

**SAFER CITY PROJECT FOR  
DAWSON CREEK, BC**

**REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

PREPARED AND PRESENTED BY CONSULTANTS OF

**D.W. McMULLEN & ASSOCIATES LIMITED**



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## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

	<b>PAGE #</b>
<b>1. INTRODUCTORY COMMENT</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. ABOUT THE SAFER CITY PROJECT</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3. SURVEY METHODOLOGY</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>4. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<b>4-5</b>
<b>5. DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS/SUMMARY RESPONSES</b>	<b>6-8</b>
<b>6. SPECIFIC SURVEY FINDINGS</b>	<b>9</b>
i. Protective Agencies	9
ii. Bylaw Enforcement	10
iii. Protective Services	11
iv. Crime Situation	12-15
v. Recreation, Parks & Cultural Services	16
vi. Roadways and Transportation	17-18
vii. City Services	19-22
viii. Perception of Causes/Contributing Factors	23-26
<b>7. CONSULTANT'S FEEDBACK AND RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>27-30</b>
<b>8. CONCLUSION</b>	<b>31</b>

## **INTRODUCTORY COMMENT**

In a project funded by the B.C. Ministry of Community Services, "Stopping the Violence" branch, the South Peace Community Resources Society and the City of Dawson Creek committed in 2008 to work together on a Safer City Project designed to gauge community perceptions about public safety in the City.

## **ABOUT THE SAFER CITY PROJECT**

The Safer City Project is a community-based initiative that engages businesses, residents, city officials and law enforcement through a project intended ultimately to maximize safety so that Dawson Creek will become a safer place in which to live, work and shop.

The goal of this project is to use the knowledge and resources of the City, the SPCRS and related interest groups efficiently to reduce hazards and increase safety.

## **SURVEY METHODOLOGY**

### **Survey Design and Construction**

The survey, collection period \_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_, forms part of a scheme to improve community safety in Dawson Creek.

Initial meetings were held to determine what types of information were wanted from the survey. A draft survey instrument was developed by consultants of D.W. McMullen & Associates Ltd and submitted to all stakeholders in the Safer City Project. Their feedback was used to refine the survey.

The finalized survey made use of the Likert Scale which is a bipolar scaling method, measuring either positive or negative response to a statement. The more typical odd number scale was used to provide respondents with a "middle option", as distinct from an even number scale which is a forced choice method since the middle option of "neither agree nor disagree" or "neither satisfied nor unsatisfied" is not available

### **Survey Distribution**

Printing and mail-out of the surveys was kindly handled by the City of Dawson Creek and information from returned surveys was inputted into a survey software program by staff at the City of Dawson Creek. Information was made available to D.W. McMullen & Associates Ltd for analysis and preparation of a report and recommendations.

The survey was distributed within the community as follows:

1. Online
2. By mail

[A copy of the survey is available on request.]

Survey questions were designed to elicit responses concerning residents' sense of safety and security around a number of issues including:

- ☞ Public areas
- ☞ City roads/streets and sidewalks
- ☞ Pedestrian safety
- ☞ Public transportations
- ☞ Phone booths
- ☞ Protective services.
- ☞ Bylaw enforcement

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Summary of Findings

**Participation rate:** 6161 surveys were issued and 1660 people responded to the survey. This reflects a participation rate of 26.9%.

Of the 1660 respondents, 97.4% completed the survey (i.e. responded to all the questions).

### Characteristics of Respondents

- ☞ The proportion of surveys completed by women (67.8%) greatly exceeded the proportion of surveys completed by men (32.2%).
- ☞ 39.9% of the respondents were 44 years or younger and 60.2% were 45 years or older.
- ☞ 72% of the respondents have lived in Dawson Creek for ten years or more.
- ☞ 4.6% of the respondents identified themselves as disabled.

## Participation

Based on useable information under this section of the survey, the greatest participation in the survey came from people living in the following postal delivery areas:

(The following information was kindly provided to McMullen by Jane Harper of South Peace Community Resources Society.)

In descending order:

1. 2C0 Downtown location
2. 4E8 Rural Route
3. 5A1 P.O. Box
4. 2L0 Downtown residential
5. 1B0 Crescent Park Area
6. 1T0 Park Hill Area
7. 1N0 Park Hill Area
8. 4T9 P.O. Box
9. 4H9 P.O. Box
10. 4L2 Unknown
11. 4K8 P.O. Box
12. 4H4 P.O. Box
13. 2G0 Downtown
14. 4H8 P.O. Box
15. 4H3 Unknown

### **Note:**

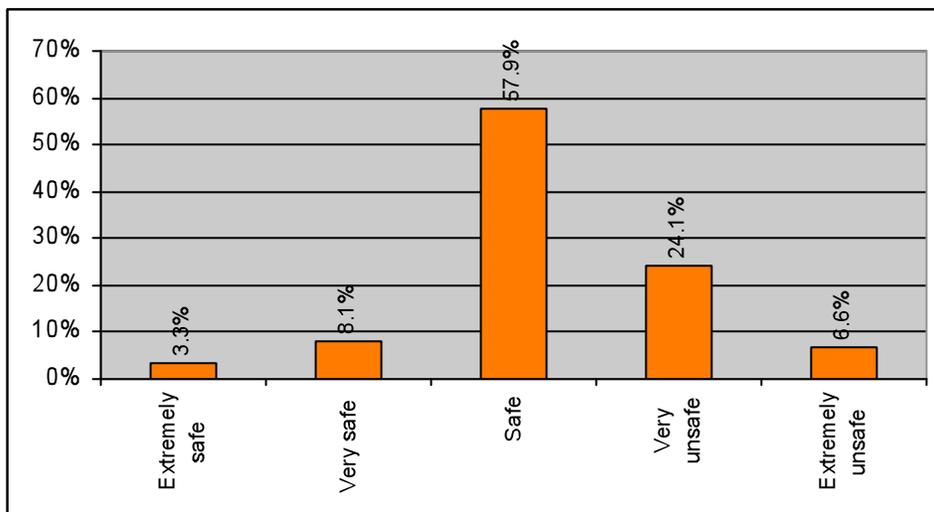
**Of the 1660 respondents overall, 1620 (97.5%) completed the postal code information as requested. However, due to errors by respondents, not all information could be used.**

## DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

### How safe is Dawson Creek?

A section in the survey asked respondents to indicate how safe they feel Dawson Creek is. 69.3% indicated that to some degree or another it is safe, and 30.7% indicated that to some degree or another it is unsafe.

Breakdown of responses as follows:



#### Note:

All 1660 respondents completed this section of the survey.

### Perceptions of personal safety

Another section of the survey asked respondents to indicate how safe they feel in given situations.

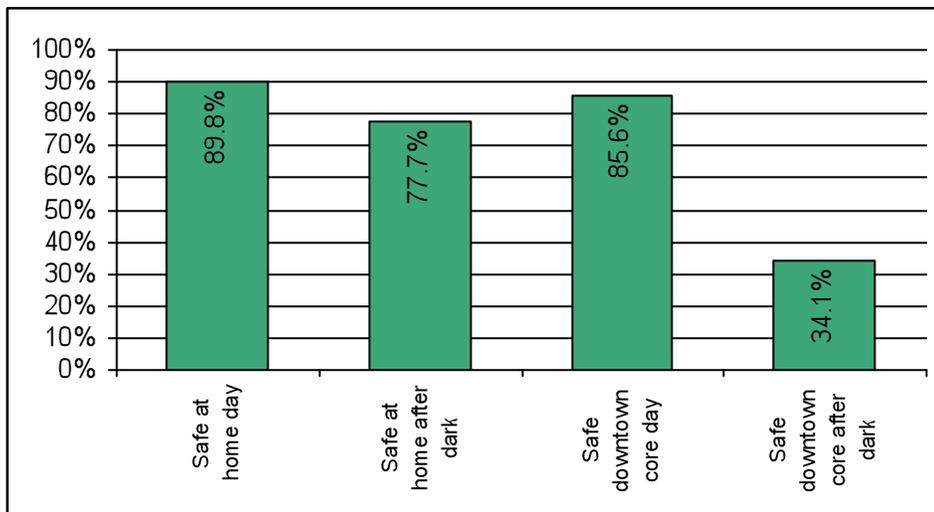
Feedback is summarized as follows:

**89.8%** of respondents indicated that they feel safe in their home during the day.

**77.7%** indicated that they feel safe in their home after dark.

**85.6%** indicated that they feel safe walking alone in the downtown core during the day.

**34.1%** indicated that they feel safe walking alone in the downtown core after dark.



**Note:**

**Of the 1660 respondents overall, 1640 (98.7%) responded to this section.**

**Of the 1640 respondents, 1113 (67.8%) were female.**

## Summary of Responses

Other sections of the survey asked respondents to indicate their satisfaction or dissatisfaction regarding public areas, public transportation, roads, streets and sidewalks, pedestrian safety etc.

