security, spinoffs, specific changes in behaviour);
 - effectiveness of different resources used to improve security
(e.g., corporate direction, general security strategies, personnel and equipment resources, organization, support systems);

9(...continued)

The percent age of residents submitting completed questionnaires varied from community to community. Willowridge was by far the most successful in achieving a high response rate (38% of units), with Yorkwoods (25%), Parma Court (18%), Lawrence Susan (13%), Warden Woods (12%) and Jane Falstaff (11%) achieving return rates above 10 per cent. Relatively lower rates of completed questionnaires were recorded for South Regent Park (9%), Lawrence Heights (8%), Alexandra Park (6%), Edgeley Village (4%) and North Regent Park (2%). It should, however, be noted that some communities (including North Regent Park) did not include all units in the survey. Given the varying return rates, it is difficult to generalize about the results. Note however, that we state findings only if they are supported across all communities in questionnaires, workshops and interviews.

10 We have provided incident and occurrence data in the separate reports to each community. But this data must be used in conjunction with local knowledge and a detailed description of the events and character of each community. Further analysis of occurrence and incident reports should be a focus of subsequent phases.

- Strengths, Weaknesses and Required Support for Individual Components of Security Strategies
(e.g., direct security, physical design strategies, community development);
 - Lessons for Future Improvements to Security
(e.g., corporate direction, general security strategies, personnel and equipment resources, organization, support systems).
- Build into the project design, mechanisms to check interim results.
 - The current project built in a number of such double checking procedures. For instance:
 - All workshop proceedings were recorded on flip charts in full view of the participants. (This technique is a variation of the Nominal Group Technique.)
 - In a working session, participants thoroughly checked our analysis of the tables and graphs that we produced from data from the MTHA automated occurrence and incident system. The session included the security planner who had been involved in SNI from the beginning.
 - Through workshops conducted in four other Canadian cities we tested the applicability to other social housing communities of the general lessons learned from the analysis of the SNI communities.
 - Ensure the relevance and comprehensiveness of the issues addressed - and the effectiveness of evaluation procedures - by involving those most knowledgeable about them, namely, the residents and staff in each community.
 - This principle of the SSF was incorporated into the evaluation through various mechanisms. For example:
 - Very early on in the project, representatives of each community attended a workshop to review suggestions regarding the issues to address and the techniques to be used.
 - Workshops of community development and security staff familiar with each community help and design the initial strategies for administering questionnaires.
 - Residents and staff from each community were involved through a series of meetings (within each community) in modifying the questionnaires and the procedures for administering them in their own communities.

1.5.2 Evaluation as Community Development

It became evident that, if designed properly, the evaluation itself could assist in the development of each community. This objective was met in a number of ways. For instance:

- The numerous project workshops provided additional opportunities to bring residents and staff together in a forum conducive to positive and open discussion (both within communities and among communities).
- The participation of CMHC in the evaluation made communities feel that they were involved in a more global effort.
- When they were given the opportunity to adapt the questionnaires to their own communities - or to collect additional information of particular interest to the community - the residents and staff were made to feel that not only was their participation valued, but also that it produced results.
- Involving residents and local staff in the administration and distribution of the questionnaires enable them to make contact with residents and to make them more aware of positive security efforts within the community.
- Finally, we have moved beyond the scope of this project by providing to the 11 SNI communities much community-specific data and analysis (e.g., derived from questionnaires and workshops) that could be used for more detailed, locally specific planning based on local knowledge.¹¹ A number of SNI committees requested this data as a basis for community-specific reports as a second step in the evaluation and to continue the safety improvement process.

11. These materials were provided under separate cover. Other materials provided in those community reports include: the customized version of the questionnaire that was prepared for each community, a description of the process used to administer the questionnaire, statistical tables documenting the analysis of the questionnaire results for that community, a description of the community, graphs and statistical tables describing the results of the analysis of the automated incident data for that community, the workshop agenda, and documentation of the flipcharts generated at the workshops.

A synthesis and comparative summary of the statistical analysis of the questionnaires and occurrence data is also presented as a separate supporting volume to the current report.

1.5.3 Acknowledging the Other Partners in the Evaluation

Security efforts are usually more effective if they incorporate community development approaches. In other words, community development approaches should be imbedded in the security strategies of all staff and residents. The evaluation itself demonstrated the truth of this principle since those evaluation tasks that enhanced community development also improved the evaluation itself.

Many staff and residents in each community worked hard to assist us in designing and implementing the workshops and the questionnaires on a scale that could not otherwise have been feasible¹². Key headquarters staff also made similar efforts throughout the project.

As well, the expertise of all these groups improved the technical quality of those parts of the evaluation in which they were involved.

Since they had a big role in its design and implementation, MTHA residents and staff within the 11 communities, together with key headquarters staff could feel joint ownership and pride in the evaluation project and its results.

1.5.4 Scope of the Evaluation: Making Security Everybody's Business

The evaluation and the format of the remainder of this report are based on the principles of the SSF. The following three chapters discuss the following overall principles:

- focusing on specific threats to security,
- involving all parts of a community and all types of resources (i.e., making security everybody's business), and
- setting priorities according to effectiveness.

The second of these general principles requires elaboration.

12. For example, in Willowridge residents and staff delivered and explained the questionnaire to residents of every unit.

Building safer public housing communities must be achieved through widespread organizational change. The most effective security initiatives will mobilize all stakeholder organizations, many of which, in the past, assumed little or no responsibility for security at the community level. All stakeholder organizations must play a role in ensuring community safety.

The Strategic Security Framework identifies five key kinds of organizational effort needed:

- **Corporate Direction and Commitment**
 - **Organization**
 - **Strategies**
- Effective security starts with a clear sense of direction. All parts of the organization must know what they have to do to achieve the overall objectives.
 - All parts of the organization have to demonstrate commitment to those objectives.
 - All persons in the stakeholder organizations must play an appropriate role in security.
 - There must be an effective organizational structure for communicating direction, for managing and for working productively with others.
 - There must be a clear understanding of how the organization does all its business, together with an understanding of any additional (but consistent) principles that apply to security initiatives.
 - The strategic, tactical and operational approaches must achieve positive results for the "customers" of the service, i.e., the communities.

- **Resources**
 - All security initiatives require adequate personnel, capital and equipment.
 - Training of staff and residents to ensure they have the appropriate skills is especially important.
- **Support Systems**
 - If staff and residents are to achieve results "on the front lines" they must have effective support from parts of the organization which traditionally have had only a tangential involvement with security (e.g., performance measuring systems, financial budgeting and expenditure control systems, management information systems, communications systems and human resource management systems).

Achieving safety and security within public housing communities requires effective contributions from **all levels** of public housing, resident and other stakeholder organizations.

1.6 Key Findings of the Evaluation

This section presents the key lessons learned from the evaluation. We believe these lessons, and the SSF principles, could be applied to social housing communities across Canada. The SNI experience confirms this view, as do the results of our consultations in four other cities (Edmonton, Winnipeg, St. John and Halifax.)

Chapters 2 through 4 explore these (and other) lessons in more detail.

1.6.1 The Extent and Nature of the Security Problem Before SNI

Certain SNI communities were experiencing very serious security problems before SNI (see Chapter 2).

1.6.2 The Extent and Nature of the Security Problem After SNI

SNI communities should be very proud of the improvements they achieved. Residents and staff report that since SNI started people in the communities feel much more secure.

However, serious threats to security still exist in certain communities. The SNI efforts must continue and be extended - both within these and other social housing communities. Creating and maintaining safe communities will require significant ongoing effort.

1.6.3 Overall Approach and Management

SNI built on the best of the innovative and effective strategic planning, management and operational principles developed in earlier efforts within MTHA.

In particular, the success of SNI has reaffirmed the need to move beyond traditional security strategies to strategies that involve all the staff and resident resources within all parts of all social housing communities.

Communities must create learning and management environments that reward innovative thinking and risk taking.

The SNI experiences have also reaffirmed the need for a coordinated approach to safe and secure communities. This approach should encompass.

- direction and commitment
- organization
- strategies
- resources
- support systems

Social housing communities need long-term comprehensive and realistic plans for ensuring community safety.

That plan should build on the strategies proven effective by the SNI communities.

1.6.4 Direction and Commitment

Creating safe communities requires continuing strong support from all levels of an organization, especially from the board, headquarters, district and community levels.

1.6.5 Organization

The work of security branch personnel and contract security officers is essential to any security effort. However, residents and other social housing staff can also play significant roles.

Community teams involving local residents and staff should be an essential element of most security efforts.

Further, local staff and residents should take ownership of security problems and solutions.

The local property manager should be the person directly responsible for security at the local level.

1.6.6 Strategies

Security strategies must recognize the considerable variation in security problems from one community to another, and from one time to another.

Most security initiatives require both a local community focus and support at the corporate level. Both are required - neither is likely to be effective if attempted alone.

Security plans must include the appropriate mix of direct security, design and community development elements.

Community development principles and techniques must be part of the day-to-day efforts of all staff.

1.6.7 Resources

Residents and staff at the community level have extremely limited resources to undertake additional security initiatives.

Planning and decision-making structures must ensure that resources are effectively and efficiently directed to priority areas identified by the community.

Initiatives should, as much as possible, build on existing resources - (i.e., the abilities of social housing staff and residents.)

1.6.8 Support Systems

Administrative, technical, communication, financial and human resource management systems must also play a role in community security.

There must be better communication at the operational level on security issues and the experiences of different social housing communities.

1.7 Concluding Comments

Although the lessons listed above (and in the chapters that follow) are very important products of the evaluation, a number of other results are equally important.

The key result is the change process initiated in the 11 SNI communities in Metropolitan Toronto. The knowledge gained and the mutual awareness on the part of staff, residents and other stakeholders (at both headquarters and the community level) will serve as a foundation for future collaboration and are major accomplishments.

SNI is expected to have lasting effects for a number of reasons:

- The new partnerships at the local level will enable people to continue their efforts in their current or future communities;
- The SNI was not merely a one-year experiment. The new skills and knowledge of participants are already being used and lessons learned are being incorporated into the organization-wide Total Quality Service initiative. The SNI is a practical example of the implementation and benefits of a "quality service" approach.
- The data collection instruments, including the workshops held at strategic points in the research process at headquarters and in the 11 communities were a learning experience which can be incorporated into future community development activities as both an information-sharing and consultative mechanism. Similarly, the massive undertaking of questionnaire development and administration in the 11 communities provided on-the-job training for staff and residents which will be invaluable in future work.
- The SNI experience was empowering for residents who were involved in all phases of the initiative.
- Finally, through the collaboration of CMHC and social housing agencies in Edmonton, Winnipeg, St. John and Halifax, this project initiated a much-needed communication network across Canada. This network involves residents and staff of public housing communities and also those they deal with routinely, such as the police and the schools. It will help satisfy the acute demand for information about how others in public housing communities are making communities safer.

Chapter 2

SECURITY CHALLENGES

2.1 Introduction

According to SSF strategies to create safer neighbourhoods, they are most likely to succeed if they focus on reducing specific security threats.

At the outset of the project, most of the SNI communities tried hard to identify and document the specific security threats they faced and to do so according to the SSF approach which suggests the following breakdown:

- type of threat
- spinoffs
- seriousness of threat
- type of offender
- type of victim
- location
- timing

The following sections describe each of these aspects of the threats in the SNI communities before the program began. The chapter also compares the threats found in SNI communities with those in Edmonton, Winnipeg, St. John and Halifax.

