



Alderman Joe Connelly
Ward 6

“Block Watch – The Time is Now”

There’s no time like the present to start thinking about community safety and security. Many of you have contacted my office to express concern about what “might be” once the West LRT begins operation in December 2012. Now is the time to connect with Block Watch if you haven’t already done so.

One of Calgary Transit’s prime areas of focus is the safety and security of its customers and staff. Existing stations have seen upgrades in security including enhanced surveillance camera technology, increased lighting, additional Peace Officers, enhanced strategic partnerships with Calgary Police Service and Bylaw Services, as well as increased monitoring of parking lots. Transit is working closely with the West LRT office, Police, Bylaw and other stakeholders to ensure that safety measures both on the train and on the platforms, parking lots and parkade are addressed through a variety of initiatives that ensure passenger safety both on and off the train.

That said, the LRT provides another form of mobility for the criminal element to move easily through the city. Block Watch, the Calgary Police Service, Bylaw Services and other stakeholder agencies will all be working collaboratively with communities to develop strategies that address the potential for increased crime, vandalism and public disorder. Part of that strategy will involve partnerships with Community Associations to collectively discourage and avert incidents of crime and public disorder before they have an opportunity to take root. Community residents are an integral part of this strategy as you know your community best.

Organizing a local Block Watch is the critical first step in crime prevention. Getting to know your neighbour, adopting an attitude of watchfulness (who belongs, what cars belong on the street), and most important, taking action by reporting suspicious behaviours to each other and the Police are all it takes to maintain ownership and control of your street and your community. Studies show that crime is reduced in active Block Watch neighbourhoods.

For more information, visit Calgary Community Block Watch’s website at www.calgaryblockwatch.com, or contact them at 403.509-2565.

Another effective crime prevention tool is provided by the Calgary Police Service. The Police and Community Telephone System (PACT) alerts residents to important local incidents including criminal acts or requests for public assistance such as missing children. The system has the ability to leave a message on answering machines. In addition, the Calgary Police Service website now offers an interactive crime mapping tool where

you can view mapped locations of reported crimes according to type. Visit www.calgarypolice.ca for more information.

Start now – get to know your neighbours and investigate the community resources available to you in order to be proactive in community safety.

Feel free to contact me if you have any questions about this or any other civic matter at joe.connelly@calgary.ca, or 268-2430. Alternatively, you can contact 3-1-1. I look forward to your on-going feedback.