



Community Safety Audit Report

Manor Park

Women's Initiatives for Safer Environments
211 Bronson Avenue, Room 205
Ottawa, Ontario K1R 6H5
Tel: 613-230-6700
e-mail: info@wiseottawa.ca
www.wiseottawa.ca

COMMUNITY SAFETY AUDIT

Manor Park

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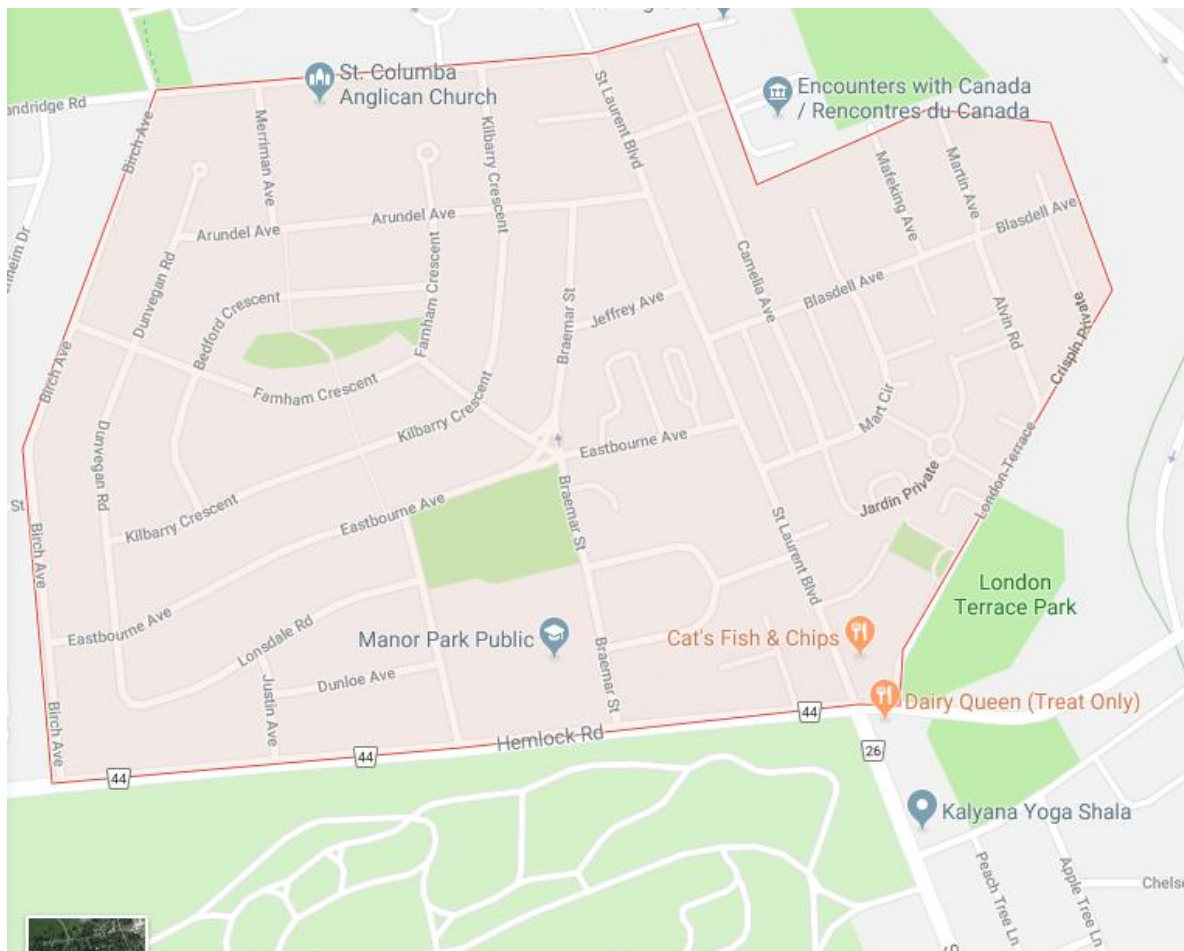
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Premise for the Safety Audit of the Manor Park

In November of 2017, the Manor Park Community Association initiated a request for a community safety audit in their neighbourhood. The request came in response to community concern over increasing crime, a relatively new phenomenon in this neighbourhood. As a proactive measure, the Manor Park community Association organized a community safety audit lead by WISE. There were 12 participants in this audit, including, local councilor's office representative, representatives from WISE and members of the community.