With respect to the SNI communities, the major overall conclusion of this chapter is that:

- Certain SNI communities were experiencing very serious security problems before the initiative began.

SNI took on challenges that many other communities have found to be overwhelming.

Note that this chapter describes the situation before SNI. As will be seen in the next two chapters, significant differences now exist.

2.2 Major Threats

Community workshops identified drug activity as the most significant threat in all SNI communities - and it was seen as being much more serious than any other concern. The rest of this report shows that this difficult issue can best be tackled with a comprehensive, community-driven approach.

Although there was not always consensus among stakeholders about the specific ranking of other threats, there was remarkable consensus among workshop participants about what these threats were. The large inventory included: domestic violence, vandalism (destruction of property), trespassing, prostitution, street violence, loitering, intimidation, the carrying and discharging of weapons, disturbances, petty theft, robbery, false fire alarms, speeding, noise, theft from cars and illegal parking. Other, more pervasive problems included racism and unemployment.

2.3 Consequences of Threats

The SSF also advocates exploring the possibility that the spinoffs from offences create damage and fear that should be considered in their own right.

For instance, the majority of workshop participants argued strongly that many threats - such as vandalism, loitering, prostitution, noise, trespassing and violence - should be viewed as by-products or "spinoffs" of drug activity, and that tackling this main issue (drugs) would reduce these other threats.

Among the many other spinoffs of drug activity identified were: disturbances, increased pedestrian and vehicular traffic, fear on the part of residents and staff of drug dealers, of being caught in the middle of a "drug-ripoff", of the unpredictable and potentially dangerous behaviour of "crack heads" - harassment of residents and staff, rowdy behaviour, thefts, resident and police apathy, negative media perceptions, health hazards (e.g., from discarded syringes, urine and feces in stairwells), the feeling of being "watched" and intimidated by drug dealers, derelict abandoned vehicles, litter, vigilante mentality, loss of trust and a general sense of alienation in the community.

The impact of these threats on the behaviour of residents was profound. Residents were reluctant or refused to talk to neighbours, to walk alone at night (or even in the day in some cases), to allow children to play outside unsupervised, to allow children to play in sandboxes because of discarded needles, to access basic services such as cabs and fast-food home delivery, to complain to authorities or to join in crime prevention activities because of fear of reprisals, to invite family members to visit because of fear for their safety and to tell friends where they lived (or worked) because of the stigma.

2.4 Seriousness of the Threats to Security

Resident and staff participants at community workshops described a level of victimization from drugs and other threats that they (and the consultants running the workshops) perceived was far above the rate in most in other Metropolitan Toronto neighbourhoods.

Although crime statistics compiled by public law enforcement officials do not allow one to test this perception reliably, the results of the project questionnaires do support the position.¹³

For instance, when residents responded to the question,

"Before SNI, was the drug problem in your community less serious, about the same, or more serious than in the nearest other residential neighbourhood"?

- 64% of all residents responding (excluding those who responded "don't know") answered "more serious here" - with only 11% responding "less serious here;"¹⁴

13. As noted in the previous chapter, the questionnaire results will only be quoted if they offer overwhelming support for (or overwhelming evidence against) an argument in the text.

14. Unless otherwise stated, all percentages are based on the total number of questionnaires returned 1 including those who responded "don't know" or "no response." In this case, if one were to include the 14% of respondents who responded "don't know" or "no response," one would find that 10% responded "less serious here," 21% responded "the same," and 55% responded "more serious here."

- In all of the 11 communities the percentage of residents responding "more serious here" was above 35%; and the percentage responding "more serious here" was above 80% in two communities (Jane Falstaff and Warden Woods).

When asked the identical question,

- 78% of all staff responding (excluding those who responded "don't know") answered "more serious here" - with only 11% responding "less serious here."

Similarly, when residents responded to the question,

"Before SNI, was the drug problem in your community less serious, about the same, or more serious than in the last place you lived?"

- 62% of all residents responding (excluding those who responded "don't know") answered "more serious here" - with only 20% responding "less serious here."
- For only one of the 11 communities did the percentage of residents responding "more serious here" fall below 27% (i.e., Edgeley, 27%); and
- The percentage responding "more serious here" was above 65% in two communities (again, Jane Falstaff and Warden Woods).

In keeping with the SSF approach of seeking corroborating evidence from as many perspectives as possible on key issues, the questionnaire also asked staff and residents,

"How often did a member of your household usually suffer consequences¹⁵ from drug dealing in your community?"

- Combining all residents' responses resulted in the following:
 - 50%..... never
 - 13%..... less than once a month
 - 5%..... at least once a month
 - 4%..... at least once a week
 - 9%..... almost every day
 - 7%..... always

15. "personally suffered consequences" was defined in the questionnaires as: "being physically hurt, been scared enough to tell others, changed behaviour to avoid the problem, took action or changed their behaviour to protect themselves against being hurt, or tried to transfer to another MTHA community to get away from the problem"

- The percentage answering "never" was fairly stable from one community to another - ranging from a low of 38% in Edgeley, to a high of only 58% in Lawrence Heights.
- It is disturbing that in only two of the 11 communities did less than 20% of the residents say they were victimized by drugs once a month or more frequently than once a month. In Warden Woods that percentage was 46%.

The combined and consistent results of the community workshops and the community questionnaire leave little doubt as to the seriousness of the security problem before SNI.

2.5 Type of offender

During the workshops participants from each community described the characteristics of drug, and other types of, offenders in their communities. The results of those sessions (and the community-specific analysis of the questionnaires) can be found in the separate reports prepared for each community. We present only selected highlights here.

Workshop participants focused their attention on their priority threat - drug activity and its spinoff activities. Most said that those involved in the drug trade before, and, in many cases, after, SNI represented a mixture of residents, residents not on the lease, and non-residents. However, there was a strong perception that the majority of buyers came from outside MTHA, while dealers were drawn roughly equally from within and outside MTHA (although they were not necessarily tenants on the lease or from the same community). Both dealers and buyers were believed to be predominantly male and aged between 18 to 35, although women were seen as represented in small numbers in both groups.

Particularly disturbing was the high percentage of dealers perceived in many communities to be between 12 and 17 years old, the age of persons falling within the aegis of the Young Offenders Act. When asked to name the two age categories accounting for the largest percentage of offenders before SNI,

- in only one community (Lawrence Susan) did less than 20% of residents cite persons aged 12 through 17;
- in three of the communities (Edgeley, Parma Court and Warden Woods(74%)), over half of the residents responding cited persons aged 12 through 17.

On the other hand, in each of the 11 communities, over half the residents responding felt that before SNI, a large number of drug offenders were aged 18 to 28.

Also significant for security policies and operational tactics is residents' perception that the majority of drug dealers were not legitimate tenants of MTHA.

- Only 16% of respondents felt that drug dealers were most likely to be residents on the lease,
- while 22% responded residents not on the lease, and
- 32% responded "non-residents." (A further 30% did not respond to the question.)
- In six of the 11 communities, the ordering of offenders was "residents" (lowest number of responses), "residents not on the lease" and "non-residents" (highest number of responses).

Clearly, although certain communities believed that drug dealing by residents was a problem people felt that the large of drug dealers came from outside the community of legitimate MTHA residents.

As in the community workshops, the questionnaire responses indicated that non-residents accounted for a sizeable proportion of drug buyers prior to SNI.

- Only 14% of residents responding overall felt that drug dealers were most likely to be "residents on the lease,"
 - while 14% responded "residents not on the lease," and
 - 40% responded "non-residents." (A further 33% did not respond to the question.)
- In seven of the 11 communities, the ordering of offenders was "residents" (lowest number of responses), "residents not on the lease" and "non-residents" (highest number of responses).
- However, there was considerable variation from one community to another. For instance,
 - in Edgeley and Jane Falstaff over 65% of residents responding felt that drug buyers were most likely to be "non-residents," and
 - in only four of the 11 communities did over 20% of the residents responding feel that drug buyers were most likely to be "residents."

2.6 Type of victim

The question "Who was victimized by security threats (and especially by drugs) before SNI?" was asked at every workshop. The answer was "everyone" who lived and worked at MTHA - young people and old people, women and men, residents and staff, all ethnic races, single people and family members - everyone.

However, certain groups - women and children in particular - were seen to be especially vulnerable.

2.7 Location

The location of threats varied but typical areas noted in the community workshops were ones which provided good visibility and ease of escape. According to participants, most communities had at least a few "crack houses." Most of these crack houses were leased to vulnerable single mothers who were preyed upon by dealers in exchange for drugs and money, and several had a busy "drive-through" trade.

Although certain sites might have been preferred locations to others for drugs and other types of offences before SNI, community workshop participants stressed that all areas were at risk. Every place could be the scene of crime - lobbies, stairwells, elevators, living units, underground and above ground parking lots, hallways, children's playgrounds, walkways and driveways.

Workshop participants also agreed that certain offences, such as drug dealing, would occur in different locations from one season to another. For example, in winter it tended to happen inside; in summer, outside.

2.8 Timing

There was also a consensus that, although certain types of problems peaked at certain times of the day, there could be some form of trouble happening all day long.

According to the SSF approach, there should be considerable variation in the types of problems experienced within individual SNI communities from one time to another. Indeed, workshop participants agreed that different types of crime occurred more frequently at different times of the day, week and month and at different seasons of the year. There was also almost virtual consensus that, even though drug dealing was a 24-hour activity, it generally increased after dark.

Workshops identified some patterns and peak periods of activity, suggesting the need for security flexible enough to respond to the ebb and flow with different levels of resources.

2.9

How SNI Communities Compare with Other Public Housing Communities

Our workshops in public housing communities in St. John, Halifax, Winnipeg and Edmonton highlighted many similarities in the problems experienced by far-flung communities. The discussions in those workshops also demonstrated the usefulness of exploring security threats in terms of the categories suggested by the SSF (i.e., type of threat, spinoffs, seriousness, type of offender, type of victim, location and timing).

The brevity of our visits to the four other cities made it difficult to compare those communities with the SNI communities as to the extent of problems experienced. Moreover, these workshops did not necessarily focus on communities that exhibited the most serious problems within those cities. However, in general, the serious problems faced in the Toronto communities occurred but were less pervasive in the other cities. Workshop participants expressed concern that serious problems could become more pervasive in the future.

In each of the workshops in the four other cities, participants were divided into two groups and each group was asked to discuss a common agenda of security issues: major threats to security, characteristics of those threats, and assessments of the different mixes of security responses.

A summary of the results of those workshops follows.

2.9.1 Halifax, Nova Scotia

As with the 11 SNI communities in Toronto, Halifax workshop participants considered drug-related offences (dealing and using) were the most serious threats to security. Comments made during the workshop regarding the nature of these drug offences are provided in Figure 1.