Feedback is summarized as follows:

### Areas of least concern

The following, in descending order of %, are areas where fewer than **25%** of respondents expressed dissatisfaction:

- Street plans and traffic flow **(24.7%)**
- Illumination of parking lots **(22.8%)**
- Pedestrian safety at lighted intersections **(22.5%)**
- Maintenance of public washrooms **(20.6%)**
- Adequacy of clean-up of vulgar graffiti **(17.7%)**
- Clean-up of biohazardous garbage on City-owned property **(17.2%)**
- Maintenance and safety of public areas within the City **(15.4%)**
- Maintenance of City-owned trees and other vegetation **(9.6%)**
- Maintenance of public recreation facilities. **(8.1%)**
- Reliability and safety of the City's transit system. **(6.3%)**

### Areas of most concern

Areas where more than **25%** of respondents expressed concerns, to one degree or another, are presented below in descending order:

- Road/street maintenance.**(63.1%)**
- Snow clearing (roads/streets) **(46%)**
- Road/street safety for cyclists. **(45.2%)**
- Sidewalk maintenance (winter) **(41.6%)**
- Adequate policing **(40.1%)**
- The number of public phone booths. **(39.5%)**
- Pedestrian crossings (markings). **(38.1%)**
- Safety for people in wheelchairs or on scooters (sidewalks) **(38.1%)**
- Maintenance of phone booths. **(37.2%)**
- Traffic speed control. **(36.3%)**

*continued...*

...Areas of most concern continued

Road network (observance of speed limits) **(35.1%)**

Sidewalk maintenance (summer). **(32.0%)**

Adequate traffic enforcement **(30.7%)**

Lighting (sidewalks) **(30.0%)**

Road network (road safety) **(29.8%)**

Control of stray dogs **(29.4%)**

Road network (pedestrian safety) **(29%)**

Pedestrian crossings (number of) **(28.4%)**

Pedestrian safety (sidewalks) **(26.7)**

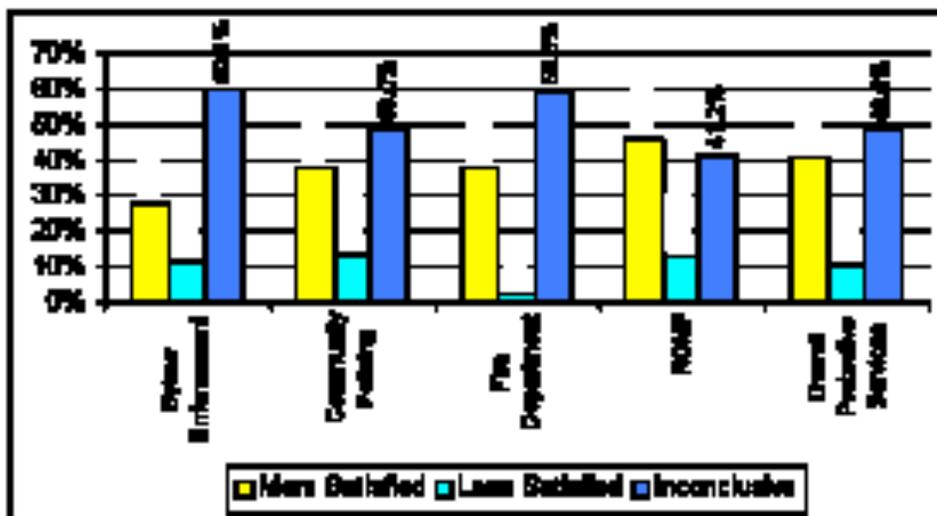
Location of public phone booths. **(26.4%)**

## SPECIFIC SURVEY FINDINGS

### 1. Protective Agencies

A section of the survey asked respondents to rate their satisfaction with levels of service for various protective agencies within the City.

(A “*More*”, “*Some*” and “*Less*” scale was used for this section of the survey)



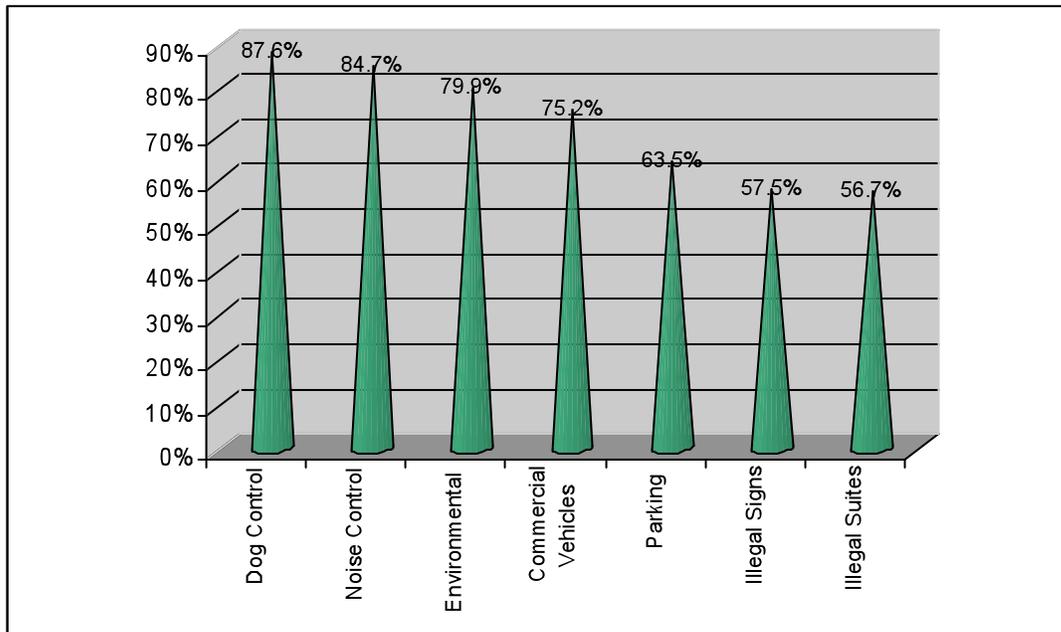
#### Note:

Of the 1660 respondents overall, 1617 (97.4%) responded to this section.

## 2. Bylaw Enforcement

A section, the survey asked respondents to rate the importance of various aspects of bylaw enforcement.

