**Malmo Plains Community League Town Hall**

*Session Minutes*

**Location**:

Southgate Baptist Church (McLaurin Memorial Baptist Church), 11107 51 Ave NW, Edmonton

**Date**:

Saturday, November 25, 2023

**Time**:

1400 to 1600

**Audience:**

There were approximately 50 attendees including community and business members from Malmo Plains and surrounding Community Leagues (Lendrum, Park Allen, and Pleasantview) as well as Councilor Janz.

**Key Takeways**

* **Concerns**
  + Overall community safety
  + LRT safety (particularly the West stairwell and pedway)
  + Encampments
  + Property Thefts
* **Challenges**
  + Reporting to EPS, City and 211
  + Sharing communication and data between all parties in attendance
* **Other** 
  + Appreciation for the role and personal impact of Constable Klein

**Panel Members**

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| Organization | Representatives |
| Edmonton Police Service/Community Policing Bureau/South Division | Superintendent Trevor Hermanutz |
| Edmonton Police Service/Community Safety and Well-being Bureau/Transit and Community Safety (TRACS) | Sergeant Darren Behr |
| City of Edmonton/Transit Safety | Megan Chenard |
| City of Edmonton/Neighbourhood Empowerment Team (NET) | Carrie Ellinger |
| City of Edmonton, Director Complaints and Investigations | Keith Scott |
| City of Edmonton, Operations Manager Park Rangers and Peace Officers | Troy Courtoreille |
| City of Edmonton, Superintendent Transit Peace Officers | Fredrick Macham |
| City of Edmonton, Community Outreach Transit Team | Katy Warrener |

**Agenda**

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| Time | Topic | Representative(s) |
| 1400-1405 | Welcome | Trent Charles  President, Malmo Plains Community League |
| 1405-1430 | Introductions and information | Councillor Michael Janz, Representatives from EPS and the City of Edmonton |
| 1430-1555 | Q and A | Representatives from EPS and the City of Edmonton |
| 1555-1600 | Closing Comments | Trent Charles  President, Malmo Plains Community League |