Figure 1

| Halifax Workshop: Characteristics of Threat Ranked #1: Drugs | |
|---|--|
| <p>1. Nature:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all types - crack, hash, marijuana, alcohol • both using and selling • problems areas shift - perpetrators move from site to site • seems to be a return to "soft drugs" and alcohol <p>2. Spinoffs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assaults by and against dealers • intimidation, especially of new tenants • damage, e.g., broken bottles family violence (especially violence related to alcohol) health hazards (some needles found on sites) • break-ins • users banging on tenants' doors, asking for baking soda, water, /or matches • service delivery people (e.g., pizza, cabs) won't come in (tenants must walk out) • perception that there is violence connected with drugs • stigma - perception that there is more drug dealing in public housing - still "the well" | <p>3. Perpetrators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mix of people • outsiders coming in to buy • kids who grew up here and have moved back • 10 to 25 year olds • kids used as runners, role models are dealers • small percentage of tenants involved • people looking for easy money • crosses all barriers • starts with older children and tenants; moves to younger family members • outsiders (drive by) • tenants in units <p>4. Victims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • whole community • immediate neighbours <p>5. When:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • more visible in summer, moves outside • layout facilitates it; maze, "concrete jungle" (many streets don't have street addresses) • 24-hour per day drug trade; perhaps more prevalent in evenings, at night • after midnight - spinoffs (complaints) |

A number of other threats to security were also identified by participants in the Halifax workshop. Among those ranked most serious (after drug offences) were: "hanging around," vandalism, disturbances, assaults, family violence and theft. Participants also emphasized, factors that contributed to these problems: residents' "turning a blind eye" an inability of management to act, and inadequate tenant screening.¹⁶

16. Other identified threats to security included: prostitution, noise, gang activity, alcohol abuse, traffic problems, animal control, intimidation, community fear, unwanted guests, unsupervised children, and false fire alarms.

2.9.2 St. John, New Brunswick

In contrast to the results for the 11 SNI sites and the Halifax workshop, drug trafficking (needles) and drugs (i.e., alcohol) were ranked as the third and second most serious problems by the two groups of participants at the St. John workshop. Vandalism/ destruction was ranked as the most serious threat.

Figure 2

| St. John Workshop: Characteristics of Threat Ranked #1: Vandalism | |
|--|--|
| <p>1. Description</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • holes in walls • garbage, dirt • siding torn off • marking up buildings • debris, e.g., broken bottles • damage to cars • lawns and gardens ruined • tire marks from parking on lawns <p>2. Spinoffs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lack of respect and pride in community • interior/exterior site • cost • appearance <p>3. Perpetrators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • people who live here • some outsiders such as people living with tenants; boyfriend of tenant breaks door in • not always kids; all ages • tenants' children • non-residents • animals • visitors and guests • police/response to calls <p>4. Location</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • common space | <p>5. Victims</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Authority • residents (eyesore, decreases pride) • tenants, animals, neighbours, staff (MCH) • taxpayers, local businesses <p>6. Cause</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lack of motivation; people are "in a rut" parents must actually accompany their kids to sports, activities and games, not simply tell them about it • boredom; young people and kids with nothing to do • reprisals: if you report problems caused by others, your property is damaged • low self-esteem • intimidation; some kids won't use recreation centre because of intimidation • let community decide on programs; then they will be appropriate <p>7. Time</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • seasonal variations; more in the summer • weekends; absentee parents, latchkey kids lead to lack of supervision |

Participants in the St. John workshop identified a number of other threats to security. Among those ranked most serious (in addition to vandalism and drug offences) were: lack of control of animals, lack of control of children, lack of tenant selection, intimidation, slow police responses and interpersonal disputes.¹⁷

2.9.3 Edmonton, Alberta

Drug offences were also not ranked the most serious threats to security by either group of workshop participants in Edmonton. Instead, "parties/ disturbances" were ranked as most serious by one group and as second most serious by the other group.

A number of other threats to security were also identified by participants in the Edmonton workshop. Among those ranked most serious (in addition to parties/ disturbances) were: break-ins/ property crimes, alcohol and drug abuse, vandalism of vehicles, and family and domestic violence.¹⁸

17. Other identified threats to security included: inadequate traffic control, junk cars, speeding cars, drinking, noise, domestic disputes, loitering and graffiti.

18. Other identified threats to security included: interracial issues, vacant-unit vandalism, child-resident safety, gangs (and drugs), stigma of living in public housing, interpersonal conflicts between residents, arson, lack of trust, fights, unsupervised children, extortion of children (lunch money, etc.), and speeding cars.

Figure 3

| Edmonton Workshop: Characteristics of Threat Ranked #1: Parties/ Disturbances | |
|---|--|
| 1. Who <ul style="list-style-type: none">• age 20-40 mostly• mainly tenants' guests from outside• repeat offenders• disputes among neighbours• family disputes | 6. Spinoffs <ul style="list-style-type: none">• noise• fights• chases all over project• demands for protective help from resident managers• vandalism; cars, windows, break-ins to vacant units to crash for night• broken beer bottles, litter, discarded needles• dissatisfaction with neighbourhood; requests for transfer• lack of personal safety; fear of being hassled at night• unsupervised children (of people at parties), at night or next day• retaliation against resident manager who tried to do something about parties• tires slashed, threats• alcohol, drugs• assaults, battering• fear and apathy of victims• fear of reprisal |
| 2. Time <ul style="list-style-type: none">• all the time• 2-6 in morning• payday• any night• all year | |
| 3. Location <ul style="list-style-type: none">• specific address• 4 or 5 units in each building that have parties• sometimes move outside | |
| 4. Who reports <ul style="list-style-type: none">• difficult to get reports in writing; fear of reprisals• office needs to have complaint in writing | |
| 5. Victimized <ul style="list-style-type: none">• children who can't sleep• non-invitees | |

2.9.4 Winnipeg, Manitoba

In Winnipeg, alcohol-related violence and alcohol and substance abuse were ranked as most serious by one group and as second most serious by the other group.

Figure 4

| Winnipeg Workshop: Characteristics of Threat Ranked #1: Alcohol-Related | |
|--|--|
| <p>1. Age of perpetrators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • alcohol; 16 and over • sniffing: ages 12-18 <p>2. Frequency</p> <p>Alcohol:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cheque days • weekends are bad (normally hear parties) • some during week <p>Sniffing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • on-going <p>3. Location</p> <p>Alcohol:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • spread around; minority of units (10-15%) <p>Sniffing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sniff houses; specific areas • moves around | <p>4. Spinoffs</p> <p>Alcohol:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • disturbances • all night parties • fights and assaults • harassment of people • vandalism • children left unattended <p>Sniffing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vandalism • harassment of others (but sniffers usually quiet, "out to lunch") • lots of hookers sniff • unpredictable (cause fear) • kids affected, physically and emotionally • threats to other people's kids • sniffing - starts with parents • creates fear in younger kids • children can't sleep • outsiders drawn into community • increased costs • enormous emotional costs • kids not attending school • increased need for police services • fires, and other damage |

A number of other threats to security were also identified by participants in the Winnipeg workshop. Among those ranked most serious (in addition to alcohol-related offences) were: vandalism, break-and-enter and a perceived general lack of family values.¹⁹

19. Other identified threats to security included: prostitution, assaults, theft, harassment by "johns," unsupervised children, speeding, fear on the part of residents, vandalism, domestic violence, disturbances, purse-snatching, auto theft, youth assaults, discrimination and racial harassment, and arson.

2.10 Concluding Comments

Workshops in all cities reaffirmed the principle that security policies and practical initiatives must recognize that different communities experience different types of problems - and experience them to different degrees. There is often considerable variation in the types of problems experienced within individual public housing communities from one period to another.

However, whatever the specific nature and degree of the security threat the principles of SSF should be applied in many situations. The next chapter explores how these principles were followed in planning and implementing responses to the security problems in the SNI communities.

Chapter 3

CREATING SAFE ENVIRONMENTS: THE SNI EXPERIENCE

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter made it clear that the 11 SNI communities were experiencing significant security threats at the beginning of the SNI process.

During the evaluation, we critically examined the specific activities that comprised the SNI initiative in each of the 11 communities, measuring these activities against the SSF principles and using the SSF to structure our evaluation.

We present the evaluation results in a format that emphasizes lessons learned that would be of practical use for further policy and operational efforts by CMHC, by MTHA, and especially by the individual SNI communities

The last sections of chapter 1 presented the general lessons learned from the evaluation. These general lessons provide an important but a broader context for the current presentation. This chapter of planning and implementing considers the more specific lessons learned about the process of the SNI efforts.

These more specific lessons are presented here under the same headings used in Chapter 1:

- direction and commitment
(including overall management)
- organization and responsibilities
- planning and operational security strategies
- resources
- administrative and technical support systems

This chapter then concludes with a discussion of the extent to which the SNI lessons were reflected in the assessments by the four workshops held in Halifax, St. John, Edmonton and Winnipeg.

3.2 Direction and Commitment

As noted in Chapter 1, a key principle of the SSF is that effective security starts with a clear sense of direction. All parts of the organizations should know what they have to do to achieve the overall objectives. Further, all parts of the organization have to demonstrate through their actions a commitment to achieving those objectives.

Specific lessons of the SNI experience that relate to direction and commitment follow.

1. During the past year, staff and residents in most SNI communities demonstrated a significant commitment to the principles and objectives of SNI.
2. The extraordinary contributions of many staff and residents should be officially recognized.

There is a need to develop better mechanisms for recognizing and rewarding the contributions of staff, residents and communities as a whole. It is especially important to appreciate staff who give up family time because of extra work and put up with other inconveniences. No one should be expected to put in superhuman efforts or to work without receiving due recognition.

3. The degree of commitment by residents and staff at different levels of the organization varies. All staff must be told exactly what is expected of them.
4. Senior management demonstrated commitment to SNI through the establishment of a SNI steering committee that included the directors of operations, security, and design services staff - as well as other key senior MTHA staff. MTHA should seriously consider continuing this or an analogous steering committee to support and guide further community-based, inter-branch security efforts.

More than 23 steering committee meetings were held over the course of the SNI initiative. The meetings were designed to:

- conduct a formal review of progress to date,
- place the projects in the context of other work being done,
- review the budget, and
- review the plans of each community for future activity.

The committee played additional roles such as:

- developing a strategy to make SNI participants feel that the project was important and that their contributions were recognized;
- monitoring deadlines to ensure that action plans didn't slide; and
- ensuring a coordinated and cohesive approach.

5. The board and senior MTHA management should not take it for granted that residents and staff are convinced of their commitment to continuing the efforts started by SNI.
6. The withdrawal of resources originally promised made people doubt the commitment to SNI within senior levels of government.
7. The organization must provide direction through clear measurable objectives for staff at all levels. Systems and procedures that convey expectations should be clearer so that staff can direct resources where they are needed most.

Although the SNI teams set written objectives for their projects, staff lacked guidance from headquarters in a number of areas. There were no clear and measurable security objectives for each staff member. (Such instruction should extend from the board to the most junior level.) There was also lack of security standards or security-related performance evaluation criteria.

8. There is a need for a set of practical and relevant security standards.

The issue of security standards was an important and recurrent theme. The formulation of minimum security standards is an important sign of corporate commitment. Presumably an acceptable level of security includes the physical and psychological well-being of residents and staff, recognition on the part of public agencies that MTHA provides a good level of protection to their staff and protection of MTHA property (i.e., the property of the Crown).

It is reasonable to expect that MTHA residents and staff should have roughly equivalent (or ideally improved) standards of safety compared to nearby neighbourhoods or other neighbourhoods where residents previously lived.

Of course, the unique nature of threats within, and the needs and circumstances of, different communities dictate flexible tailoring of security approaches rather than rigid, uniform corporately dictated standards. There is obvious merit, for example, in setting standards to ensure the compatibility of software programs for card access systems throughout MTHA. Moreover, there is a need to set minimum standards for community consultation especially since it appears that some managers construe existing guidelines as purely voluntary. There should also be procedures, to prequalify contractors to alleviate the frustration around delays and shoddy work.