[A “*Very Important*”, “*Important*”, “*Not Important*”, “*Unimportant*”, “*Very Unimportant*” scale was used for this section of the survey]



### Note:

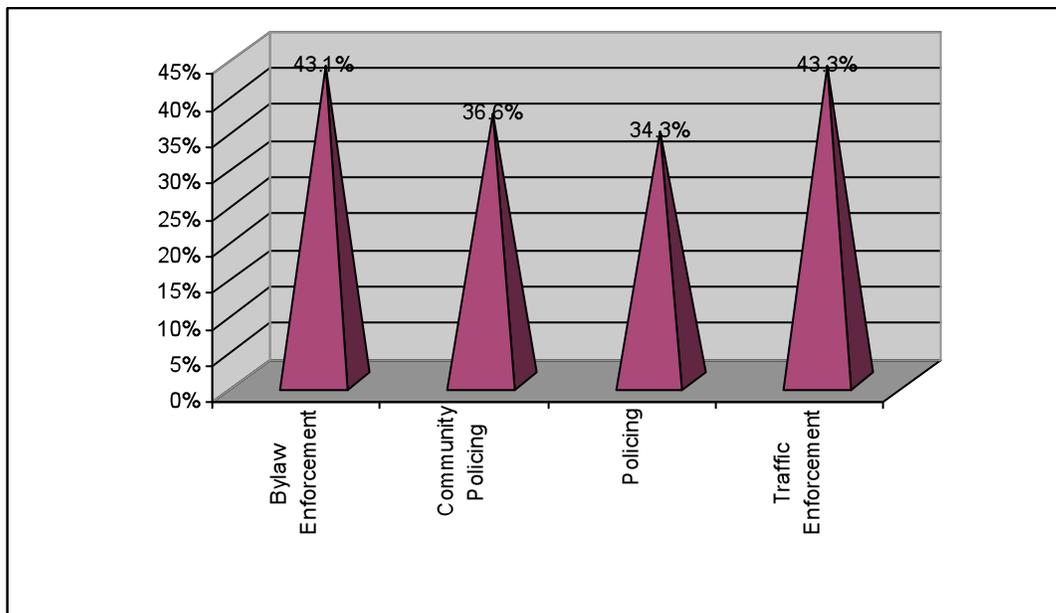
Of the 1660 respondents overall, 1639 (98.7%) responded to this section.

### 3. Protective Services

A section, the survey asked respondents to rate the sufficiency of certain protective services.

[A “**Strongly Agree**”, “**Agree**”, “**Neither Agree or Disagree**”, “**Disagree**”, “**Strongly Disagree**” scale was used for this section of the survey]

The following is a graphic representation of respondents who agreed to one degree or another that the protective services as outlined below are adequate.



**Note:**

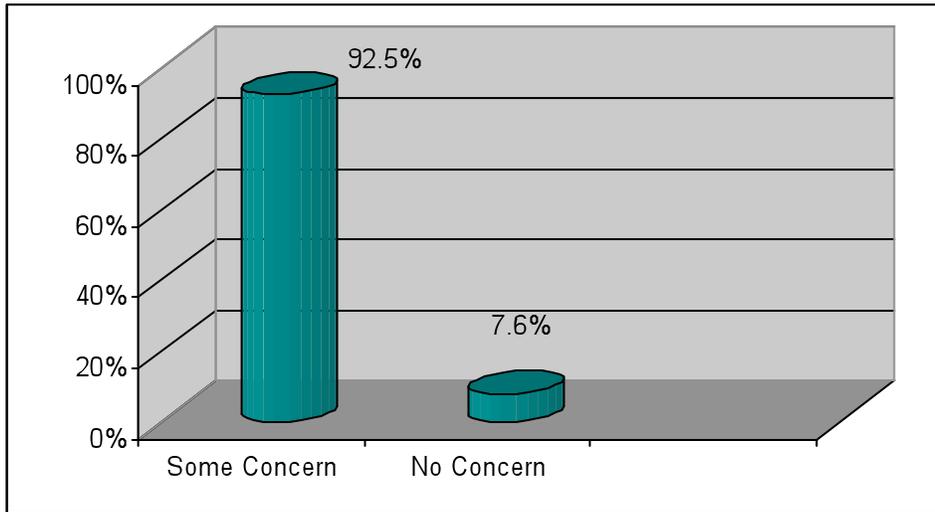
Of the 1660 respondents overall, 1639 (98.7%) responded to this section.

#### 4. Crime Situation

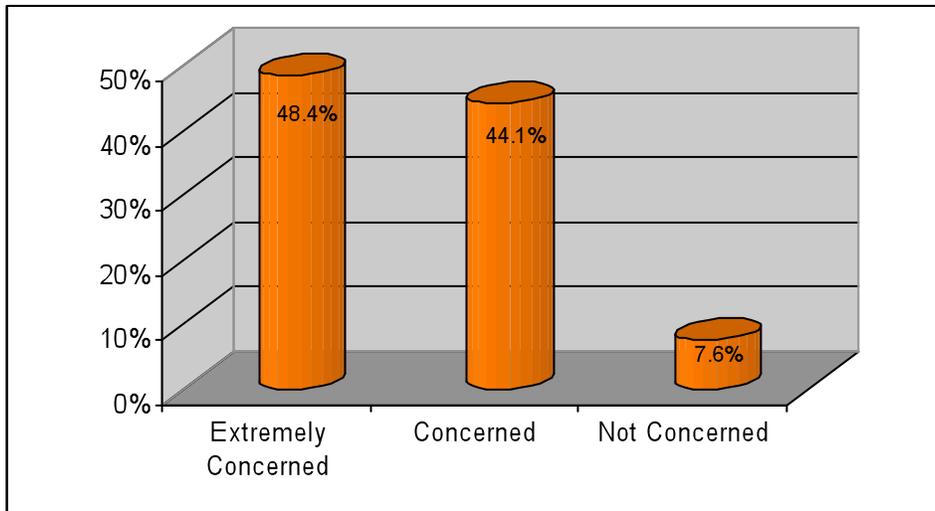
##### Levels of Concern - Respondents Overall

A section of the survey asked respondents to indicate their level of concern about the crime situation in Dawson Creek.

**92.5%** of respondents indicated they were either *concerned* or *extremely concerned* about the crime situation.



Breakdown of the degree of concern expressed by respondents as follows:

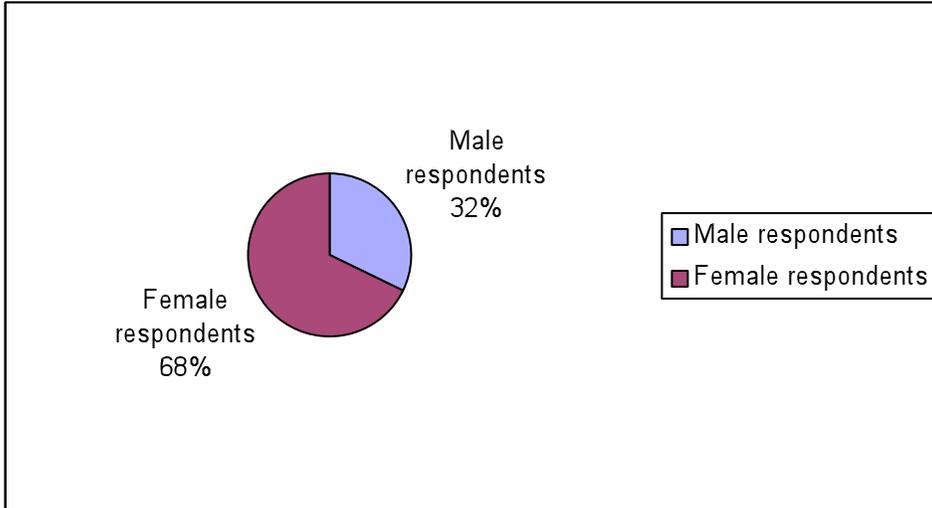


**Note:**

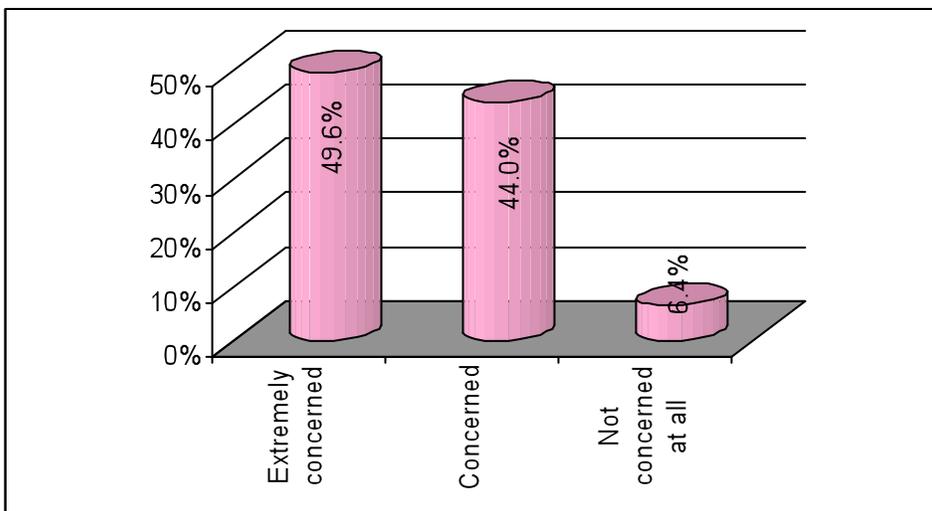
**Of the 1660 respondents overall, 1639 (98.7%) responded to this section.**

