

Safer City Program – Chilliwack Experience

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Introduction

The City of Chilliwack, British Columbia is a community of approximately 80,000 people, located 100 kilometers east of the City of Vancouver.

In the spring of 2003 the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia sponsored the Safer City initiative in an attempt to reduce vehicle accidents.

The Insurance Corporation of BC convinced the City of the benefits of the Safer City Program as a systematic and comprehensive approach to promoting road safety within a community. This program would depend on a collaborative effort from City officials, RCMP officers and ICBC experts.

Objective

The City of Chilliwack experience approximately 4,000 vehicle related traffic accidents per year, the primary focus of this program is to systematically reduce the number of accidents.

The Safer City initiative will focus primarily on the public road network (excluding private property) and concentrate on accident reduction. Achieving this objective will require the development of partnerships and programs involving the City of Chilliwack as road owner, the RCMP officers in the Traffic Section as the enforcement element and the Insurance Corporation of BC as program sponsor and primary safety issue communicator.

By utilizing the 3 E's of engineering, enforcement and education, the Safer City initiative will strive to integrate the 3 E's for maximum effect. The original Safer City initiative included 5 stages, described below in table 1, which had a proposed implementation period of 3 years.

**TABLE 1**

Stage A: Project Adoption	Stage B: Project Initiation	Stage C: Plan Development	Stage D: Management Transition	Stage E: Longer Term/Ong oing
Introductory meeting	Training	Classified network	Policies and Procedures	According to Plan
Introductory Presentation	Establish Committees	Speed management	Training	
Council Acceptance	Work Plans Contracts	Intersection master plan	Report	
Recruiting	Crash Data, Data and Mapping	1 planning project		
	Questionnaires	Blackspots		
	Speed Surveys	Community Safety Initiatives		
	Early winners	Consultation and Communications Enforcement, etc.		

## Partnerships

At the core of Safer City is partnerships that strive to improve linkages, communications and cooperation. The primary partnership arrangement is with ICBC, the City of Chilliwack and the Chilliwack Detachment of the RCMP.

In addition there are secondary partnerships that are formed between the primary group (City, ICBC, and RCMP) and other effective and influential groups in our community, including:

- University of Fraser Valley
- Chilliwack Junior Hockey Association
- Insurance Retailers
- Citizen volunteers from Speed Watch, Neighbourhood Watch, Citizens on Patrol.

Partnerships are utilized to encourage participation and maintain focus on the primary objective of vehicle accident reduction.

The partnerships were formalized with the signing of the Safer City Alliance documents at program launching media events in 2004. Formalizing the partnership assists in maintaining the commitment necessary to ensure program success.

## Programs

The Safer City Initiative is effective when partnership staff (City, RCMP & ICBC) and community volunteers work together through regularized programs. The City of Chilliwack Safer City Initiative has adopted, and is implementing a number of the standard programs offered by generic Safer City literature. Table 2 illustrates the current active programs under the Chilliwack Safer City banner.

Table 2

#	Program Name
1	Three Strikes Campaign
2	Safer School Travel
3	Earned Media
4	Hey Neighbour Please Slow Down
5	Speed Watch
6	Weekly Partner Reporting

In the following sections, the programs listed in Table 2 will be described in brief.

### Three Strikes Campaign

Goal: To control vehicle speed on major arterial and collector roads in the community.

Method: The three strikes campaign uses three communication tools to effect driver behavior change to drive within the posted speed limit. The first strike is a standard regulatory speed sign (50 or 60 kph in Chilliwack). The second strike some 100 meters downstream is the portable speed reader board operated by Speed Watch volunteers. The third strike, again some distance downstream, is a RCMP team equipped with speed enforcement equipment (radar or laser).

The packaging of a regulatory speed sign, volunteer Speed Watch personnel with a speed reader board and an RCMP member conducting speed enforcements is intended to increase the impact on the driver. This program also raises the profile of the Speed Watch volunteers, as motorists are not always sure when they are packaged with RCMP enforcement support.

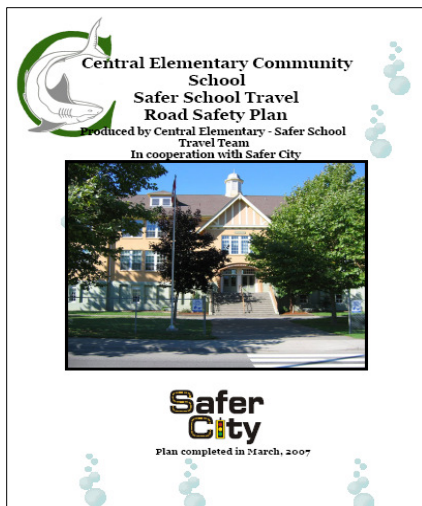
*Photograph 1  
Strike 1 of Three Strikes  
Campaign 2011*



### Safer School Travel

Goal: To improve the safety of the daily trips to and from elementary schools within our community (20 elementary schools in Chilliwack) by identifying impediments to walking and cycling and by identifying vehicle parking and circulation improvements on school grounds.