9. Evaluation of staff performance in security matters must be built into the system to give staff feedback on performance and to determine what has worked and what needs improvement.

3.3 Organization

A second principle of the SSF is that effective security requires all persons in stakeholder organizations to assume responsibility for security as appropriate.

There must also be an effective organizational structure for communicating direction, for managing and for working productively with others.

Specific lessons of the SNI experience that relate to organization and responsibilities follow.

1. An effective security initiative will usually depend on all stakeholders in public housing communities making a commitment to the initiatives. These stakeholders include: local housing authority staff, residents, police, schools, community centres, etc.. There is still considerable untapped potential in this area.

The degree to which different stakeholder groups were involved differed from community to community. In some cases, the degree of involvement reflected the infrastructure of social services in the local community. (e.g., Caring Community and community workers).

Many residents and staff felt that the full potential contribution of stakeholders had yet to be tapped by MTHA communities. In the community questionnaires, residents and staff were asked to describe the contribution that was made by different groups in their community since SNI started. Possible answers were "very strong contribution," "some contribution," "hardly any or none," or "no opinion."

Of all the groups specifically mentioned,

- only the public police were considered by over 70% of the residents²⁰ in all 11 communities to have made a "very strong" or "some" contribution;
- only the local community centres were considered by between 50% and 70% of the residents in all 11 communities to have made a "very strong" or "some" contribution (over 70% of residents in Falstaff);
- the local schools were considered by over 50% of the residents in eight of the 11 communities to have made a "very strong" or "some" contribution; and
- parks and recreation were felt by over 50% of the residents in six of the 11 communities to have made a "very strong" or "some" contribution (71% in Falstaff).
- In the large majority of the 11 communities, less than 50% of the residents believed the following groups, among others, to have a "very strong" or "some" contribution: local churches, municipal politicians, provincial politicians and federal politicians.

2. Within a public housing authority, responsibility for security must be shared by all divisions, including, but not limited to: property management, community services, maintenance, recreation, tenant relations, race relations, finance, human resource management, design services, communications, information and technical services, etc. However, although SNI achieved great strides in this area some MTHA staff must still be convinced of the importance of the proactive role in security initiatives.

Specific responsibilities for creating safe neighbourhoods must be allocated to every staff member. All parts of the organization must be involved. It is unlikely that the SNI would have been so successful if it had been marketed as solely a security staff initiative.

Although there is widespread rhetoric that security is everybody's business, this attitude has not permeated to every corner of the

20. All respondents were included in the base used for calculating these percentages - even those answering "don't know" or "no opinion."

organization. In certain cases, the success of SNI was in spite of the conspicuous lack of commitment from some individuals at headquarters, in the districts and at the sites. In the words of one participant, "Some got it and others didn't."

The SNI coordinator was frequently called upon to remove organizational barriers created by uncommitted managers who failed to recognize the value of SNI. These managers seemed to expect the initiative to be a passing fad of headquarters the "latest flavour of the month" as some were fond of saying. Those people had not yet accepted the idea that SNI is the way the corporation will do business in future.

3. The SNI experience clearly established the possibility and value of meaningful involvement of both residents and staff within each community

Mistrust and misunderstanding between staff and residents has been, in the past, a major barrier to creating safe communities, but has lessened as a result of meaningful involvement and the tangible benefits of participation.

It is important to involve all groups in the community. The degree of multicultural representation in this initiative was note worthy. It was a major change from similar initiatives as recently as two years ago when community meetings, workshops, etc., tended to be homogeneous.

4. In certain communities, SNI participants were anxious to give credit for successes to the prior and concurrent efforts of other groups.

Staff and residents have devoted considerable time to working with stakeholders to negotiate the different roles that each can play to develop safe MTHA communities.

Indeed, we believe that in one or two of the communities they would have achieved almost the same results without SNI because of their strong community agencies and additional funds that other levels of government provided for security improvements.

5. Better mechanisms are required to improve communications and partnerships with residents of neighbouring non-MTHA communities.

A number of adjacent communities were reluctant to view the crime problem in the neighbourhood as a joint problem requiring a joint solution. Instead, the neighbouring communities preferred to think of the problem as an MTHA public housing problem. Sometimes neighbouring communities were also at times upset when SNI efforts resulted in the threats to security being "displaced" to their turf.

A more promising approach is suggested by one SNI community which wished to include a sampling of people from adjacent private housing in their survey. Residents intend to do follow-up work with staff and residents of these buildings, recognizing that the threats they face are a community problem, not a Housing Authority problem and that partnerships between them (e.g., joint resources, sharing lessons learned) would result in more effective threat reduction.

6. The SNI coordinator played the role of facilitator and was crucial to the initiative. Virtually all SNI communities formally expressed the view that the coordinator's hard work, commitment and willingness to take risks by adopting innovative approaches to problem solving was a critical factor in their success. In addition, because the SNI coordinator had management support, fewer organizational obstacles were put in the way of SNI.

3.4 Strategies

A third principle of the SSF is that effective security requires that people understand the principles that determine "how the organization does **all** its business," and any additional (but consistent) principles that apply to security initiatives.

The strategic, tactical and operational approaches used must achieve positive results for the "customers" of the service, i.e., the communities.

Specific lessons of the SNI experience that relate to strategies follow.

1. Although the SNI efforts reflect many of the principles, of the SSF much work remains to be done to communicate these principles.

The corporate strategies based on the SSF approach, which should be continually expanding and changing to meet new security threats, must serve as a guideline for focusing resources towards key goals and objectives. There are still instances in which key staff and residents (even in the SNI communities) have received insufficient training and information regarding the security principles that were developed through earlier MTHA security work.

2. Security solutions must be flexible enough so that they can be tailored to the particular problems and situations in different communities at particular times.

It is important to recognize the value of using different approaches adapted to the location and need at the time. Strategies that were appropriate at one time may become inappropriate under different circumstances. For example, while one community may be erecting

walls, another community may be taking them down. One of the communities knocked down walls to deter drug dealers who used them as cover. A resident noted:

"When I was little we used those walls and the shrubs to play hide and seek and they were a protection for us against traffic. They made me feel safe. But now the kids I used to play with have grown up and some of them are dealing drugs using the walls and shrubs as a cover. It's a real shame. I suppose that in another few years a new group of residents who know nothing about the history of the drug problem and the walls will want the walls and high shrubs back because the shrubs look nice or cut the wind - and maybe they should be put back if the drug problem is gone. I guess it seems like a circle and maybe a waste of money putting them up and taking them down and so on - but I guess it's responding to what residents at a particular time need and want."

3. Community development should not be done by specialized community development personnel only, but by every staff member as part of everyday routines. (MTHA is creating a community development document, and the SNI experience should provide input.) The success of SNI was often due to the significant community development done by staff during previous initiatives. With SNI, more staff were convinced to see community development as part of their roles.
4. There is a need to clarify the roles and responsibilities of residents and staff in all phases of security planning and operations.
5. There is a need to better encourage innovative approaches.

We must spread the work about strategies that have been used successfully in other parts of MTHA. This will help develop organizational mechanisms that encourage innovative - and at times risky - problem solving on the part of staff and residents.

Although the most successful SNI communities were using innovative approaches, there were many stories of initiatives being stifled or stalled by arbitrary bureaucratic inflexibility or unwillingness to tolerate or reward innovation and risk taking.

6. Effective security strategies use a good mix of three types of security tools: direct security, physical design and community development.

Initially, SNI committees tended to look to single solutions but gradually came to appreciate the importance of a multi-faceted approach. Workshop participants vigorously argued for a mix of physical design, direct security and community development approaches as required by the specific security threats in the specific community at specific times. The consensus was that no single approach would work, by itself.

For instance, design strategies (e.g., tree pruning, surveillance cameras, frosted windows, fences lighting) are not effective without companion efforts of community development and in some cases direct security (e.g., police and security personnel).

Design Strategies

Workshop participants observed that design strategies (e.g., better access control and increased surveillance), were especially effective in deterring drug dealers from using SNI communities for drug activity, and also resulted in increased detection and apprehension of perpetrators. Further, they said the design of SNI communities (e.g., clear lines of sight, traffic control, limited points of entrance and exit) helped reduce opportunities for threats to occur.

Design strategies were varied and site-specific. They included: the installation of directional fencing (to eliminate escape routes), the removal of pipe-rail fencing, an upgrading of lobbies, improvements to signage, window replacements and upgrading, the relocation of noisy activity areas such as domino tables away from units, the physical relocation of children's play areas to allow parents to better supervise and safeguard their children, the removal of alcoves and walls (which provide a cover for drug activity), the installation of gates to reduce drive-through drug dealing, the installation of CCTV and intercoms, the upgrading of apartment doors (from hollow core with only a single deadbolt), the installation of card access control systems, the control of traffic, the pruning of shrubs to provide clear lines of sight, the installation of overhead garage doors on underground garages (with keys that cannot be duplicated) and, in one case, cooperation with outside stakeholders to close a fast food store since it was a haven for drug dealers in a plaza adjacent to one community.

In one community, following site analysis which included community walkabouts, some 24 walls were taken down in three phases. This increased visibility and removed a cover for drug activity. The change was coupled with improved lighting, renovated lobbies and the installation of magnetic locks.

Direct Security

Virtually every workshop participant was positive about increased hours of security coverage in SNI communities. They also favoured the lobby guard service, where applied. Other changes that made people feel safer were increased visibility, more police participation, bicycle patrols by police and security officers and the interactions associated with these patrols.

There were mixed feelings among workshop participants about whether reductions in security coverage, which occurred at the end of the pilot year, led to more threats to safety. In those communities where there were reductions, transition plans were developed in conjunction with residents.

Some workshop participants said that the reduction in security personnel hours had no apparent effect, whereas others found that threats had increased, or might increase, as a result of the reductions.

Community Development

Workshop participants observed that community development took a wide variety of forms, including: anti-drug days, multicultural festivals, community gardening, the creation of newsletters, children's programs such as reading circles, surveys, and outreach such as building representatives going door to door to distribute information about local events and to invite participation in SNI.

Workshop participants also reported that staff are now more willing to share information. One result of this is that residents are more realistic in their expectations.

Surveys and observations by outside stakeholders support the residents' positive change. Police participants attested to decreased calls for service, and formal surveys, such as one done by the Addiction Research Foundation, showed that residents of one SNI community have observed an improvement in their neighbourhood.

In one community, a local community centre hired five residents as community development workers (CDW), each responsible for a portion of the community in partnership with the centre. Another community hired a CDW who was a resident of a different MTHA community. Recreation activities were also part of community development strategies. Workshop participants were very positive about such initiatives.

Recreational activities were also part of community development strategies.

7. Community development approaches and practices (as demonstrated by all involved in the community) are especially important.

Some strategies, at first glance, may not seem related to safety -- for example, painting a lobby and other efforts to maintain standards or upgrade the community.

Yet SNI and past initiatives demonstrate that such activities foster community pride and belonging which in turn foster a safer environment. The SNI experience is that when staff, show they care, residents appreciate it and reciprocate.