### Levels of Concern – Female Respondents

Of the 1639 respondents to this section of the survey, 1113 (68%) were female.



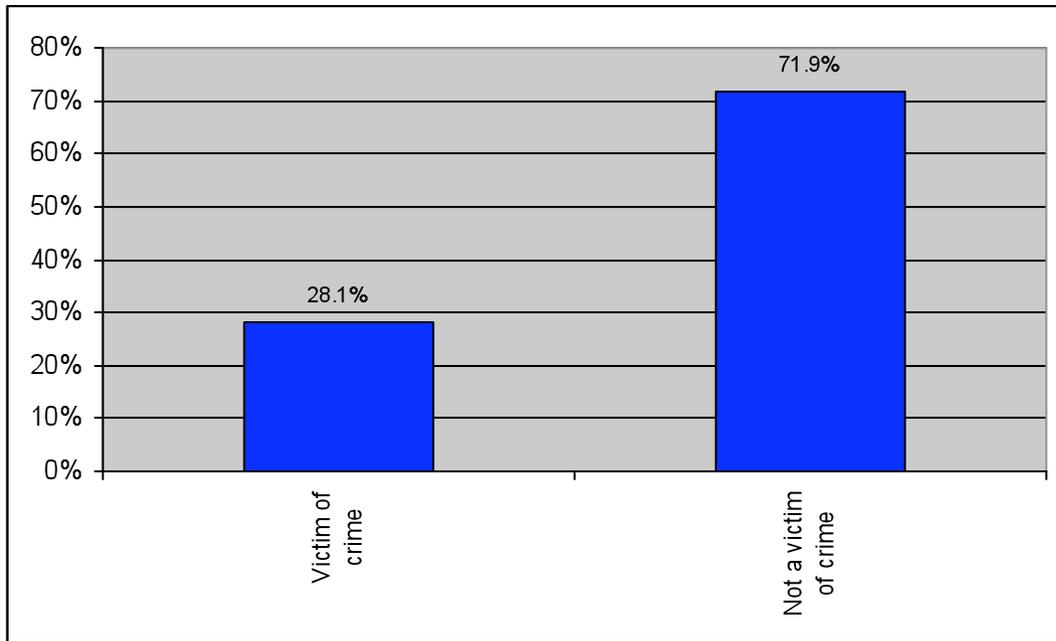
Of these 1113 respondents, 93.6% indicated they were either concerned of extremely concerned about the crime situation on Dawson Creek, while 6.4% indicated no concern at all.



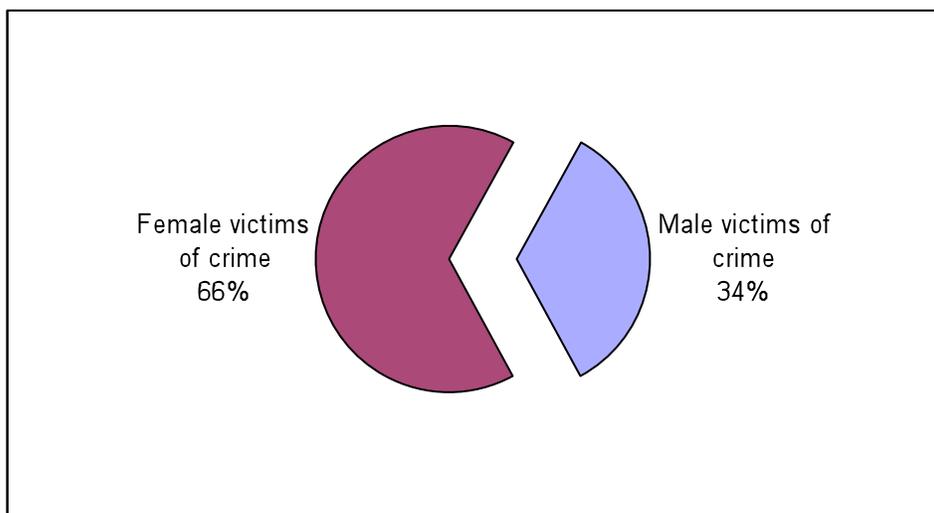
### Victims of Crime – Respondents Overall

In this section of the survey, respondents were asked to indicate by selecting either “yes” or “no” if they have been victims of crime in the past three years. 1639 respondents answered this question. [98.7%]

Findings are represented graphically as follows:



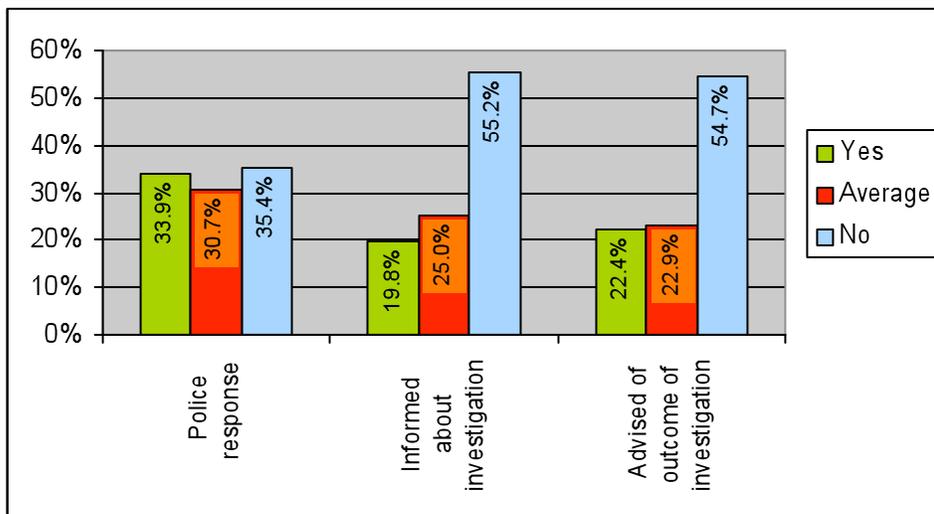
### Victims of Crime – Respondents Male/Female



### Levels of satisfaction

In this section of the survey, respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction with police response, information provided to them by police about the investigation, and if police advised them of the outcome/conclusion of the investigation.