*\*Please note, times and activities are approximate*

**Summary of the Q & A**

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| **Participant** | **Question or Comment** | **Response** |
| Community Connection and Crime Prevention Program in Aspen and Westbrook | The new version of the EPS crime map does not allow for defining of crimes of opportunity. Is there a way to separate these crimes from violate crimes so that they can assist with their targeted support? | A new system is coming into place that will allow for this. This feedback has been noted. |
| Why is the City choosing shrubs instead of trees with their designs**?** | This is Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) tactics are used when the City makes these decisions. CPTED information is available at the table off to the side. |
| Previous resident (owned property in Malmo but moved due to no longer feeling safe because of multiple acts of arson) | Many people are worried about property and belongings, but LRT is become unsafe for a person physically. City has responded with an abundance of staff who monitor and report. There is not enough focus on those who can take action. | * Boots on the ground components – 1 sergeant and 6 constables. TRACS is what our area is called. We are up and down the line all day. 6 am to 5 at night and then 4 until about 5 in the morning. Proactively, fighting targets, logically. * Trying to get a sixth team in May. We then must recruit, train, etc. * Transit Peace Officers (TPOs) have the entire system to look at with a prioritization of South Gate. Broader social issue. EPS takes care of criminal elements and bylaws. TPOs restricted to Provincial Municipal bylaws. Security Guards observe and report. |
| Beautification projects are not welcome or a good use of finances. We need to put our money into things that makes us feel safer (mirrors, police officers, etc.). Don’t feel at all listened to or heard. People want to leave without stitches, being beaten and with their property. My sons and daughters will not be taking transit. | Mirrors in the stairwells is on the list of improvements due by the end of March next year. |
| Officer Klein is really missed by the community. She was very special to us. |  |
| Resident (49 Ave close to 11a street) | East end of Malmo is changing as a neighbourhood. More tenant situations, foreign students, lack of neighbour networking. There have been changes to traditional policing. Thoughts about making those transitions now that things are changing. | * Used to have neighbourhood block parties. Community Officers would attend these. Every situation is unique, and the response is unique. We are necessarily getting a different type of call. Property theft seems to be the largest calls these days. Crimes of convenience. Balanced enforcement is currently happening (how do we help and not just arrest) * Takes a real conservative effort for neighbourhood connections. Much of this was lost during COVID. We can help connect you with Neighbourhood Resources Coordinators for Abundant Communities, Block Parties, etc. City also has small micro grants to support this. |
| University Student (19 years old) | We are very used to crime so we don’t bother reporting it. We go to other safer stations. We know police are understaffed, we get put on hold, get asked what we were wearing. Is it possible to report anonymously and quickly so that we can show you where the crimes are happening without expectations of something being done immediately? QR codes that can be scanned? Make it effortless. | * Never feel that you can’t report it. Variety of ways to report. [Online](https://www.edmontonpolice.ca/ContactEPS/OnlineCrimeReporting/process), phone in (780-423-4567), have someone follow up with you, don’t need to come to a station. Looking to increase the types of crimes that can be reported online. We do need to have this data. * Text the [Transit Watch](https://www.edmonton.ca/ets/safety-and-security) number (780-442-4900) which goes directly to dispatched. You can do this while sitting on the bus, at school, etc. * Clothing question is asked so that we have your description so that we can find you and help you. |
| Constable Klein was a personal connection. Follow up when reporting is key. The personal aspect is missing. |  |
| Pleasantview Community League area Crime Liaison | Great loss when the community engagement teams were dissolved. We no longer have that personal contact. Will this be changing? | Increased front lines as we weren’t responding as quickly or efficiently as we wanted. Some of our community engagement folks were moved to other focus areas. See value in that community level of support. Management is talking about how can we do this with our current resources. We are hearing it is wanted and we feel it is of value. Modified duties folks can’t go on the streets so this isn’t necessarily an option. We are looking into it. |
| Vice President Malmo Community League and UofA student | Take the LRT almost every day. Various hours. Suggested that temperatures be adjusted to make things less enjoyable on the West Pedway. Was told it couldn’t happen because of the elevator mechanics but also heard that this can be done separately. Heat and Air Conditioning can make things less inviting. | Currently it is set to 7+ which is the lowest this can go in this space. Meet regularly with maintenance and can bring this idea forward (heat elevators shafts separately) |
| Anonymous | Question is about 211 and 311 responses. She assisted a young lady/teenager who clearly looked like she needed attention. Security was no help, was waiting for 211 and still had to support this individual. 90% of the people she works with does not know what 211 was. Put signs up, these are the services we provide. | * Encampment Response 2016 – 2017, 600 to 700 encampments City wide. Last year, 9,300 complaints, this year we will end around 1,600 complaints all with the same resources. Average response time is 8.9 days. When 311 calls come in, we schedule site assessments, closures, and clean ups weeks in advance. If we must pivot and prioritizes, that shifts things around. * 311 scripting changes are done regularly. Trying to communicate back. Graffiti perspective – constant battle to balance the property owner and have heard that our warning letters are not often well received. Resources from grants and supports are included in this information though. * 211 details were explained. Resource guides are available at the table and through NET. Will consider more ways to promote it within those spaces * Community Outreach Transit Team (COTT). There is a solid relationship between the city and 211. Our team is paired with a uniform Officer on shift. We assist these officers with the calls you explained. We have vehicles where we can transport people, get clothing, help with resources, protect them, get ID, treatments. Look for the Big Blue emergency buttons in every centre and this links to the dispatch who can call us out. |