8. People must understand the need for, trade offs and recognize the possibility of, unintended results.

Trade offs must often be made. One team reported that cameras reduced the level of threats, including drug activity, and were well received overall. However, their installation had to be weighed against other factors such as some people's perception that they were being monitored or spied on. This sense that their movements were being broadcast to their neighbours made some people reluctant to use the foodbank and some fear burglary when they left their apartments. Further, in one community some youth felt alienated because they believed the cameras were installed as a control strategy directed at them, rather than to curb the drug activity.

Other unanticipated results were:

- perceptions that SNI sites got preferential treatment;
- the displacement of problems which could lead to anger from outside communities;
- the lowering of tolerance thresholds with attention shifting to smaller problems after the major ones were solved;
- a rise in noise and vandalism caused by more people going outside once drug problems were reduced.

3.5 Resources

A fourth principle of the SSF is that effective security requires adequate personnel, capital and equipment. Adequate training of staff and residents to ensure they have the appropriate skills is also important.

SNI showed that not only is the level of resources important but also the effective targeting of them. SNI provided authority and procedural mechanisms for more community control over the resources. The initiative changed previous set budget allocations to better respond to community needs and conditions. This reallocation was done with acceptable impacts on other operations within MTHA. It was successful because the community initiated the changes and therefore accepted the results. Lessons learned from the introduction of mechanisms for budget flexibility were especially evident in the identification of requirements and implementation of solutions that involved capital improvements.

Specific lessons of the SNI experience that relate to resources follow.

1. Staff and residents need more training in the skills and techniques required to plan and manage security initiatives.
For instance, staff have probably not received sufficient training in conducting effective community meetings, workshops, interviews, etc. They are also unlikely to have had enough training in research skills such as the development of questionnaires, sampling frames and statistical analysis techniques. In many cases, they are simply told, "Just do it."
2. Staff and residents need more training in the strengths and weaknesses of specific security approaches and security tools.
As security becomes part of everyone's job staff will need training so that they can serve as resources to the local community. For example, if Technical Services Branch staff are expected to provide security advice on access control equipment, they must be trained in how to deal directly with residents.
3. Where at all possible efforts such as SNI should build on resources and organizational infrastructures that are already in place in the community.
To assist residents and staff to achieve their safety objectives they must make use of resources not directly controlled by a housing authority. To capitalize on these resources, residents and staff build partnerships with representatives of other community organizations. The cooperation of groups outside the housing sites is needed to create safe communities. Each site is located within its own network of community organizations, programs and services. (e.g., police, schools, community centres).
4. It is important to recognize that there is also considerable variation in the skills and resources available in specific communities for designing and implementing security responses.
5. The efforts of a core group of staff and residents in each community and their perseverance was key to the success of the SNI in most communities.
Perseverance is an important quality and was particularly necessary in instances such as delays in delivery of technical equipment, and problems around the selection and control of contractors (which necessitates the use of punitive clauses which are rarely invoked).
6. Because of the level of staff effort required during the SNI some of them risked "burnout."

Communities are overburdened with surveys and many staff and residents feel burned out. Nonetheless, residents and staff in all the SNI communities showed true commitment to improving safety by willingly participating in the current evaluation. They took part in workshops and in planning and administering a detailed questionnaire - all within very tight deadlines.

7. Expectations for security must be tempered by the recognition that resources at both the community and corporate level are extremely limited.
8. The SNI initiative clearly demonstrated the significant contributions that residents can make.

3.6 Support Systems

A fifth principle of the Strategic Security Framework is that effective security requires support from many parts of the organization which traditionally have had only a tangential involvement with security (e.g., performance measuring systems, financial budgeting and expenditure control systems, management information systems, communications systems and human resource management systems).

Specific lessons of the SNI experience that relate to support systems follow.

1. The SNI experience demonstrated that considerable work remains to be done to create effective mechanisms for communicating expectations and accomplishments within MTHA.

One example of poor communication about operational matters is the fact that the nature and extent of SNI funding was never adequately communicated to site staff. They lacked a clear understanding of the funding of SNI throughout the process.

Similarly, when asked during the community questionnaires how much their household knew about SNI,

- only 18% of residents said "a lot,"
- 32% said "something," and
- a full 46% said "nothing or very little."²¹
- Further, in six of the 11 communities, over half of the residents responded "nothing or very little."
- Only in Lawrence Susan, Edgeley, Falstaff and Willowridge did over half of the residents respond "a lot" or "something."

21. An additional 7% did not answer the question.

A communications plan was in place and, in September 1992, the districts printed and distributed 33,000 copies of an SNI newsletter. Still there was an obvious need for improved communications about SNI. Documenting ongoing activities through a timely newsletter or through flyers would be an effective means of communication in future project.

It is crucial to establish mechanisms to ensure a more effective two-way flow of information among residents, staff and external agents.

There is also a need for better organizational structures to ensure the sharing of information (e.g., task forces, inter-unit workshops, horizontal communications). For instance, key meetings of the SNI Steering Committee could have been followed by a general meeting to bring together representatives of the SNI teams from the ten communities. This would allow for a productive exchange of ideas.

Organizations should use a variety of techniques to assess achievements instead of relying solely on crime statistics. These techniques could include direct observations, questionnaires, workshops and maintenance costs. It is also important to measure, not only changing levels of threats, but also other safety-related changes -- for example, whether staff are more responsive to community needs and whether residents are more willing to become involved.

Further, overall statistics to measure threats across the portfolios are of marginal value. Statistics and their analyses must be site-based - and interpreted by people with local knowledge. For instance, using data extracted from the automated MTHA security system, the current evaluation developed - for each site - statistical indicators of the trends over the duration of SNI in individual types of, and four groups of, occurrences and incidents. However, it became clear that the statistics on their own (i.e., without considerable commentary based on local knowledge) would be misleading. Their analysis has therefore been deferred to the planned analytic efforts in each community.

2. The SNI experience demonstrated the significant improvements that can be made in the way support services are offered. However, the organization needs to build on positive experiences such as those of certain members of design services to provide services in a more consultative, customer-oriented manner.

3. Staff and tenants in different public housing communities are not sufficiently aware of, what similar communities are doing to improve security - and, in particular, which initiatives work and which don't work in specific types of situations.

An inventory of community safety improvement projects should be developed and distributed to ensure coordination of efforts among sites and headquarters.

A more complete set of lessons learned during SNI and recommendations regarding support systems are included in Chapter 5.

3.7 SNI Experience: Concluding Comments

The residents and staff in the SNI communities have undertaken a major security initiative within their communities. Moreover, for the most part, SNI applied the best of the principles for effective security developed in earlier MTHA efforts. The evaluation of the processes undertaken in the SNI communities is therefore overwhelmingly positive.

The above discussion does highlight certain areas which need improvement. Many of these suggestions relate to aspects of the MTHA organization apart from the SNI communities. These suggestions should be considered within the context of a very positive overall evaluation.

3.8 Other Jurisdictions

Again, the workshops in Halifax, St. John, Edmonton and Winnipeg demonstrated that the general lessons learned during the SNI experience had relevance beyond those 11 communities. The following four charts present highlights of the discussions that occurred in each of those workshops when participants were asked to suggest methods and guidelines for improving security. Specifically, they were asked to assess different mixes of security responses and to suggest general guidelines for strategic alliances in the future.

3.8.1 Halifax

Figure 5

| Halifax Workshop: Representative Suggestions for Improving Security | |
|--|---|
| <p>Direction and Commitment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure attitude change and greater commitment by management: <p>Organization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • empower tenants, staff, police, social agencies • define more clearly responsibilities • form of a tenants association • form a tenant grievance committee (to handle inter-tenant disputes) • close the gap between staff and tenants and agencies • put tenants on the board • appoint people to board who are interested in, and committed to, tenants • create a community-driven tenants association • create community partnerships (institutions such as schools and churches exert informal social control; they should be stronger partners) • foster positive media support • Set common ground rules <p>Strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • work on community development - (motivation, self-esteem, money required) • create programs for youth - ones that are (appropriate and not overly structured) • take chances and be experimental, but don't set people up for failure (try to catch failures early to keep them small) • increase security such as community policing, outside security (contract), locks • create defensible space • create street names instead of terms such as "A" Block; lessens stigma • decrease police presence (less visible police will reduce stigma and people won't say there are the police at housing again.) • increase police visibility; community constables will become accepted as trust builds up and police will not be a stigmatizing presence • consider pros and cons of legalizing drugs • improve lighting • secure windows and doors, install deadbolts | <p>Strategies (Continued)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • change legislation to deal with <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evictions • justice system • change physical structures such as fences and walls to divert traffic, define public and private space • create incentive programs (tenants don't have the incentive of private home owners to take care of property) • improve appearances if a project looks better, this will instill pride and by involving residents attitudes will change • be in for the "long haul," persevere • keep in mind different communities have different needs; no single solution for all <p>Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increase police more budget • off duty police • train residents to deal with issues on weekends (e.g., dispute resolution around minor issues such as parked cars) • hire residents, create opportunities (e.g., maintenance) <p>Support Systems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improve communication to all stakeholders (develop protocols) • create a mechanism for tenants to report concerns without fear of reprisal (e.g., crime stoppers) • have more consistent communication between staff, tenants and outside agents - both <u>verbal</u> and written (to avoid illiteracy barrier) and a more personal approach • improve circulation of information between housing authorities so each is not "reinventing the wheel" • exchange information between agencies |

3.8.2 St. John

Figure 6

| St. John Workshop: Representative Suggestions for Improving Security | |
|---|---|
| <p>Direction and Commitment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • follow through on threats (eviction) <p>Organization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • speak up and take responsibility (residents) • encourage community involvement at appropriate levels • create neighbourhood tribunals (dispute resolution) • support tenants organizing (e.g., create linkages with the broader community give money) • communicate programs and build partnerships (i.e., public education about public housing to the wider community to reverse the stigma) • hold tenants accountable for their actions <p>Strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • set up drug and alcohol programs (NA, AA) • increase police patrols • increase supervised recreation for children • create more community-based programs and training • have strict "no pet" policy and remove outdoor animals • increase lighting • keep things locked • improve traffic control • ensure vandals make amends (e.g., in a recent example two kids ruined screens and were made to clean the parking lot on the first nice Saturday) | <p>Strategies (Continued)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • change terminology Housing AUTHORITY is too oppressive and "big brotherish" • instill pride in residents • impose curfew for children • improve school rules and regulations • teach respect for others and other traditional values; churches and schools play a role here) • create more joint activities for parents and children (children need love and open communications from parents) • offer parenting courses ("home orientation management") • improve community policing • report problems • set up neighbourhood Watch • organize "Welcome Neighbour" gatherings • communicate changes education via the Tenant Association (esp: re: planned improvements) • set up police identification program • criminal charges • lobby to have Young Offenders Act tightened up • improve tenant selection and screening • ensure accessibility for handicapped • ensure orderly and responsible care of tenants and units <p>Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • bring in undercover police <p>Support Systems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • share information • improve communication between staff, tenants and police |