(A “*Yes*”, “*Average*”, “*No*”, “*Disagree*” scale was used for this section of the survey)

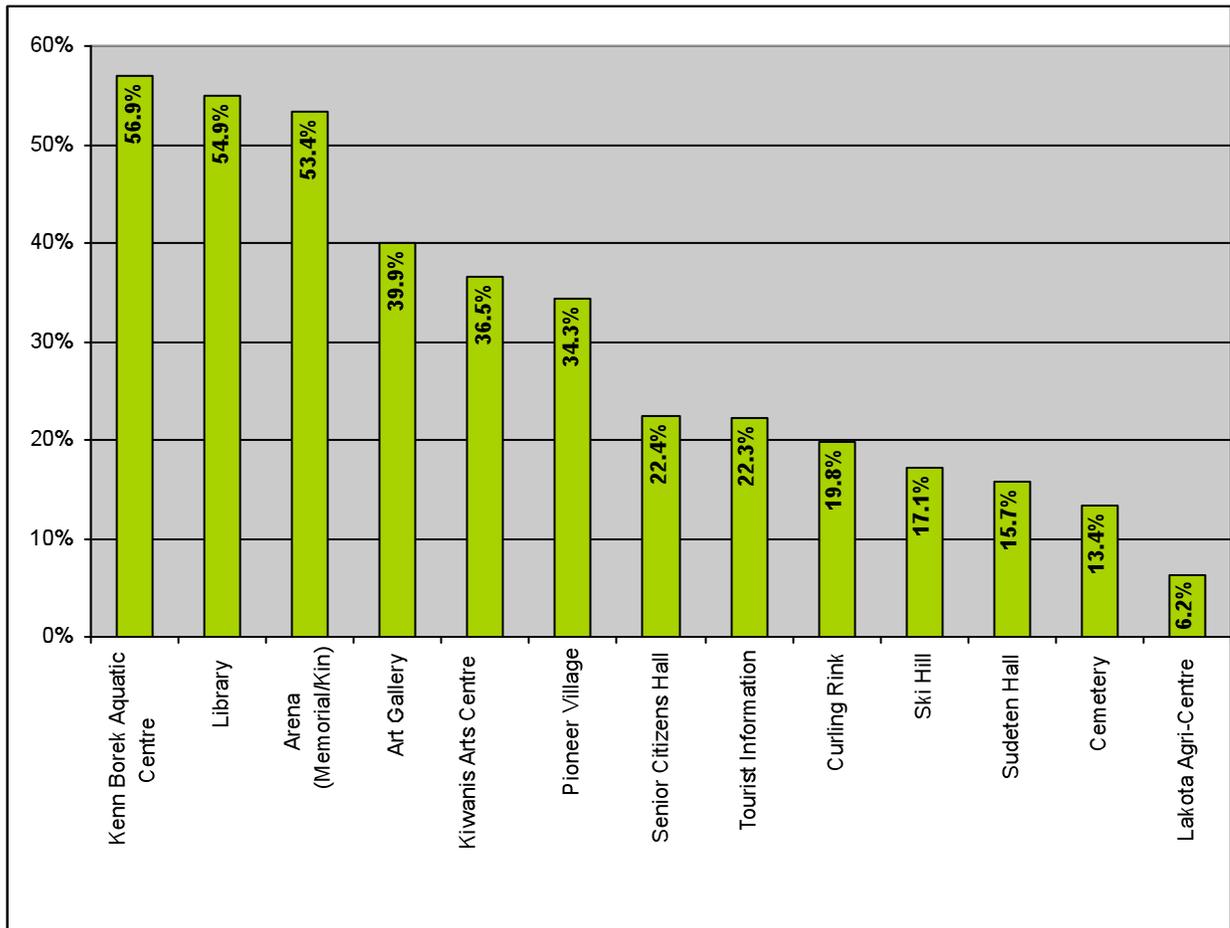


**Note:**

**460 (27.7%)** of the overall 1660 respondents answered this question. Of the 460 respondents, **303 (65.8%)** were female.

## 5. Recreation, Parks & Cultural Services

A section of the survey asked respondents to indicate the City facilities they used most frequently in the past year.



**Note:**

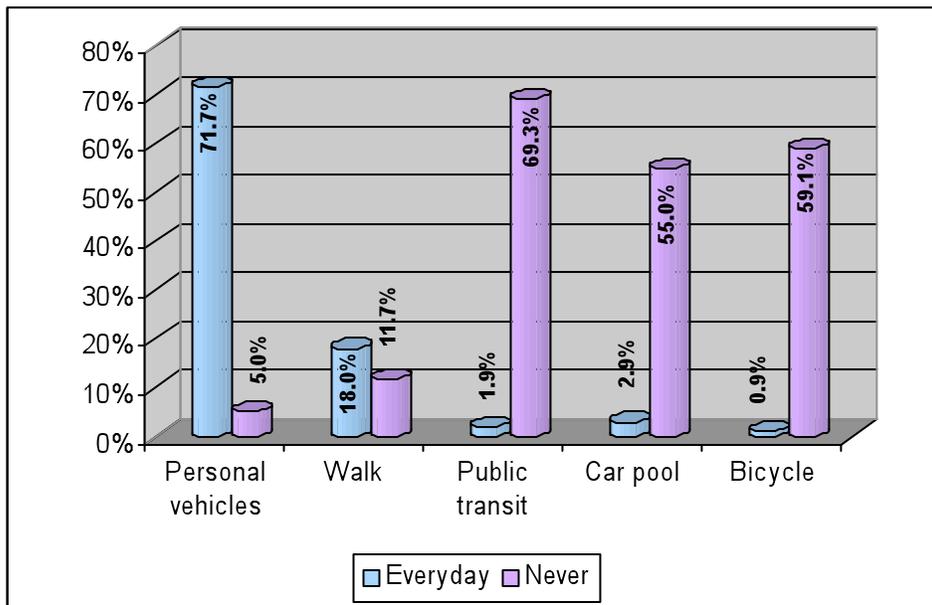
Of the 1660 respondents overall, 1497 (90.1%) responded to this section.

## 6. Roadways and Transportation

### Methods of Transport Used

In this section of the survey, respondents were asked to indicate what methods of transportation they used either everyday, a few times or never.

Feedback is represented as follows:



#### EVERYDAY

- **71.7%** of respondents use personal vehicles
- **18.0%** of respondents walk (or rollerblade)
- **1.9%** of respondents use public transit
- **2.9%** of respondents use a car pool
- **0.9%** pf respondents use a bicycle

#### NEVER

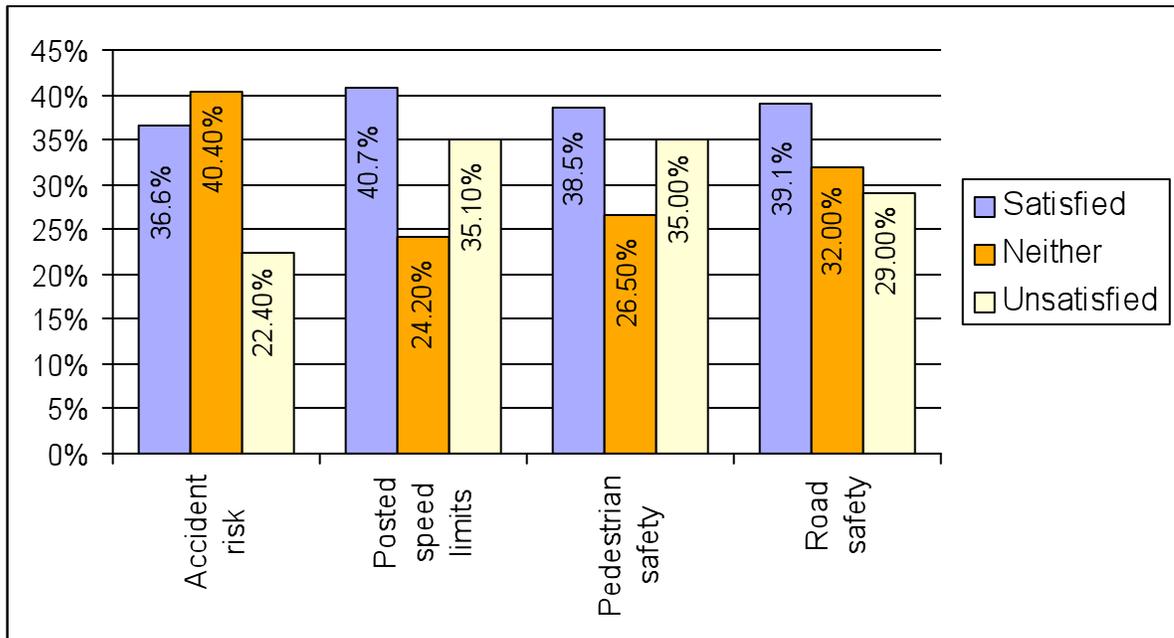
- **5.0%** of respondents never use personal vehicles
- **11.7%** of respondents never walk (or rollerblade)
- **69.3%** of respondents never use public transit
- **55.0%** of respondents never use a car pool
- **59.1%** pf respondents never use a bicycle

## Road Network

A section, the survey asked respondents to rate their satisfaction as it relates to the City's responsibility for the road network as follows.