Residents identified issues that affected their sense of safety, while WISE staff made note of these concerns and engaged in discussions of possible solutions. All group members shared and developed recommendations for improving the safety in the areas audited. The safety concerns identified and recommendations proposed by the community residents are detailed in this report.

Map of Manor Park Community:



Women's Initiatives for Safer Environments (WISE) and Community Safety Audits

Who is WISE?

WISE is a community based organization established in 1992 in response to series of crimes against women in Ottawa. Our mandate is to create and maintain safe physical and social environments for women and other vulnerable groups. We achieve our mandate through a program known as the Community Safety Audit. Our programming is offered to the community through funding from the City of Ottawa. In addition to community safety audits, WISE offers Personal Safety Workshops to diverse groups of women, seniors, and youth.

What is a Community Safety Audit?

Safety audits help people to evaluate how safe a physical environment feels, and identify tangible solutions that would make it safer for everyone. During a safety audit, people walk through a space, noticing what feels safe and what does not. The safety audit checklist encourages them to consider things like:

- What is the lighting like?
- Can I see what's up ahead?
- Are there places someone could be hiding?
- Could I get help if I needed it?

The findings from this walkabout form the basis for an action plan to make the space safer.

Safety audits were first developed by the Metro Toronto Action Committee on Public Violence against Women and Children (METRAC). Women's Initiatives for Safer Environments has adapted the safety audit checklist to better include the concerns of women with disabilities, francophone women, rural women, aboriginal women and immigrant and visible minority women. The revised "made in Ottawa-Carleton" kit was published in September 1996.

The safety audit checklist is based on:

- Community experiences of what feels safe and unsafe in a physical environment;
- The principles of good planning;
- Studies of how offenders use public space.

Safety audits have been used to assess and improve the safety of many places, including:

- University campuses, including Carleton, Ottawa and Guelph Universities;
- Ottawa Board of Education Schools;
- Neighbourhood parks and recreational pathways in Ottawa;
- City blocks;
- Public transit systems, such as transit way stations in Ottawa, and subways in Toronto;
- Work sites, such as Federal government buildings;
- Apartment buildings;

- Parking lots and garages.

Safety Audits have many benefits:

♀ They lead to tangible improvements in the safety of the area audited. Safer environments reduce the opportunity for violent or threatening behaviors. If a space feels safe, it also attracts more people, and busy places are safer.

♀ It is an opportunity for people to share their experiences of feeling vulnerable. This reduces isolation and helps those responsible for a facility respond to the concerns of users.

♀ The experience of being listened to and creating change (no matter how small) builds confidence and increases individuals' sense of control over their lives.

♀ Safety audits are a fun and effective way to build a sense of community.

♀ Participants in a safety audit learn about their physical environment; the others who share the space, and the impact of violence on women and other vulnerable groups.

Community Safety Audit: Manor Park

The following section is a tabular representation of the specific concerns identified in the *Manor Park Safety Audit*. Each concern is organized by safety evaluation criteria.

The table consists of seven categories which are organized as follows:

1. Item: number assigned to the particular issue.
2. Priority: denoting a **High** – **Medium** – or **Low** degree of priority for the community.
3. Concern: the identified safety concern.
4. Location: where the concern is found.
5. Recommendation: the community's recommendation for improving or resolving the concern identified.
6. Referred to: the appropriate body, organization, stakeholder, proprietor responsible for the safe and efficient use of the space with the authority to effect physical changes.
7. Action: the eventual action taken to resolve the safety concern.

Those items listed as “**HIGH**” in the priorities column of the community safety audit report are designated by participants as ones that cause significant fear and deter residents from using the space.

Participants:

12 individuals participated in the safety audit walkabouts.

Item A: Lighting Issues

Our perception of safety is greatly influenced by the level of light emitted in a physical space. Often the critical question in our minds is: Can I see and be seen? Good lighting increases the chances of someone coming to the aid of a person who is in trouble and also increases the chances that others engaging in unsafe activities will be identified by someone.

Night lighting objectives should include the following considerations in order to be effective in terms of safety:

- Help people see where they are going and help them be seen;
- Help people see their surroundings and to discriminate between objects;
- Offer appropriate light color and intensity;
- Present an aesthetic character (luminaries shape, size, and height).