3.8.3 Edmonton

Figure 7

| Edmonton Workshop: Representative Suggestions for Improving Security | |
|---|--|
| <p>Direction and Commitment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • get resident support • EHA is open and willing to help but frustrated at lack of response <p>Organization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • could go to Safer Cities Task Force • could involve CANDON • set up community-police liaison group • get help to organize community • find facility for meetings • set up community league • get better community policing through joint community - EHA appeals to police • get CMHC assistance in addressing security issues at Portfolio delivery, PMC, sub-committees (with CMHC and provinces) • set up tripartite communities on inner-city problems (but be aware of danger of diluting to city-wide solutions when really want to focus on specific areas) • safer city Task Force <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - out of FCM - there is a housing subcommittee • set up joint planning committee on housing for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - inner city housing problems - security issues • involve tenants in patrols • create tenants' associations | <p>Strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • gain credibility by small quick successes, - e.g., better bus shelters • lobby to get rid of recently planted (trees; will become location of parties and rapes) • EHA will assist in getting transfer • EHA will refer to social services • If woman or neighbour calls, EHA will report to police • report child abuse to child welfare • will keep files on everybody, would include parties or abuse • change doors • install intercoms • change windows • improve lighting • encourage agencies to come on site • establish neighbourhood foot patrol • review fences; can be a problem or a solution • improve tenant relations • resident managers • establish security patrols • community mediation and use of other agencies • evictions have occurred • relocate or transfer tenants when necessary <p>Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make use of shared cost resources available from CMHC • use existing EHA facilities for meetings • make use of CMHC funds for demonstration projects • Use of authority facilities, programs |

3.8.4 Winnipeg

Figure 8

| Winnipeg Workshop: Representative Suggestions for Improving Security | |
|--|--|
| <p>Direction and Commitment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure a vision for the community is clear <p>Organization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • involve tenants' association more • Community Educational Development Association (non-profit organization which specializes in community development, funded by United Way and Winnipeg School Division) • involve tenants more in management • create a tenants relations position to organizing communities • get Bear Clan to work with communities • improve better coordination of different community organizations. • have a combined co-ordinated community effort • encourage parents to take responsibility for their community • find community development assistance • encourage schools and other agencies to work with the tenants' association <p>Strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • bring in police Foot Patrol <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • introduced zone officers • community police • install new doors, windows mailboxes and locks (old doors could be opened through mailboxes) • FAST (Fast Action Safety Team) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24 hour phone line (including monitor for seniors) • since May for Winnipeg • access to all services • introduced 5 years ago for Manitoba • seniors, as they come in, record critical information; if alarm (pull cord) sounded, then FAST monitors phones (or contacts police, etc.); send appropriate response • Housing Authority does have screening/reference checks • create more youth targeted programs (12-18) involving physical activities • increase volunteer patrols by tenants | <p>Strategies (Continued)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • set up Block Parents • involve Housing Authority more with tenants' associations (e.g. by attending meetings, listening) • demand more freedom for tailoring CMHC policies and programs to situations in specific sites (since resource problems differ) • start to deal with cross-cultural differences • plan community garden with flowers and vegetables • set up security guard patrol of seniors' building, 7-8 hours per night (not common in MHA) • Core area initiative - built community centre for kids • create babysitting co-op; community kitchen • establish neighbourhood Watch • establish buddy system (seniors, 1 person on each floor does a morning check) • John busting by Lord Selkirk tenants association and Community Councils and Bear Clan Patrol • Community Council (parents) at school <p>Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use police as well as community policing by volunteers • obtain Housing Authority capital for doors and locks • ensure that Housing Authority and schools, etc., hire to match the ethnocultural mix of the community • hire from local area • make better use of existing resources, e.g., the security officer in school • ask Housing Authority to contribute funds to keep centre programs going; these include seniors' programs evening programs for kids and families • obtain more funding for projects • increase housing staff to allow provision of other services |

3.8.5 Four other Communities: Concluding Comments

The highlights from the workshops in Edmonton, Winnipeg, Halifax and St. John clearly support the general conclusions reached in the SNI communities.

These highlights also support the SNI communities' conclusion that residents and local staff represent a major resource for security efforts - not only for their commitment and energy, but also for their good ideas on how to make their communities more secure.

Chapter 4

IMPACTS OF THE SAFE NEIGHBOURHOOD INITIATIVES

4.1 Introduction

The major conclusions of the current chapter are:

1. SNI communities should be very proud of the improvements they have achieved. Residents and staff report that since SNI started people feel much more secure in nearly all SNI communities.
2. However, certain communities still face serious threats to security.

The efforts that were started or extended under SNI must continue - both within the SNI sites and other MTHA communities. Creating and maintaining safe communities will require a significant on going effort.

We will support our conclusions with an analysis related to each of the categories suggested by the SSF:

- type of threat
- spinoffs
- seriousness of threat
- type of offender
- type of victim
- location, and
- timing

4.2 Major Threats

Drugs and drug-related matters were the predominant threats in all 11 SNI communities at the beginning of SNI, and they continue to be so in most sites. However, as will be seen later, the problems have become less serious.

It is interesting to note that in some sites when serious problems were alleviated residents and staff began to focus on misbehaviours that were relatively more "trivial." Thresholds of tolerance for less serious threats seemed to decrease as more serious problems were reduced.

A number of factors might explain this phenomenon. First, it may be that a community's expectations for safety are linked to both what level of safety is possible, and what the community feels it deserves. SNI showed that communities could develop safer neighbourhoods, and the initiative improved pride and self worth within the communities. Secondly, SNI generated a considerable amount of community energy and empowerment which did not necessarily dissipate the moment that the more serious problems were dealt with.

4.3 Spinoffs of Major Threats

The spinoffs related to the major security threat, drugs, decreased as the threat decreased.

The majority of workshop participants said that threats to security - and the resultant spinoffs - had decreased as a result of SNI activities. As a result, they felt more secure along with a greater sense of "neighbourliness" and a sense that all stakeholders were working toward a common goal of neighbourhood improvement. Concrete evidence of improved safety varied from one community to another, but included practical changes in behaviour such as: children playing in the playground, greater resident participation in crime prevention activities, and posted flyers staying up longer.

Moreover, workshop participants said that outsiders have also noticed an improvement. Police officers have commented on a reduction in calls for service at the SNI sites, and the greater trust between officers and residents. Officers have also exhibited better attitudes towards residents, and vice versa, as a result of everyone working together on common objectives of neighbourhood safety. Further, many residents noted that service deliverers (e.g., fast-food deliverers, taxi drivers) were less reluctant to come into the SNI communities.

4.4 Seriousness of the Threats to Security

The results of our consultations demonstrate that residents and staff strongly believe that the SNI initiatives had a significant impact on safety in their communities. Nonetheless, most agreed that there is still work to be done.

4.4.1 Community Workshops

When workshop participants - who, in general, tended to be outspoken and critical regarding other MTHA initiatives in their neighbourhood - were asked directly, "was the SNI initiative worthwhile for the people of Ontario?" they gave the following responses:

- Not one of the over 200 resident and staff workshop participants answered "no, it was of little or no worth" or "it was of only minimal use."
- A few answered, "Yes, it was of moderate worth."
- However, the overwhelming majority answered, "Yes, it was very worthwhile."

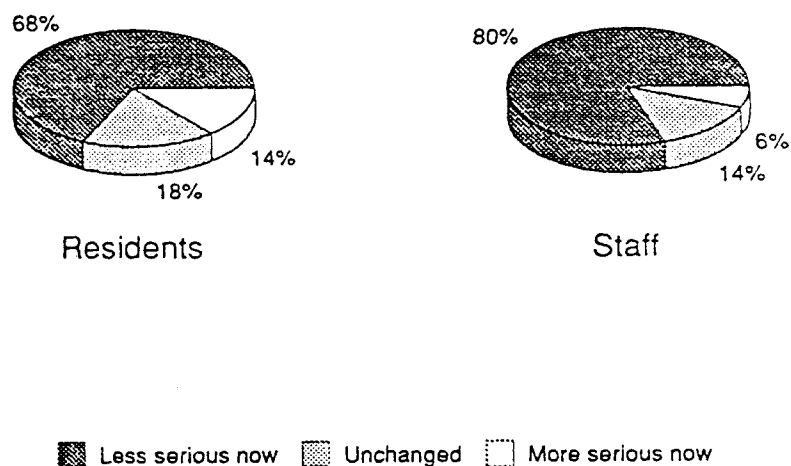
4.4.2 Questionnaire: Overall Impact

The results of the 11 sets of community questionnaires also clearly support these conclusions. In keeping with the SSF principle of exploring each issue from as many perspectives as possible, those questionnaires also addressed the issue of perceptions of the impact of SNI.

First, and most directly, residents and staff were asked: "Compared to the spring of 1991 (i.e., before SNI) is the drug dealing problem in your community less serious now, unchanged from before, or more serious now?"

Figure 9

Drugs: Change During SNI



As shown in Figure 9 (after respondents answering "don't know" were excluded from the percentages),

- overall, 68% of residents responded "less serious now",
- 86% of residents responded that the drug problem was either "less serious now" or "unchanged," and
- only 14% felt that drug problems had got worse.

As also shown by Figure 9, overall, the staff in the 11 communities who answered the questionnaire were even more positive about the results of SNI - with 80% feeling that the drug problem was "less serious now."

It is also important that

- in fully nine of the 11 SNI communities, over 50% of the residents felt that the drug problem in their community was "less serious now."²² (Again this was after respondents answering "don't know" were excluded from the percentages.)

Positive feelings about the effects of SNI on drug dealing were especially high in certain SNI communities. Even when respondents answering "don't know" were included in the percentages,

- 81% of the residents from Jane Falstaff felt that the drug problems were "less serious" after SNI. Especially positive results were obtained from residents of Lawrence Susan (82%), South Regent Park (71%), and Yorkwoods (68%).

The results are therefore overwhelmingly positive - especially given the seriousness of the problems facing these communities at the beginning of SNI. However, the results also indicate that still more work must be done.

For instance, over all communities (when respondents answering "don't know" were also included in the percentages), 11% of the residents responded that the drug problem was "more serious now." Granted this is a minority, but it is big enough to warrant concern. In addition, the percentage of residents responding "more serious now" was especially high in certain communities - that is in Alexandra Park (21%), North Regent Park (21%), Parma Court (21%) and Willowridge (18%).²³

22. The exceptions are Alexandra Park (only 8 of 22) and Willowridge (35 of 75).

23. Note that the staff and residents in the Willowridge community team were more successful than teams from the other communities in obtaining completed questionnaires from a high percentage of units in their community (i.e., 38% of the units as compared to 25% and 18% of the next most successful communities in this regard (i.e., Yorkwoods and Parma, respectively). In interpreting the results for Willowridge, one should, therefore, keep in mind that Willowridge was probably more successful than other communities in soliciting the opinions of those who were less likely to be involved in SNI. To a lesser extent, similar considerations should apply to the results for Yorkwoods and Parma.

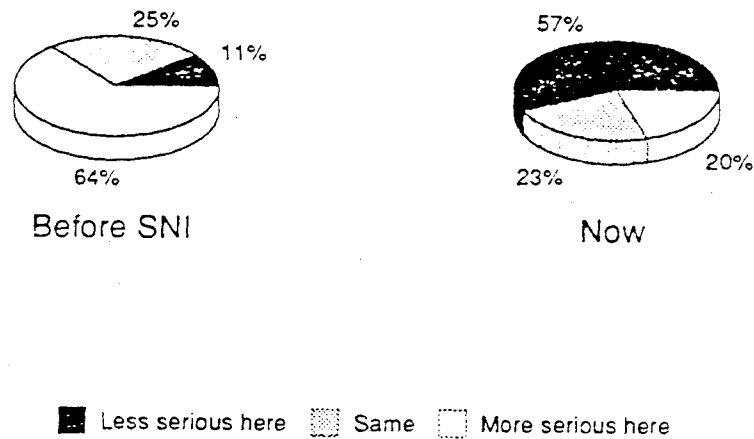
4.4.3 Questionnaire: Compared to Nearest Neighbourhood

As shown earlier in Chapter 2, when residents responded to the question, "Before SNI, was the drug problem in your community less serious, about the same, or more serious than in the nearest other residential neighbourhood?"