Method: Staff from the City, RCMP and ICBC work with school principals and parent volunteers to identify routes to school, infrastructure deficiencies and school travel safety issues. Solutions are identified utilizing a team approach, followed by improvement programming by partnering agencies.



*Central Elementary  
Community School; Safer  
School Travel Road Safety  
Plan - 2007*

## Earned Media

Goal: Work with television, radio and print media companies to raise the profile of road safety within Chilliwack.

Method: Staff from the City, RCMP and ICBC work with local media companies to express the road safety message into the community. Examples include televised community programming highlighting topics such as “Back to School”, “Winter Driving” and “Intersection Safety”.

## Hey Neighbour Please Slow Down

Goal: To control vehicle speed on local residential streets in the community.

Method: The City lends temporary lawn signs to neighbourhood volunteer captains who arrange for installation in lawns in speed plagued neighbourhoods. Signs intend to remind thoughtless motorists that their speeding affects friends and neighbours.



*Hey Neighbour Please Slow Down campaign signs on Tilston Street - 2008*

## Speed Watch

Goal: To control vehicle speed on major arterial and collector roads in the community.

Method: City, RCMP and ICBC support and encourage Speed Watch volunteer program utilizing portable speed reader board at various trouble spots throughout our road network. In addition to speed reader board messaging on site volunteers can record the license plate details of problem speeders who can be contacted for educational purposes.

*Speed Watch volunteers on  
Yale Road East 2011*



Weekly Partner Reporting

Goal: To communicate weekly public input about road safety issues to Safer City Partners in an end of week report.

Method: Assemble and report out to RCMP and ICBC each weeks public issues regarding road safety. Report is used to target educational messaging and enforcement resources.

Here is a list of issues that have come over my desk this week.

For the Week of: **February 7 to 11, 2011**

Location	Issue	Name	# of Requests	Notes
Watson Road	Heavy Trucks	Steve Watson at 792.4450	1	Heavy trucks (dump trucks, cement trucks) using Watson Road and speeding through school zone; requesting RCMP enforcement and Speed Watch
Ashwell Road	Heavy Trucks	Steve Watson at 792.4450	1	Heavy trucks (dump trucks, cement trucks) are using Ashwell Road between Deans Avenue and Hodgins Avenue (both directions) as part of their daily route. This area is not an approved Municipal Truck Route. Requesting RCMP enforcement.
Sylvan Drive	Speeding	Jennifer Erickson @ 858.3670	1	Speeding vehicles in park/school zone on Sylvan Drive. Requesting RCMP enforcement and Speed Watch
Stevenson Road	Speeding	Cathy & Dan at 847.9987	1	Speeding vehicles especially during rush hours (7:30-9 am + 4-6 pm); all types of vehicles speeding including school buses. Requesting ongoing RCMP enforcement and Speed Watch.
Evans Road	U-turns		1	Uturns continue to be a concern at the south end of the Evans overpass. Requesting ongoing RCMP enforcement.
Payne Road	Speeding	Gary Sjogren at 858.4989	1	Vehicles are travelling at high rates of speed on this road; speeding occurs all day every day – no particular 'problem time' of the day was indicated. Requesting RCMP enforcement and Speed Watch.

*Weekly Partner Report  
February 2011*

## Projects

In addition to regularized programs, the Safer City umbrella includes regular and individual projects. The projects completed to date are listed below in Table 3.

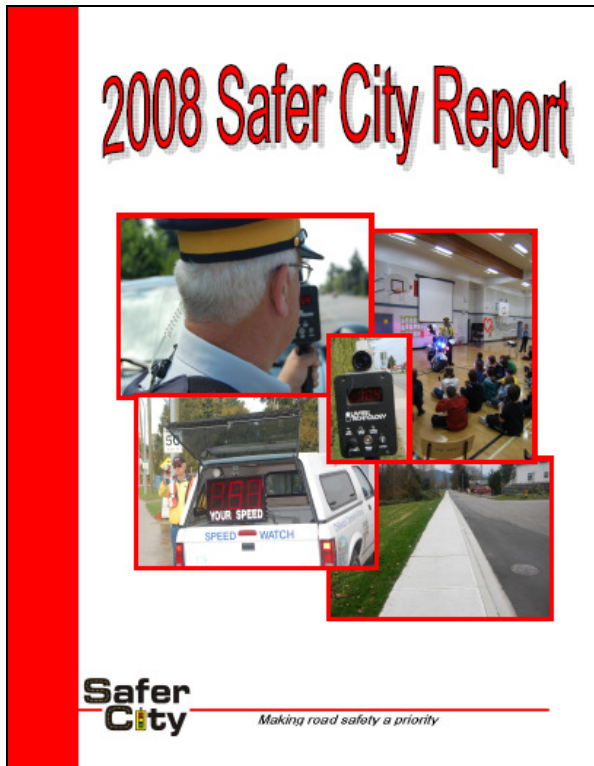
Table 3

Project	Frequency
Safer City Annual Report	Annual
Integrated Corridor Projects	Annual/As Required
Speed Surveys	As Required
Road Classification Update	Every 5 Years
Safety Audit Policy/Bylaw	Individual

The following sections describe in summary, the projects listed in Table 3.