[A "**Very Satisfied**", "**Satisfied**", "**Neither Satisfied or Unsatisfied**", "**Unsatisfied**", "**Very Unsatisfied**" scale was used]

Feedback is graphically represented as follows:



### Note:

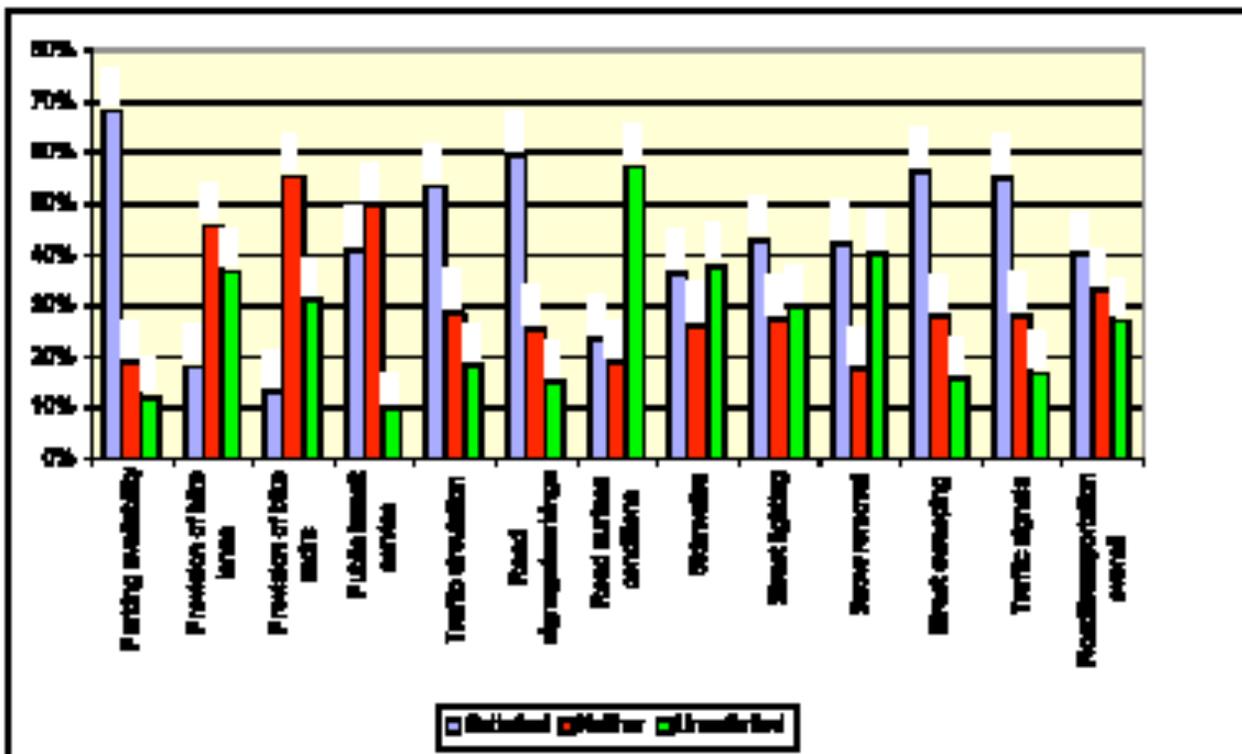
Of the 1660 respondents overall, 1618 [97.4%] responded to this section and 43 [2.5%] did not.

## 7. City of Dawson Creek Services

In this section, the survey asked respondents to rate their satisfaction as it relates to the City's services including availability of parking, provision of bike lanes and racks, public transit service, traffic circulation etc.

(A "Very Satisfied", "Satisfied", "Neither Satisfied or Unsatisfied", "Unsatisfied", "Very Unsatisfied" scale was used)

Feedback is graphically represented as follows:



In addition to the above, where respondents indicated “*Very Unsatisfied*”, they were asked to provide specific information.

**General comments provided are interpreted below:**

Having reviewed the 349 responses, the following areas (in no particular order), appear to have elicited the greatest number of comments:

1. Road conditions, specifically potholes, poor surfaces and exposed manhole covers
2. Snow-clearing
3. Inadequate bike lanes and bike racks
4. Traffic speed and flow
5. Lack of and poor condition of sidewalks
6. Street sweeping
7. Inadequate road signage and markings
8. Inadequate lighting throughout the City in general
9. Inadequate crosswalks
10. General concerns about pedestrian safety

### **Specific comments and recommendations by respondents**

Some of the responses and comments could not be included due to a lack of clarity and/or reference; however a number of specific concerns were cited and included recommendations by respondents as follows:

1. The sidewalk on 111<sup>th</sup> Avenue is in an unacceptable condition.
2. Lighting in Kin Park needs upgrading.
3. Speed control is required on 8<sup>th</sup> Street and Alaska Avenue.
4. Parking too close to intersections and blocks stop signs.
5. A controlled crosswalk is needed on 8<sup>th</sup> Street and Alaska Avenue
6. Reroute all through traffic to bypass and relieve congestion on 8<sup>th</sup> Street.
7. Stop signs at 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 90<sup>th</sup> Street are not adhered to. Traffic enforcement.
8. North 17<sup>th</sup> Street needs a sidewalk.
9. Traffic circle is not user-friendly as more hazardous since upgrading.
10. Too many boulevards on 8<sup>th</sup> Street and not enough road space.
11. Need bicycle lanes everywhere but mostly on 8<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Streets and Alaska Avenue.
12. Sidewalks in hospital area need to be replaced.
13. Stop filling potholes and fix them properly.
14. Improve snow removal around walk buttons at lighted intersections.
15. There is inadequate parking at the library.
16. Resurface 17<sup>th</sup> Street.
17. Poor traffic flow at the 3-way intersection outside the hospital.
18. All crosswalks must be painted each spring.
19. Rural roads are in an unacceptable condition.
20. 107<sup>th</sup> Street needs better illumination.
21. Traffic lights on Alaska Avenue are not synchronized and interfere with traffic flow.

*continued...*

*Specific comments and recommendations by respondents continued...*

22. Need traffic lights at 8<sup>th</sup> Street and 120<sup>th</sup> Avenue as using the crosswalk is hazardous.
23. There are too many stop signs. More yield signs would improve traffic flow.
24. 8<sup>th</sup> should be swept regularly as it gather gravel from side streets.
25. 101<sup>st</sup> Avenue is not adequately illuminated.
26. 17<sup>th</sup> Street needs to be paved.
27. The sidewalk on 17<sup>th</sup> street north of Alaska (Road) is in need of upgrading.
28. 93<sup>rd</sup> Avenue should be plowed more frequently in winter.
29. 116<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 17<sup>th</sup> Street needs sidewalks.
30. Road markings for traffic direction at Alaska Avenue and 17<sup>th</sup> street need repainting.
31. There should be a left turn lane and light at 102<sup>nd</sup> Avenue (Co-op Store) and at 103<sup>rd</sup> Avenue.
32. Storeowners and staff should park behind businesses and not on the street.
33. The sidewalk outside the Public Health Unit towards the Mall is uneven and dangerous.
34. The left turn light into the Dawson Mall seldom works.
35. Intersection at 103<sup>rd</sup> Avenue and 8<sup>th</sup> Street Eastbound, left hand lane should be for left turns and straight ahead. Right lane should be for right turns only.