Below is a list of concerns and recommendations regarding improvements that can be made to lighting in the space audited:

Item		
A-1	Priority	HIGH
	Concern	Lighting is absent in park corners and along the sides of the park. Entrances and exits are not visible. Activity within the park is hidden. Residents are concerned that illicit drug activity is occurring in this location. Cars are seen parked on the grass and exchanges are made during the night.
	Location	London Terrace Park
	Recommendation	Add in lighting in the corners and side peripheries of the park
	Referred To	The City of Ottawa
	Action Taken	
A-2	Priority	HIGH
	Concern	There is no light along the right hand side of Hemlock St. ; adjacent to the unlit park. The entrance to the park is narrow and visibility is very poor at night. This is an isolated area with parks on either side. It is unsafe due to extremely dark conditions. Pedestrians are often not seen by drivers coming around the curve of this street to approach St. Laurent Blvd.
	Location	Meadowpark on Hemlock St.
	Recommendation	Add pedestrian light standards,
	Referred To	The City of Ottawa
	Action Taken	
A-3	Priority	HIGH
	Concern	There is poor lighting along London Terrace
	Location	London Terrace
	Recommendation	1) Add light standards,

		2) Trim back overgrown tree branches that cover exiting light standards
	Referred To	The City of Ottawa
	Action Taken	
A-4	Priority	HIGH
	Concern	No lighting in the parking lot. This creates feelings of fear as people approach or exit their vehicles. Poorly lit parking lots are often targeted for vandalism, theft, and assault.
	Location	Parking lot adjacent to unit 350
	Recommendation	Add in lighting to make this area more brightly lit
	Referred To	The City of Ottawa
	Action Taken	
A-5	Priority	HIGH
	Concern	NCCs trees hide light, creating dark walking conditions.
	Location	London Terrace
	Recommendation	Trim the tree branches to clear the area surrounding the light structure and, add a lit pathway
	Referred To	The City of Ottawa
	Action Taken	
A-6	Priority	HIGH
	Concern	Corner leading to a path is unlit. Loitering and alcohol consumption is occurring in this location.
	Location	Path approaching Aviation Parkway
	Recommendation	Add light standard
	Referred To	The City of Ottawa
	Action Taken	
A-7	Priority	HIGH
	Concern	There is no lighting within the community of condominiums in this enclave. If porch lights are not turned on, there would be no light for pedestrians approaching their units.
	Location	Davenport
	Recommendation	Add pedestrian light standards (lamps)
	Referred To	
	Action Taken	
A-8	Priority	HIGH
	Concern	No lighting
	Location	Mart Circle and Camillia Streets
	Recommendation	Put in light standard at this intersection.
	Referred To	The City of Ottawa
	Action Taken	
A-9	Priority	HIGH
	Concern	No lighting in parking lot
	Location	Parking lot adjacent to Unit 360 on London Terrace
	Recommendation	Install light standards in parking lot to enhance visibility and safety of vehicles and individuals
	Referred To	
	Action Taken	

Item B: Signage


Signage is an important determinant of one’s perception of safety. Signage allows us to orient ourselves safely through a space and directs us to important information. Effective signage is made up of certain characteristics:

- **Inclusivity:** Signs must be easy to understand and comprehensible to a person whose first language is neither English nor French. The use of symbols is a good way to create universally understood signs.
- **Accessibility:** Effective signs are ones placed at a height where able-bodied adults, children, persons using a wheelchair, and the elderly can read them with ease. Incorporating Braille will allow blind or visually impaired individuals to orient themselves safely. Large lettering on a high contrast background will also improve visibility for people who have reduced vision.

Signs are helpful in identifying the proper use of public spaces and indicating where to report maintenance concerns or issues of vandalism. Installing signs that indicate who the responsible parties are in the ownership and care of the space, allows a partnership and dialogue to open up between the community and the proprietors of the space. It is important for community members to feel that they have a responsibility for the space they are occupying, and that they are invited to voice their concerns and comments.