### Safer City Annual Report

Safer City staff prepare an annual report summarizing the achievements of the year. The report includes vehicle accident data statistics, project reports and updated status reports on program activities.



*Safer City Annual Report - 2008*

## Integrated Corridor Project

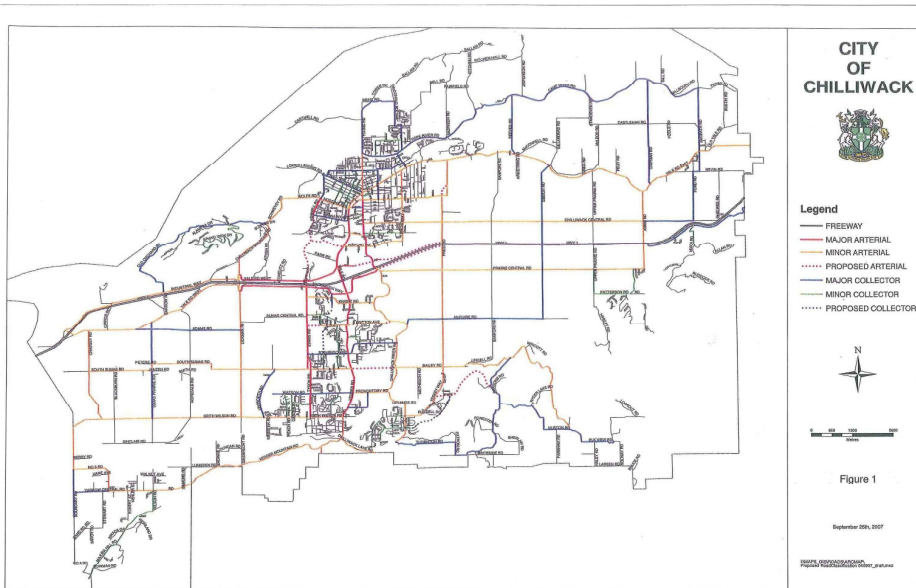
Integrated corridor projects have been completed annually on the City's highest accident arterial road corridor. The project integrates efforts of engineering, education and enforcement for a focused one month period to reduce collisions. Projects have produced significant accident reduction results for the one month, the 2008 corridor projects resulted in a two thirds accident reduction for the month (May, 2008).

## Speed Surveys

Periodically Safer City will initiate a speed survey to gather driver behavior information in relation to a problem area, or, as in the case of the annual integrated corridor project, speed data is gathered before, during and after the project period. The data assists in evaluating the performance of various engineering, enforcement and educational tools.

## Road Classification Update

Classification of the road network is a common tool for road authorities which aid staff in operation and management activities. In 2006 the City embarked upon a review of our 20 year old classification system; the review was intended to emphasize the element of safety in the consideration of road classification.



## Success

Public contact and interaction is a large component of the work done by our City Engineering Department, our Safer City Initiative has improved our contact performance with the public. The creation of a Public Safety Specialist employee position to operate and manage all the projects



and programs of Safer City has helped to bundle the safety related customer service duties. As a result our customer contact performance has improved, through the systemization of the programs.

Of all the programs under the Safer City umbrella, the Safer School Travel program has generated the single largest benefit for City Engineering Staff. Through this program the volunteer parents are guided through a documented series of steps and activities which result in concrete action, all reported in the final document, a document the volunteers write.

The Safer School Travel Program has long lasting effects which appear to transfer down to the parents of the younger students entering the school each year.

The Safer City initiative owes all of its success to the partnership between the City, RCMP and ICBC. Like most partnerships, this one only works if sufficient time is invested in nurturing the partnership and finding ways to meet all the partner needs.

### New Programs

Through public interaction and colleague communication our Safer City Program list is always under review. The following is a description of several new programs we are implementing in 2011.

#### Pace Car Program

A volunteer driver program intended to create a percentage of vehicles though out the community travelling at the posted speed. With enough volunteer involvement this program could reduce the average speeds on major arterial roads in our network.

#### Road Safety Solutions Team

In an ongoing effort to institutionalize road safety, our Public Safety Specialist has launched a Road Safety Solutions Team to engage staff from each of the Partnership organizations. This team approach provides a brainstorm session for open discussion about safety issues and possible solutions.

### Conclusion

The Safer City initiative as a whole has been successful and valuable for each of the primary partners, City, ICBC and RCMP providing a public communication and feedback platform focused on public road safety.

The Safer City initiative continues to evolve to address new road safety issues, with new programs and enhanced partnerships. While some programs resonate well with residents, some are of little interest and fall into dis-use.

Program initiatives that have succeeded include;

- Safer School Travel
- Integrated Corridor Project
- Three Strikes Campaign
- Weekly Partner Reporting

The importance of concentrating limited resources on those programs and initiatives that perform well is unquestioned. We also spend some staff resource time looking for new ideas in use in other communities across western Canada, this dedication to looking for and leaning about new safety programs will ensure a strong Safer City Program going forward.