**Note:**

Of the 1618 respondents who responded to this part of the survey, 349 (21.5%) offered individual responses.

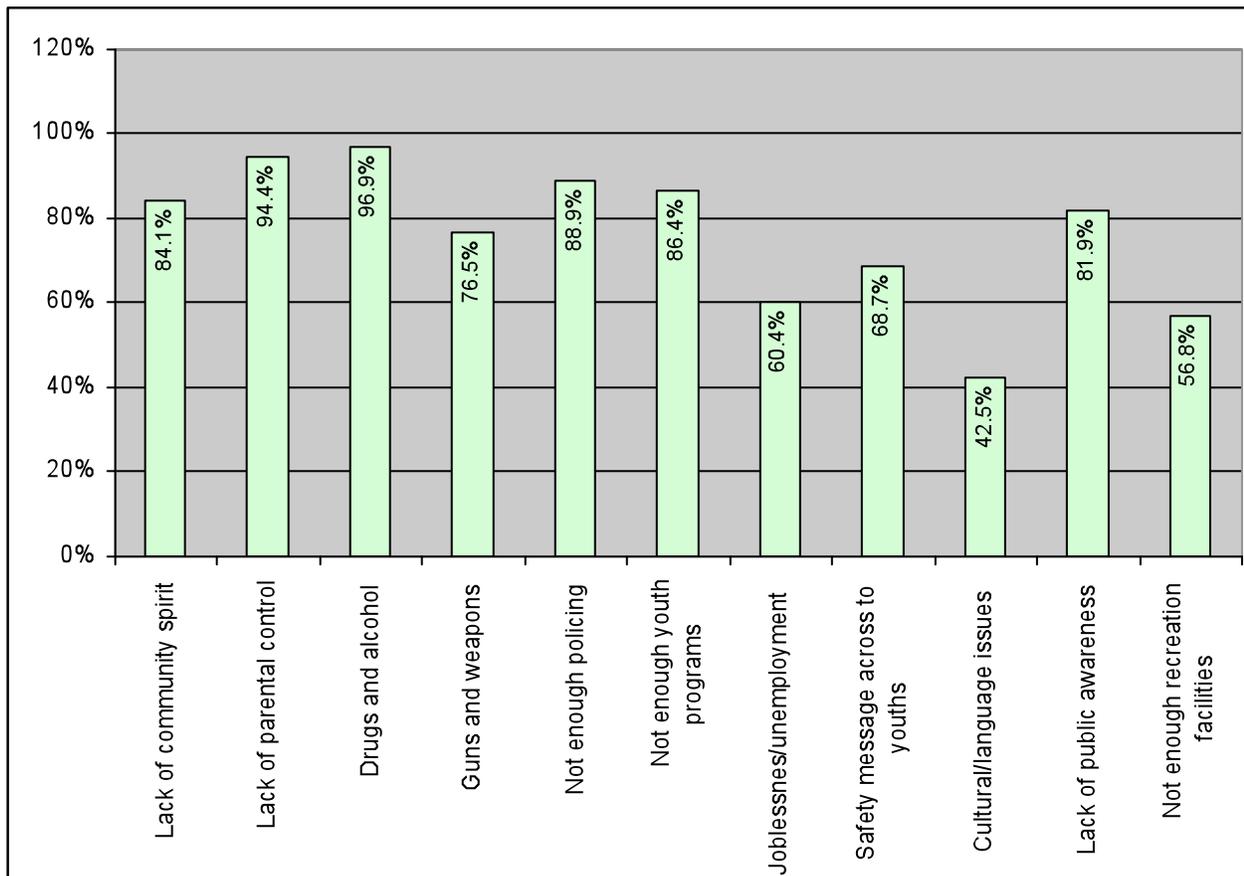
## 8. Perception of causes and contributing factors to problems within the community

Finally, a section of the survey asked respondents to indicate what they believe to be factors that may cause or contribute to problems within the community.

(A “*Definitely*”, “*Possibly*”, “*Unlikely*” scale was used.) The information was sorted by combining “definitely” and “possibly” responses to identify the number of respondents who felt that the following **were or could be** causes or contributing factors.

1. Not enough community pride and involvement
2. Lack of parental control/supervision over minor children
3. Alcohol or drugs are too readily available
4. Guns and other weapons are too easily available
5. Not enough police presence
6. Not enough community youth programs
7. Joblessness/Unemployment
8. Schools are not getting safety messages across to the youth
9. Cultural differences and/or language barriers (immigrants)
10. Lack of education and understanding of the community’s problems
11. Not enough public recreation facilities

(To facilitate the preparation of the graph, in some instances, the above survey statements have been abridged.)



In addition to the above, respondents were asked to offer their opinion on what they believed to be specific causes or contributing factors. Given the number of individual responses (217), and the wide range of perceptions, the writer has filtered the feedback under specific headings in descending order as follows:

1. Not enough RCMP presence, especially at night. (Patrols and curfews)
2. Drug and alcohol problems
3. Delinquent youth and gang activity
4. High cost of public recreation
5. Affordable activities for youth (both day and night)
6. Public apathy, lack of concern, lack of involvement or similar.
7. Homelessness, joblessness, unemployment
8. Provide more affordable housing
9. Address racial issues
10. Take stronger action against small crimes

In order to provide the reader with a more detailed insight into some local concerns and attitudes, the following selection of statements and comments by respondents is offered below for review.

*“Not enough police focusing on real criminals rather than people not wearing seatbelts.”*

*“Drug enforcement “not enough bust” where obvious dealing.”*

*“Justice system is far too lenient and the social norm is to turn a blind eye to small crime.”*

*“A lot of people live here for short periods but cause a lot of trouble. It’s not usually about the locals.”*

*“Police patrol at night – curfews, management of people walking the streets.”*

*“RCMP need at LEAST -3x the number of officers...”*

*“Too much vandalism at dark.”*

*“Drugs, drugs, drugs they run our town. You know who they are!”*

*“Lack of funding for recreation for low income people.”*

*“Bars being open until 4 am.”*

*continued...*

*"Perception of causes and contributing factors continued..."*

*"Allowing known criminals to get business licences and get examples to our youth."*

*"Worry about drugs in town, not seatbelts."*

*"Too much influence by too few! And not enough information from the council."*

*"It's not the (number of public facilities), its the cost of using them."*

*"Police more interested in giving out seatbelt tickets than cracking drug houses."*

*"cost of recreation prohibitive!!"*

*"How about a teen center! Influences in general!"*

*"No accountability at any government level."*

*"Gang violence."*

*"Need more for teens."*

*"Very late bar hours."*

*"Swim pool and bingo hall should have stayed in our downtown core!"*

*"Not enough taxi service - people driving after drinking b/c they can't get a cab."*

*"Should be curfews for minors under 18 years of age."*

*"The police don't do a damned thing when called."*

*"No bus service to pool after 6 pm"*

*"No where enough policing."*

*"Swimming pool too far from city core"*

*"Lack of restrooms in city parks"*

*"Crack cocaine - Alaska Hotel, Rockwells, Cedar Lodge."*

*"Need tougher penalties for young offenders"*

*"Too much money spent on stuff that isn't needed. i.e. a Spirit Square!!!!"*

*"Police are too worried about marijuana and not enough about crack/meth/coke."*

*continued...*

*"Perception of causes and contributing factors continued..."*

*"Laws are not tough enough."*

*"Place for teenagers to gather i.e. coffee houses etc."*

*"Too much bullying - need more surveillance cameras."*

*"Stronger consequences for youths are needed"*

*"... Road Racing on Alaska Hwy is disgusting... where are the police!"*

*"Longer hours for public transportation to run"*

*"A 'Drug Free Zone' implies drugs are okay in other places."*

*"... Some of the younger people (16-25) are on the streets in big groups and intimidating people..."*