Below is a list of concerns and recommendation regarding improvements that can be made to signage in the space audited:

Item		
B-1	Priority	HIGH
	Concern	The multi purpose path does not have a crosswalk sign making walking conditions unsafe for residents and children in the neighbourhood.
	Location	Hemlock and London Terrace
	Recommendation	Mark a crosswalk for getting on the multi purpose path
	Referred To	The City of Ottawa
	Action Taken	
B-2	Priority	HIGH
	Concern	Unidentified street. Crispin St. is not identified at this location.
	Location	Three street intersection of Alvin, London Terrace, and Crispin
	Recommendation	Install street sign for Crispin St.
	Referred To	The City of Ottawa
B-3	Priority	HIGH
	Concern	No signage identifying Blasdell Street (until Alvin Street)
	Location	Blasdell Street
	Recommendation	Add street sign identifying this Blasdell Road at entry to the road
	Referred To	The City of Ottawa
	Action Taken	
	Priority	HIGH

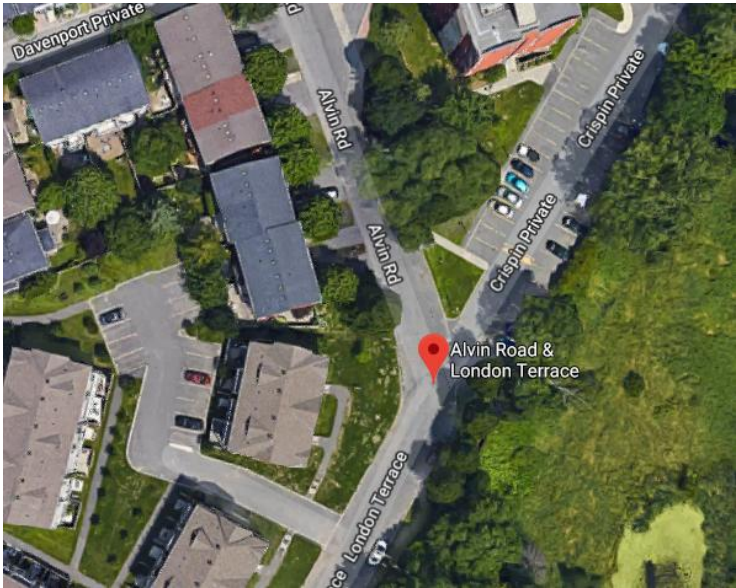
B-4	Concern	<p>No signage identifying Park. Parks that are identified by signage increase safety because they can be located in case of distress. They appear monitored and legitimate in terms of rules and regulations that govern public parks and spaces. This can deter unsafe activity. At the present time, residents report observing cars parked on the grass in this area and illicit drug activity occurring.</p> 
	Location	London Terrace - Park
	Recommendation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Install signage identifying park in addition to lighting, and trimming of bushes and branches along the peripheries of the park. 2) Install signage that states the regulations of the park
	Referred To	City of Ottawa
	Action Taken	
B-5	Priority	HIGH
	Concern	Dangerous intersection for pedestrians due to speeding vehicles
	Location	St. Laurent Blvd. and Hemlock St.
	Recommendation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Install painted crosswalk at this intersection 2) Ensure there is a pedestrian walk light at intersection and that it is timed to gives pedestrians adequate time to clear the intersection.
	Referred To	City of Ottawa
Action Taken		

Item C: Visibility

Visibility of the surrounding area is important for safety. Surroundings should be visually “assessable” to individuals. This will enable a person to see if an individual or object is in their right-of-way and to make sure it is safe to approach the area. Effective measures for assessing visibility include addressing sightline obstructions such as:

- Pillars or high fences;
- Landscaping features;
- Sharp corners or walls;
- Advertisement panels;
- Snow-banks;
- Or other obstructions.

Below is a list of concerns and recommendations regarding improvements that can be made to visibility in the space audited:

Item		
C-1	Priority	HIGH
	Concern	Angle of the road approaching the parking lot at London Terrace and Alvin St. creates unsafe conditions for both drivers and pedestrians. Visibility is poor. Cars exiting the parking lot cannot be seen by drivers on Alvin St.
	Location	London Terrace and Alvin Street
	Recommendation	The community discussed the installation of wide security mirror on Alvin Street a; across from the parking lot to ensure better visibility.
		
	Referred To	The City of Ottawa
Action Taken		
Priority	MEDIUM	


C-2	Concern	Paper delivery is unsafe due to overgrown branches and bushes and poor lighting at this location
	Location	Between Martin and Blasdell Streets
	Recommendation	Trim branches and bushes, install solar sensor lanterns at this location to make walking conditions safer
	Referred To	The City of Ottawa
	Action Taken	
C-3	Priority	MEDIUM
	Concern	Overgrown bushes and branches create poor visibility at this corner
	Location	Corner of Hemlock and St. Laurent Blvd.
	Recommendation	Trim and cut back overgrown shrubbery in this location to enhance visibility.
	Referred To	City of Ottawa
	Action Taken	


Item D: Maintenance and Graffiti

Spaces that are well maintained indicate a healthy environment and regular surveillance. Spaces that are well maintained feel safer, are easier to navigate through, and draw more people to them. In contrast, spaces where maintenance is infrequent are often perceived as unsafe. Poor maintenance can indicate minimal or nonexistent surveillance, a lack of pride in the space, and can contribute to the presence of crime. Often people get the message that no one cares about the space and therefore, acts of personal violence may also go unobserved.