- 64% of all residents responding (excluding those who responded "don't know") answered "more serious here" - with only 11% responding "less serious here."
- Further, in each of the 11 communities the percentage of residents responding²⁴ "more serious here" was above 35%.

Figure 10

Drugs: Seriousness Compared to Nearest Neighbourhood RESIDENTS



24. Including those responding "don't know" or "no response."

However, Figure 10 dramatically illustrates that residents feel a major change has occurred since the start of SNI. When asked,

"Today (i.e., "after" SNI), is the drug problem in your community less serious, about the same, or more serious than in the nearest other residential neighbourhood?"

- only 20% of all residents responding (excluding those who responded "don't know") answered "more serious here" - with the percentage responding "less serious here" rising strikingly from 11% to 57%!
- Further, whereas in no community did more than 15% of the residents responding²⁵ feel that the drug problem was "less serious here" before SNI - in six out of the same 11 communities, more than 50% of residents felt that the drug problem was "less serious here" today (i.e., 80% in Jane Falstaff, 86% in Lawrence Susan, 60% in Parma, 65% in South Regent Park and 56% in Yorkwoods).
- In fact, in only two communities did less than 50% of the residents responding to the questionnaire feel that, compared to the nearest other residential neighbourhood, the drug problem today was either "less serious here" or "about the same here."²⁶
- Finally, the percentage of residents responding "the drug problem is less serious here" when describing their community today was higher in all 11 communities than when the same residents were describing their community before SNI. The increase in percentage was highest for Falstaff (a 71 percentage point increase), Lawrence Susan (+71), South Regent Park (+50) and Parma (+50).

Clearly, by this measure as well, residents felt that SNI resulted in significant improvements to their communities - even when one controlled for developments that might have been affecting the wider general neighbourhood within which their particular community existed.

As shown in Figure 11, the results for staff responding to the questionnaire told a very similar story.

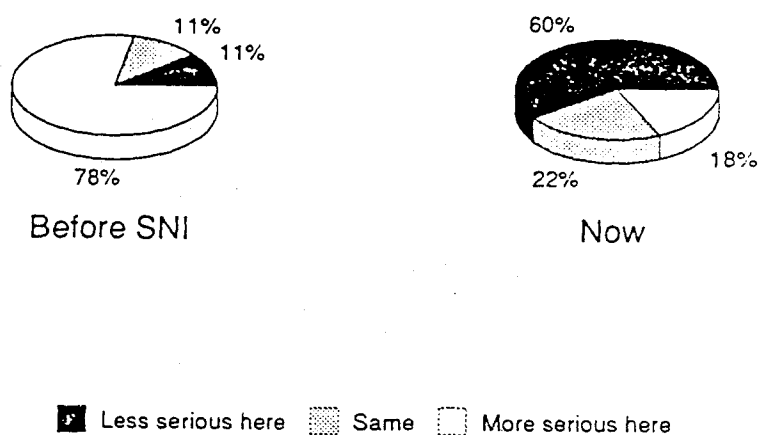
However, this comparison with the nearest other residential neighbourhood also indicates that - at least in the minds of some residents - communities have not finished their task of making their neighbourhoods truly safe.

25. Including those responding "don't know" or "no response."

26. i.e. Alexandra Park, - 26% "less serious here" and 22% "about the same;" and Lawrence Heights 4 30% "less serious here" and 8% "about the same."

Figure 11

Drugs: Seriousness Compared to
 Nearest Neighbourhood
 STAFF



One must recognize that the percentage of respondents who felt that the drug problems were "more serious" in their own communities (when compared to the nearest other neighbourhood), fell for each community. Nonetheless, in only three of the communities (Edgeley Village, Jane Falstaff, and Yorkwoods) was that percentage below 10 percent - and, even though it was not as high as before SNI, the percentage was still over 20 percent in three other communities (Alexandra Park, Warden Woods and Willowridge).

4.4.4 Questionnaire: Compared to Last place of Residence

Residents were also asked:

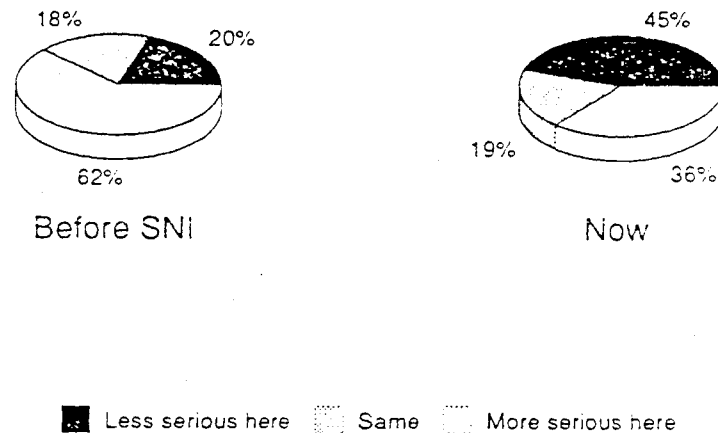
"Was the drug problem in your community less serious, about the same, or more serious than in the last place you lived?" both "before SNI" and "today."

Here again, the responses indicated that the drug threat to the security of the community had decreased during SNI.

- As shown in Figure 12, when making the comparison for the period before SNI, 62% of all residents responding (excluding those who responded "don't know") answered "more serious here" with only 20% responding "less serious here."

Figure 12

Drugs: Seriousness Compared to
Last Residence
RESIDENTS



- In contrast, as also shown in Figure 12, when asked instead to compare their community now (i.e. after SNI) to their last residence, - the percentage responding that the drug problem was more serious in their current SNI community had fallen to only 36% - a reduction of 25 percentage points!
- Moreover, all 11 SNI communities followed this general pattern - although there was some variation from community to community.²⁷

27. The difference between the percentage of residents saying that the drug threat was more serious in their SNI community "before SNI" and "today" was stronger in Falstaff and Lawrence Susan (a difference of -50 and -35 percentage points, respectively), and weaker in other communities - e.g., North Regent Park and Alexandra Park (-3 and -8 percentage points, respectively).

4.4.5 Questionnaire: Rate of Victimization

A final set of evidence confirming the positive change that occurred during SNI is in the responses to the question introduced earlier in Chapter 2:

"How often does a member of your household usually suffer consequences from drug dealing in your community?"

Respondents were asked to respond to the question with respect to two time periods: before SNI (i.e., some 16 to 19 months ago), and "now" (i.e., after SNI).

The table below reports the percentages of respondents that answered "at least once a month, at least once a week, almost every day, or always." As shown in that table, reported victimization rates for residents (of "at least once a month" from drug threats) fell during SNI in 10 out of the 11 communities - with the size of the decreases being especially large in Edgeley Village, Lawrence Susan and South Regent Park.

Figure 13

| Percentage of Residents Indicating That They Were Victimized By Drug Threats At Least Once a Month | | | |
|--|------------|-------------------|--------|
| Community | Before SNI | Today (After SNI) | Change |
| Alexandra Park | 15 | 22 | + 7 |
| Edgeley Village | 29 | 5 | -24 |
| Jane Falstaff | 16 | 7 | - 9 |
| Lawrence Heights | 17 | 12 | - 5 |
| Lawrence/ Susan | 25 | 4 | -21 |
| North Regent Park | 22 | 19 | - 3 |
| Parma/ O'Connor | 24 | 12 | -12 |
| South Regent Park | 31 | 14 | -17 |
| Warden Woods | 47 | 33 | -14 |
| Willowridge | 29 | 25 | - 4 |
| Yorkwoods | 23 | 16 | - 7 |
| Total | 25 | 16 | - 9 |

4.5 Type of offender

When one combines the questionnaire responses of all residents, there appears to be very little change between residents' perceptions of either:

- the age distribution of drug dealers before SNI and after SNI, or
- the residence of offenders before SNI and after SNI, or
- the age distribution of drug buyers before SNI and after SNI.

Whether or not changes occurred in individual communities is left to the subsequent analysis planned by those communities.

4.6 Type of Victim

The information collected did not indicate a change in the type of victim. The general consensus seems to be that, although the level of threats has decreased, everyone is still a potential victim.

4.7 Location

The questionnaires collected information from residents and staff in each community regarding the locations they thought were most likely to be used for drug dealing - both "before SNI" and "today". However, because the questionnaire (and workshop) for each community listed locations specific to that community, the most appropriate venue for testing out whether SNI had an impact on the location of offences would be in the separate community-specific analysis planned for each community.

Workshop participants did comment that successes in a particular community often resulted in the "displacement" of the problem to some other community. Quite often this other community was a neighbouring one or another MTHA community.

In either of these two cases, people could use the expertise generated through SNI to alleviate the problems in these other communities.

4.8 Timing

It does not appear that SNI altered the timing at which different offences occurred. However, workshop participants stressed that there were considerable changes in the rates at which threats occurred, from one day of the week to another, from one part of the month to another, and from one part of the year to another.

4.9 Other Impacts

During the workshops, both residents and staff frequently mentioned that SNI not only improved safety, but had a number of other positive impact as well.

For instance, participants in a number of workshops observed that:

- requests for transfers from their community have dropped sharply,
- SNI resulted in a greater sharing of power and increased input into decision making,
- SNI created a renewed sense of personal pride, empowerment and sense of community,
- at least for those participating in SNI, the communications and trust between residents and staff had vastly improved,
- SNI resulted in spinoff programs. For instance, in some cases, residents have submitted applications to outside agencies for grants for programming.

Through the community questionnaires, a broader range of residents and staff were questioned about the effect SNI had in areas mentioned in the workshops. These areas are listed in the first column of the following table.

For each of the areas, respondents were asked to state whether SNI had a "very strong effect," "some effect," "hardly any or no effect" or "no opinion."

In the table,

- a "+" or shaded cell indicates that over 70% of the residents who responded felt that SNI had either a "very strong effect" or "some effect,"
- a blank cell indicates that between 50% and 70% of the residents who responded felt that SNI had either a "very strong effect" or "some effect," and
- a "-" in a cell indicates that less than 50% of the residents who responded felt that SNI had either a "very strong effect" or "some effect."

Thus in the table, if a cell is blank or shaded, over half of the residents in that community feel SNI had a "very strong effect" or "some effect" on that characteristic of the community.

Although there was significant variation from one community to another - and from one type of effect to another - the number of shaded and blank boxes in the table clearly indicates:

- that the SNI efforts often had important positive impacts on communities (and MTHA generally) beyond the reduction of threats to security.

Nonetheless, as indicated by the number of boxes which have "-"s in them (and even the boxes that are blank), there are still areas that could be improved.

4.10 Conclusion

This chapter used a number of indicators to test whether residents and staff felt that, during SNI, the 11 communities experienced significant increases in security. The chapter test whether SNI had positive impacts that were important for initiatives other than security.

On both counts it is clear that residents and staff - together with other stakeholders in their communities - can take pride in what they achieved.

Little wonder, then, that residents and staff often said they hoped that they would continue to receive corporate support for their SNI programs in their communities.