*"Racism against Caucasians."*

*"Lack of crown support for police."*

*"Parents/others not held accountable for their actions."*

*"There is not enough effective mental health services (provincial responsibility) not city."*

*"Cultural differences and/language barriers... (survey question) - this is offensive."*

*"Cooperation from the public at large - afraid of retaliation"*

*"Lack of court imposed jail time for those convicted of a crime"*

*"Not enough indoor areas in winter."*

*"Unsufficient public transit at nite... cabs not available for drive homes."*

*"City Management I'ts A Joke"*

*"Gangs of youth on the street at night - intimidating."*

*"There is enough police presence but not enough action on their part."*

*"Average family can't afford to do activities."*

*"Lack of concern from parents and people in general."*

*"Reckless drivers on city streets, esp. after school."*

## CONSULTANT'S FEEDBACK AND RECOMMENDATIONS BASED ON FINDINGS

### 1. Criminal Activity

The survey revealed significant concerns among the respondents regarding the crime situation in Dawson Creek. Nearly 93% of respondents felt concerns of one level or another. Over a quarter of respondents indicated they had been a victim of crime within the past three years.

***It is recommended that a review be conducted to measure the focus and effectiveness of existing youth programs within the City of Dawson Creek to determine if they are adequate and meet the specific needs of the community.***

### 2. Road/Street Maintenance

The condition of the City streets was of concern among many participants. Evidently of particular concern, is the paving and repairs to potholes, which repeatedly came under criticism.

***It is recommended that the City conduct an independent study to validate these concerns and where applicable, review its current road maintenance strategies.***

***Seasonal factors are acknowledged and comment on the benefits of re-routing thru-traffic is addressed elsewhere in this report.***

### 3. Street Safety for Cyclists

Cyclists and perhaps parents of cyclists indicated safety concerns where cyclists are forced to travel in very close proximity to fast moving traffic due to a lack of dedicated cyclist lanes.

***It is recommended that the City conducts a study to identify feasible opportunities for bicycle lanes and establishes a five-year implementation plan.***

***This initiative could be supported by programs such as "share the road" and other programs designed to educate cyclists and other road users while increasing levels of safety awareness.***

#### 4. Sidewalk Maintenance (Winter)

Concern about slips and falls caused by ice and snow build-up on sidewalks during winter were numerous.

***It is recommended that where the City has responsibility for cleaning sidewalks, it publicizes its policy showing priority areas and encouraging the public to contact the City to report hazardous sidewalk conditions.***

#### 5. Sidewalk Maintenance (Summer)

Some concerns were expressed about the condition of the sidewalks in summer with maintenance being the subject of most criticism.

***It is recommended that the City consider a “sidewalk hotline” or similar initiative to allow the public to “call in” damaged or failing sidewalks.***

#### 6. Pedestrian Safety (Road networks and sidewalks)

The speed and volume of traffic through and around the City is of significant concern to respondents. It is unclear how much of this traffic could bypass the City rather than use the already busy 8<sup>th</sup> Street and Alaska Avenue route, but any reduction in volume, especially of heavy vehicles and equipment, would:

- Improve current perceptions
- Improve traffic volume and flow
- Reduce road surface “wear and tear”

Another facet of this problem is that pedestrians using most of the City’s sidewalks are in close proximity to the moving traffic as sidewalks are generally positioned directly beside the road with little or no separation by landscaping, paving or other means.

***It is recommended that the practicality of diverting all through-traffic around the City using the by-pass be examined and, where applicable, develop an implementation strategy to bring about this change.***

***It is further recommended that as future development of high traffic areas is planned, that provision be made for the separation of sidewalk edges from road curbs by the inclusion of landscaping or other means.***

## 7. Adequate Policing

Many respondents indicated that the levels of crime were or could be due to inadequate policing and that increased police presence could effectively address many of the problems identified by the survey.

***It is recommended that a more detailed study be initiated by the RCMP detachment to evaluate the sufficiency of existing RCMP resources as well as the effectiveness of current prevention programs. Where applicable, the RCMP could make recommendations to the City for an increased budget allowing greater resources.***

## 8. Public Phone Booths

The situation regarding public phone booths was of concern to a number of participants. In most cases the concerns centered on an inadequate number of phones, poor lighting or poor maintenance. One respondent commented that the phonebooks had been removed from several phone booths around the City.

***It is recommended that the appropriate authority be asked to review the number and spread of phone booths throughout the City. The authority could be asked to provide statistical information on calls made from current phone booths as a starting point in evaluating potential growth in use/demand.***

***The condition of the phone booths could also be addressed as part of this study, as could lighting levels and suitability of location.***

## 9. Pedestrian Crosswalks

The survey highlighted concerns regarding the shortage of crosswalks around the City as well as the design and maintenance of those in place. Some respondents felt additional crosswalks are needed, while others cited the hazards of uncontrolled crosswalks, specifically across 8<sup>th</sup> Street.

In other instances, concerns were expressed about the poor visibility of crosswalks at night and the lack of snow-clearing around the posts carrying “pedestrian cross” switches/controls.

One respondent indicated concern about the number of pedestrians who cross at a crosswalk and do not look to ensure all lanes of traffic have stopped before crossing.

***It is recommended that the City conducts an internal study to determine if existing crosswalks within the City are safe when measured against an established set of criteria, and if additional crosswalks are required.***

***It is further recommended that a campaign on crosswalk safety be initiated to increase public knowledge on the potential hazards of crosswalks and best practices when using them.***

## 10. Safety for People in Wheelchairs/Scooters

The conditions of sidewalks and concerns regarding crosswalk safety have already been addressed in this report. However, several respondents commented on the condition/suitability of these amenities for people in wheelchairs or medical scooters.

***It is recommended that further consideration be given to the concerns of wheelchair and medical scooter users in the community through a specific survey designed for the needs of that group.***

## 11. Traffic Speed Control

Respondents who offered individual responses frequently commented the volume and speed of traffic on. Many made specific reference to 8<sup>th</sup> Street and Alaska Ave and refer to it as “a race track”.

The fact that much of the traffic using the through-town-route includes heavy trucks and other industrial equipment makes the situation more hazardous in the opinions of a number of respondents.

***It is recommended that enforcement of posted speed limits be increased and could include a program of volunteers who monitor the traffic speed interactively. Lighted intersections and crosswalks also help to control traffic speed.***

## 12. Protective services

The role of bylaw services was considered by respondents to be very important and many agreed that bylaw enforcement is an effective service. Control of stray dogs was cited as the most important issue.

***The following recommendations are offered for consideration:***

- ☞ Educate the public to minimize available, “edible” waste, which attracts dogs as well as bears and other wildlife.***
- ☞ Introduce spaying/neutering incentives where these aren’t already in place,.***
- ☞ Incorporate fencing of property undertaking before issuing dog licenses***
- ☞ Establish a set of minimum standards to be met by potential owners before releasing pets from the SPCA and similar animal shelters.***
- ☞ Prohibit sale/release of pets two weeks before Christmas to prevent pets being given to children as Christmas presents then being abandoned after the season.***
- ☞ Initiate programs at schools to educate young people about what is involved in being a responsible pet owner.***

## **CONCLUSION**

It is hoped this report will stimulate participation and discussion on the very important matter of community safety, and that the recommendations will be considered and where feasible, be implemented.

It is further hoped that this study leads the community of Dawson Creek toward the establishment of new standards of excellence in community safety.

The writer would like to thank both the community as a whole, staff at the South Peace Community Resources Society and at the City of Dawson Creek for their input, enthusiasm and support in the preparation of this report.

## **REPORT END**

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**FOR**  
**D.W. McMullen & Associated Limited**