Below is a list of concerns and recommendations regarding improvements that can be made to maintenance and graffiti in the space audited:

Item		
D-1	Priority	MEDIUM
	Concern	Sidewalk ends in the middle of the road creating unsafe walking conditions for pedestrians in the neighbourhood. There is often speeding on this road making walking conditions further unsafe.
	Location	London Terrace
	Recommendation	Create sidewalk along the entire road to maintain continuity for walkers and prevent falls.
	Referred To	
	Action Taken	
D-2	Priority	MEDIUM
	Concern	Landscaping is overgrown, cannot see around the corner`
	Location	Corner of Hemlock and London Terrace
	Recommendation	Trim the landscaping for better visibility
	Referred To	The City of Ottawa
	Action Taken	
D-3	Priority	MEDIUM
	Concern	Broken sidewalks
	Location	Jardin St. and St. Laurent across from unit 292
	Recommendation	Repair and improve grading of sidewalks
	Referred To	The City of Ottawa
	Action Taken	
D-4	Priority	MEDIUM
	Concern	NCC trees need cutting back. The overgrown branches obstruct existing lighting. This creates extremely dark walking conditions.

			
	Location	London Terrace	
	Recommendation	Cut back branches of trees and trim bushes to improve visibility and ensure safer walking conditions.	
	Referred To	The City of Ottawa	
	Action Taken		
D-5	Priority	MEDIUM	
	Concern	Dumpsters are not in an enclosed structure creating the spread of waste which can invite animals and unhygienic conditions.	
	Location	London Terrace - Parking lot behind Mia Restaurant	
	Recommendation	Put an enclosed structure around the dumpsters	
	Referred To	The City of Ottawa	
	Action Taken		
D-6	Priority	HIGH	
	Concern	There is an unofficial walking path to a wading pool in this area. It is unpaved and narrow. It is unsafe to use this path currently because it is unlit and narrow.	
	Location	Jardin Private	
	Recommendation	1) Pave the path. 2) Widen the path. 3) Install signage identifying the route of the path.	
	Referred To	The City of Ottawa	
	Action Taken		
D-8	Priority	MEDIUM	
	Concern	Unenclosed garbage receptacle	
	Location	15 Claremont	
	Recommendation	Enclose this garbage location to contain waste	

	Referred To	The City of Ottawa
	Action Taken	
D-9	Priority	MEDIUM
	Concern	<p>Children's park is often found littered. Play structures are old and need replacement.</p> 
	Location	Alvin Heights
	Recommendation	Beautification of the park and pool
	Referred To	The City of Ottawa
	Action Taken	
D-8	Priority	MEDIUM
	Concern	Broken fence. This fence is repeatedly broken and residents have installed nails to the fence to prevent vandalism.
	Location	Fence along Coop
	Recommendation	Remove nails - extremely dangerous Replace the fence with a stronger material such as metal and increase height of fence.
	Referred To	The City of Ottawa
	Action Taken	

Item E: Behaviour

WISE acknowledges that we cannot prevent all disruptive behaviours. However, provided below are some recommendations that will help deter individuals from creating unsafe spaces for themselves and other.

Item		
E-1	Priority	HIGH
	Concern	Crossing the intersection is dangerous. Vehicles are speeding when using the intersection.
	Location	St. Laurent and Hemlock
	Recommendation	Install zebra crossing, have pedestrian walk lights
	Referred To	The City of Ottawa
	Action Taken	
E-2	Priority	HIGH
	Concern	Cars are speeding on London Terrace, this is a walking hazard
	Location	London Terrace
	Recommendation	Add in speed limit signs and/or an electronic speed sign that shows people their speed and tells them to slow down if they are going too fast
	Referred To	The City of Ottawa
	Action Taken	
E-3	Priority	HIGH
	Concern	Residents report "People are gathering and drinking, smoking drugs"
	Location	Leading to Aviation Parkway
	Recommendation	Potentially have area monitored by police to discourage activity.
	Referred To	Ottawa Police
	Action Taken	

Item F: Entrapment Sites

Entrapment sites are small confined areas located near or adjacent to a well traveled route. They are shielded on three sides by a barrier such as a wall or bushes.