Chapter 5

ACHIEVING AND SUSTAINING SAFE NEIGHBOURHOODS: NEXT STEPS

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapters outlined the key principles of the SSF developed by the authors in earlier work with MTHA. Those chapters also documented the results of an evaluation of the more recent SNI at MTHA. The results were presented as a series of lessons learned regarding general principles that should guide future efforts of this kind. Through a series of workshops in four other cities, the evaluation also tested the general applicability of these findings to other public housing communities in Canada. The results of these latter consultations are documented in Chapters 1 through 4.

However, in those chapters the focus was on general directions for the future. The following sections concentrate on more specific actions that the authors recommend for the immediate future. The chapter begins by focusing on recommendations from the findings that are most relevant to the current security policy development efforts within CMHC. This discussion is followed by the authors' suggested next steps that the MTHA could undertake.²⁸

28. Clearly there is also a role for provincial housing authorities and other local housing authorities. However, recommendations regarding those groups is beyond the scope of the current project.

As with previous sections of this report, the discussion is organized according to the following key areas addressed by the SSF:

- corporate direction and commitment
- organization
- strategies
- resources
- support systems

5.2 At the National Level: Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation

At the national level, the following policy directions are especially important:

- **Corporate Direction and Commitment**
 1. Public housing communities are a valuable and substantial social asset serving many low income households in need. The quality of life of those communities should be preserved as much as possible.
 2. The level of safety and security is a major determinant of the quality of life of public housing communities.
 3. Some public housing communities experience an acceptable level of safety and security but others do not.
 4. CMHC should launch and support initiatives for ensuring safe and secure environments for residents, staff and other stakeholders in public housing communities
 5. National, provincial and local housing authorities should be encouraged to develop mission statements, goals and objectives, and standards concerning security.
 6. Authorities involved in public housing at all levels should demonstrate a commitment to continuous improvement and regular evaluation of security policies, programs and operations.

- **Organization**
 7. An effective security approach requires, and will benefit from, contributions from a wide range of stakeholders including, but not limited to, residents and public housing staff.
 8. Tenants, staff and other major stakeholders should be consulted and involved during the design, implementation and operation of security initiatives.
 9. Developing partnerships, strategic alliances and a sense of community among all major stakeholders within a community is essential to a security initiative.
 10. CMHC should take steps to work with MTHA to ensure that the strategic alliance begun with this SNI security evaluation continues through the next steps of considering, communicating and implementing the evaluation results.

- **Strategies**
 11. A security plan should be prepared (and updated at least annually) by national, provincial and local public housing agencies.
 12. The security plans should be based on an assessment (in each community) of:
 - the security threats in the community (during specific times, at different locations, and with respect to different types of victims and offenders),
 - the resources available from different groups of stakeholders, and
 - security responses found to be effective in similar situations.
 13. Security plans should specifically consider the appropriate mix required in each community of the three basic types of security measures:
 - design and physical improvements,
 - direct security (including police and other security personnel), and
 - community development.

14. Security plans should incorporate effective community development principles in the planning and delivery of all three basic types of security measures.
 15. All regeneration, design improvement and major modernization must include an assessment of the implications of those changes for safety and security of residents, staff and other stakeholders in the community.
 16. A commitment to security planning consistent with all policies listed here should be a prerequisite for CMHC funding and participation in security initiatives.
 17. CMHC policies must be flexible enough to recognize that the causes, level and nature of security problems will likely differ significantly from one community to another, and from one period to another within the same community.
- **Resources**
18. Because the federal government is operating in a period of fiscal restraint, the level of federal housing subsidies cannot be expected to increase.
 19. Improvements should be accomplished with existing budgets.
 20. Nonetheless, developing an acceptable level of safety and security in certain public housing communities will require significant resources - especially if improvements require substantial design and direct security upgrades.
 21. Certain communities have an immediate requirement for a major upgrading of security on a one-time basis.
 22. Most communities require ongoing resources to maintain and operate security systems and responses.

- **Support Systems**
23. CMHC should address the current need for better communication and discussion of information regarding:
 - the experiences and current activities of different public housing organizations in Canada in the field of security,
 - the effectiveness of different types of security initiatives (including physical design, direct security and community development) in different situations.
 24. CMHC should address the current need for better education and training regarding:
 - security planning
(e.g., consultation techniques, surveys, questionnaires and data analysis, report writing, strategic decision making)
 - community development
(e.g., defining appropriate stakeholder involvement, securing that involvement, maintaining a level of participation and commitment, running meetings)
 - direct security
(e.g., application of legislation regarding security, roles and responsibilities, contracting for security, developing partnerships with local police, managing and scheduling direct security resources)
 - physical security
(e.g., the effectiveness in different situations of different systems for access control, lighting, surveillance, vandal proof materials, maintenance for security, alternative physical designs).
 25. CMHC should also work with different stakeholders to develop guidelines for the development of basic support systems that are currently required for effective security initiatives. Special attention should be paid to:
 - budgeting systems
(at the local community and authority levels)

- strategic security information systems
(to support threat assessment, monitoring, planning, and evaluation)
- operational security information systems
(to support immediate response and follow up to specific security occurrences and incidents)
- communication systems
(both within communities, within different communities within the same authority, and among authorities)
- systems and initiatives to promote community development
- systems and initiatives to promote organizational development and continuous quality improvement generally

5.3 Next Steps for the Metropolitan Toronto Housing Authority

In addition to those policies and operational strategies that are required at national levels and which have obvious counterparts at the local housing authority level, there are more specific policies and strategies that MTHA could adopt to ensure that all its communities benefit from the SNI experience:

- **Corporate Direction and Commitment**

1. The board, general manager, and other senior MTHA staff should provide immediate positive feedback to the residents and staff in the SNI communities in recognition of their extraordinary commitment during SNI.
2. The board should coordinate a press conference to communicate the accomplishments of SNI.

(Public announcements should be planned in consultation with staff and residents from the SNI communities who may wish to play a role in designing and implementing the events (e.g., whether it should be a community-based or a Headquarters initiative, who should participate, the timing of the event, etc.).

3. The board should communicate to staff its ongoing commitment to SNI and convey how this commitment will be demonstrated whether by continuing SNI or using it as a foundation for new initiatives such as Total Quality Service.

(The SNI in many ways represents an exemplary implementation of some key principles of the Continuing Improvement/ Quality Service approach currently being developed within MTHA.)

• **Organization**

4. The SNI Steering Committee should develop an action plan for:
 - considering the results and recommendations of this report,
 - developing a short-term and long-term work plan for extending the SNI approaches and results to other communities within MTHA (at both the local and headquarters level),
 - ensuring that the work plan is consistent with other related efforts within MTHA (especially the Continuous improvement/ Quality Management initiative), and
 - securing board and senior management approval and commitment to the plan.
5. The SNI Steering Committee should also assume responsibility for ensuring that other key stakeholders in SNI particularly residents and site staff in the communities have more direct input in to the work of the committee.
6. The development and maintenance of safe neighbourhoods requires strong leadership from MTHA senior managers. Therefore, there should be a workshop of senior managers to identify and deal with organizational barriers in the SNI evaluation. (This process should also be used to identify organizational features which contribute to safe communities and specific plans to support these features.)

7. Each director and senior manager should have the responsibility to:
 - review the evaluation report (and their own experiences with SNI) and identify both
 - a) barriers to SNI which were within their branch's sphere of responsibility, and
 - b) effective approaches to security which could be more fully applied within their areas of the organization;
 - develop an action plan to address these issues (with emphasis on mechanisms which encourage innovation, streamline cumbersome procedures, and eliminate organizational barriers);
 - report on the progress they have made in achieving the objectives of the action plan, within agreed specified time frames;
 - develop a work plan to involve those who report to them in the above efforts; and
 - develop a communications plan to convey these objectives and progress to others within MTHA.
8. A detailed examination of the effectiveness and role of the Security Services Branch and the larger Security Delivery System is subject matter for a separate study. However, the current study did identify the need to clarify the specific relationships that should exist between the Security Delivery System and SNI. Work is also required to better define the role of headquarters and field personnel within the Security Branch in community driven security efforts such as SNI.
9. MTHA should work with CMHC to ensure that the strategic alliance begun with this SNI security evaluation continues through the next steps of considering, communicating and implementing the results of the evaluation.

• **Strategies**

10. Determining the appropriate mix of the three types of security strategies (i.e., design and physical improvements, direct security, and community development) should be considered a priority.
11. Community development approaches and practices are vital to creating safe MTHA communities. Staff should realize that community development must be part of the everyday duties of all staff members, not just the work of specialized personnel. Implementing the lessons learned through SNI in this area should be coordinated with the current MTHA efforts to develop and implement a community development policy.
12. There must be further analysis of the questionnaire data from each of the 11 SNI communities. Residents and staff should receive the necessary technical support to allow them to review in more detail the data collected in questionnaires and workshops in their specific communities provided in 11 separate reports by the consulting team) - and to develop strategies and recommendations based on local knowledge.
13. This community-specific analysis should be incorporated into community responses to this evaluation report. Those community responses (together with the current report) should then form the background materials for a major multi-community workshop to discuss the next steps in the SNI process.
14. This site-specific analysis and reporting should be coordinated with the site planning process in each SNI community.
15. There must be further analysis (in consultation with local residents and staff of the SNI communities) of the special automated file created for this project from data from the MTHA occurrence and incident reporting system.

• **Resources**

16. Given this period of fiscal restraint, MTHA should continue to develop methods to operate existing security systems in the most effective and efficient manner possible and in accordance with the principles of the SSF.
17. Staff and residents need more training in a number of priority areas which include: security planning and consultation techniques, community development, direct security and physical security.
18. Staff and residents need to identify and tap the resources of stakeholders outside of MTHA.

An important first step in this process would be to include known stakeholders in a communications strategy about SNI, and to request their participation in further analysis of this report and other community-based data (i.e., from questionnaires and workshops).

• **Support Systems**

19. A detailed examination of support systems required for effective community security was outside the scope and resources of the current study. However, the initial analysis that was possible does indicate that these support systems need much improvement. These systems include:
 - budgeting systems (including site planning)
 - both strategic and operational security information systems (including the automated incident and occurrence system)
 - human resource management systems
 - design services
 - systems and initiatives to promote community development
 - systems and initiatives to promote organizational development and continuous quality improvement generally
 - communications systems
20. People responsible for human resource management should develop mechanisms to ensure that staff and residents receive the training recommended throughout this report.

21. During SNI certain design services staff used innovative and effective techniques. To respond to community needs - and for general two way communications with local residents and staff. Design services personnel should ensure that these new approaches are used more broadly in the future.
22. The SNI experience demonstrated the need to create more effective operational mechanisms for communicating expectations and accomplishments throughout all parts of MTHA.
23. In particular, the results of the SNI evaluation should be communicated to each SNI community in a workshop format or general meeting that allows two-way communication.
24. Materials should be developed to help ensure that each SNI community understands how SNI work will continue whether under SNI or as part of other developments such as the Total Quality Service initiative.
25. The lessons learned as part of SNI should be shared with other MTHA communities. Communication strategies, such as a speakers' panel of residents and staff who participated in the experience, a video, or resource kits might be considered to extend the knowledge learned.
26. A communications package should be developed (jointly with those who participated in SNI) to share the results of the SNI evaluation with potential partners outside MTHA (e.g., police, elected officials, recreation leaders). That package should recognize the critical role played by local staff and residents in SNI.