| 311 – I have reported graffiti a thousand times and it is still there. I get hit and then two days later, an Officer is giving me a warning. Garbage cleanup is worse, attracts coyotes, blows around. Get “Case Closed” with no follow up. This is a city issue. Vulnerable citizens are on the rise, and nothing is being done to help them. |
| Anonymous | No longer takes LRT. The only thing the mural accomplishes is beautification and not safety. There is support for making the elevator and elevator shaft glass. Was told there was no opportunity due to funding. This would beautify and create safety. | * Hear the concerns about beautification efforts. Holistic approach. Public surveys showed that cleaner, more sightly locations do make people feel safe. Balanced approach with enforcement as well. * The City did gets quotes for the elevators but it was extraordinary. We will take your information and follow up more. |
| What is the point of adding more officers if we aren’t cracking down on open drug use? Only about 12% of vulnerable citizens offered, accept the help offered. Why is law enforcement not doing something about this. | * Last few years we have had balanced enforcement. We can’t just arrest ourselves out of this. Opportunities for self-improvement is offered. Our approach is to now work with partners to provide the resources. Safer Public Spaces gives members the authority not to walk past drug use any more. This is a training, adjustment that will take some time, but changes should become noticeable. We are part of the solution, not THE solution. COVID also played a role in these changes due to lack of the personal touch. We have to disrupt the behaviour. |
| Anonymous | Support EPS and Park Rangers and the work everyone does. Capacity and demand is overwhelming. New recruits are so important. Robbery in our neighbourhood grew during an encampment for three weeks. Ultimately one person was arrested with outstanding warrants. Incidents happening on the university south campus. Coordination between the agencies is needed and support of analytics being used. It too long to get a response to the encampment. Would value a briefing on what is happening in the neighbourhood. Need to add to budgets for Park Rangers. Historical reporting would also be helpful. | * We have university liaisons within EPS so information is definitely shared and relationships have been built. * We have joint analytics working group between all parties and are working through all the gaps to make improvements. * We do map all encampment complaints City wide. Two tier assessment – risk based approached for housing or priority closure (unsafe situation or behaviour). Prioritize closures based on these assessments. * Stats show that there is about 1 officer per 1,000 site inspections. Assessments take anywhere between 6 – 16 days. Closures could take longer based on the needs (balanced approach). Closures are done with EPS and data is shared. 6 different systems that don’t necessarily share data so this requires sorting and takes time. We are working on this gap. |
| Lendrum Community League President | Happy to hear that the message is report, report, report. There is frustration when people know their property is in an encampment and nothing can be done to get it back. The encampment discussed took many weeks to be investigated but then it closed overnight. Is there communication between the police and 311 prior to cleaning to help recover property? | * Recognize there might be some communication gaps between the City and EPS. Once the camp is assessed, EPS will be contacted if their assistance is needed. City doesn’t have access to EPS systems. 6 EPS members dedicated to encampments and 6 Park Rangers dedicated. Looking to get more resources. City does not have access to stolen property databases. * Encourage everyone to write down serial numbers of your property and photos as well. Also utilize the EPS Bike Index to register your bikes serial number. * Within the City, working on integrating our dispatch which will improve internal information sharing. Then there is a larger project to join City, Fire and EPS dispatch in the future. |
| Resident | Relating back to transit and safety, is the City considering pay gates to help remove those who aren’t paying? Is the grant being considered for these changes? | It has been on the books for many years. Some research out of Calgary has determined that fare gates don’t have an impact in this. People will just jump over. At that time, we decided not to go that route based on the research. It is still in conversation though. |
| Malmo resident | Mental Health and drug difficulties are a problem. Teams of enforcement and social supports are needed. Would you call upon teams like this to provide support? | Police and Crisis Teams (PACT) are deployed. Officers and social service support work as teams to provide the support needed for Mental Health and addictions. |
| Angry and upset in the last few years about the beautification. Why don’t we put that money into helping the homeless and more safety measures. |  |
| Anonymous | We really need to have some compassion. Where is the help and support for people when they get out of prison? How hard is it to get back on track? All of us who are doing so well, need to think about those who are not in a more compassionate way. Each one of us has a role to play. Police are not the only solution. When we fund more police, we support the middle class, creating a larger gap between those who have and those we don’t have. As you think of the things you have had taken from you, think about how at least you had those things. We need to give people hope. |  |

\*\* Youtube recording can be viewed [here](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DK_by-RUrIY).