When assessing whether an area is an entrapment site, there are several factors to consider, including:

- Is this an area where someone could hide from view?
- Can you see or hear people around you?
- Is this area well lit?

Below is a list of concerns and recommendations regarding improvements that can be made to possible entrapment sites in the space audited:

Item		
F-1	Priority	HIGH
	Concern	Bushes create entrapment sites along parks and on London Terrace and Hemlock.
	Location	London terrace and Hemlock Roads
	Recommendation	Cut down bushes so it is not possible for someone to hide near them
	Referred To	The City of Ottawa
	Action Taken	
F-2	Priority	HIGH
	Concern	There is a path leading to the forested areas, but it is not an official path. It is extremely dangerous and isolated at night.



Location	NCC land
Recommendation	The community strongly advocates that this path is made official or closed. It presents as an extremely dangerous entrapment site.
Referred To	NCC
Action Taken	

Item G: Emergency and Security Measures

Safe public spaces are characterized by the provisions of emergency and security features that allow people to communicate and access aid if they should need it. Emergency and security features include such things as public phones, emergency call boxes, security cameras, and so on.

Below is a list of concerns and recommendations regarding improvements that can be made to emergency and security measures in the space audited:

Item

G-1	Priority	HIGH
	Concern	Security at the intersection of London Terrace and Alvin Road
	Location	London Terrace and Alvin Road
	Recommendation	Install a wide angle security mirror to improve visibility and reduce the opportunity for collisions between vehicles and pedestrians.
	Referred To	City of Ottawa
	Action Taken	

Item H: Accessibility

Safe public spaces are accessible to all community residents and incorporate those safety features and services required for residents with varying abilities.

Below is a list of concerns and recommendations regarding improvements that can be made to accessibility in the space audited:

Item

H-1	Priority	MEDIUM
	Concern	No sidewalk at the middle of London Terrace
	Location	London Terrace
	Recommendation	Create sidewalk to maintain continuity of safe walking conditions
	Referred To	The City of Ottawa
	Action Taken	
H-2	Priority	MEDIUM
	Concern	There is a path leading to the forested areas, but it is not an official path. It is extremely dangerous and isolated at night.
	Location	NCC land
	Recommendation	The community strongly advocates that this path is made official or closed. It presents as an extremely dangerous entrapment site.
	Referred To	NCC
	Action Taken	

Conclusion

In order to decrease opportunities for crime and improve the safety of the Manor Park community, WISE strongly recommends improvements to lighting along walking paths and roads adjacent to parks, such as London Terrace, Hemlock and Crispin Avenue.

Where lighting is poor or absent, acts of crime often go unnoticed. People cannot see or be seen in these areas. If exacerbated by isolation, as is sometimes the case in large fields and parks at night, this can create further extreme unsafe conditions in the neighbourhood. The presence of drug activity in various pockets of the neighbourhood attest to this phenomenon.

Signage is also extremely important in certain key locations. It helps people to orient themselves and indicates to all users that the area is monitored. All parks in the neighbourhood should be identified with signage.

There are numerous hidden areas that can pose as entrapment sites throughout the neighbourhood. These areas are characterized by overgrown bushes and trees, very poor lighting, lack of signage and movement predictors. Of particular note are Hemlock, London Terrace, and unmarked paths leading to isolated parks, or fields.

It is important to install lighting standards in key areas as detailed in the report. Signage should be installed in all parks areas and paths. Trees and bushes need to be cut back to improve visibility and eliminate entrapment sites and other hidden areas.

WISE believes that the safety of a community is based on the strength and cooperation of its every member. The users of a space have an expertise on the factors that work, or fail, in making their physical spaces safe for all members of the community, including its most vulnerable members. A community based approach to safety planning builds communication and partnerships that bring together solutions and cohesive commitments that allow everyone to feel a sense of ownership for the environments in which they live. Therefore, we thank all participants for their valuable input, recommendations, and community support. It is our hope that the safety audit process forms the beginning of strong community bonds and initiatives that continue to grow and make the living environment a pleasant and vibrant place to live.

References

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