

Thorndale Safety Survey

Created & Conducted by
I Love Thorndale
October 2017
114 Responses



- This is the slide deck that was presented at the October meeting.
- Slides that have been updated with information (minutes, notes) have a gold background (like this slide) to indicate representatives input.

Guests Invited

- For the 2nd annual safety meeting representatives from OPP, Middlesex County, Municipality, West Nissouri Public School Rep, residents & business owners were invited to attend.
- Chris Traini (Middlesex County engineer) & Mike LeBlanc (Director of Transportation) send their regrets

Guests In Attendance

- OPP representatives: Max Gomex, Brian Patteson
- Municipality of Thames Centre representatives:
 - Ward 1 Councillor, Kelly Elliott
 - Ward 3 Councillor, Alison Warwick

-Community Group reps, residents & business owners

Turn out was low considering the number of complaints & concerns in the area, plus 117 surveys were submitted

- Reviewed stats from the survey

OPP Opening Remarks

- OPP were very grateful to have been invited and were well prepared for this meeting. Here are some of their opening words (more specific responses to questions concerns are later in the slides):
- “You live in a very safe community...”
- “hosting meetings like this and seeing residents come out shows you care... You are lucky to be in a community like this...”
- OPP’s investment in the area is typically from 11pm-4am
- Thorndale is not an exclusive area in OPP’s eyes. Thorndale is part of a bigger community (Thames Centre, which is part of Middlesex County). Huge demands on resources and these demands are changing with the trends that are being identified. There are also limitations due to the court system.

How can residents help OPP?

- 1) Crime Prevention “these are crimes of opportunity. Please remove the opportunity”
 - ie. Lock your vehicle, remove valuables, close garage door, lock sheds, etc.

There will be increased attempts with Christmas shopping, holiday parties, etc.
- 2) Lighting is important. Leave your property lights on all night. Helps police on patrol
- 3) Have audible alarms

LOCK IT OR LOSE IT!

How do we fix speeding

- OPP

- “change their mindset. Tell your neighbours, people visiting your community to drive appropriately...” “Needs to affect your heart....”

- “enforcement has little to do with long term change”

- “this is not a problem that is exclusive to Thorndale”

Results of safety meeting 1 year ago

- Resident engagement & advocating with residents
- Signs adjusted in school zone
- Wye Creek Developer, Jane Elliott communicated with construction companies the importance of obeying traffic regulations
- Discussions with neighbouring communities re: safety campaigns (child size cut-outs, speed radars)
- Interest in re-initiating the Community Policing Committee by Councillor Kelly Elliott
- Crosswalk approved & budgeted for by Municipality
 - Not yet approved by county
 - County is developing a policy. To be revealed earlier today at Thames Centre council meeting

Most Pressing Safety Concerns Resulting from 2017 Survey

- Thefts, break & enters, vandalism
- Traffic
 - Speed, volume & type (ie. heavy trucks), parking, distracted, violations (running stop signs, passing school busses with lights flashing)
- Crosswalk or safe crossing (poor visibility), Wye Creek Bridge
- Police Presence
- School Safety
- Safer Cycling Options
- Thorndale's growth (poor planning, lacking infrastructure & amenities, gravel pits, above concerns could be amplified with larger community)
- Lighting
- Road Surfaces (poor grading, inadequate surface for the traffic)
- Dogs off leash (future dog park?)

Residents' Suggestions

- Increase police presence
 - patrol streets, speed traps, distracted driving campaigns
- Increase, improve signage & road markings (speed, crossings, Neighbourhood Watch programs)
- Alter speed limits (why 70km/h @ library?)
- Install speed radars, security cameras
- Parking & Nuisance enforcement (ie dogs off leash)
- Install/alter/eliminate downtown crosswalk or alternative
- Install 4 way stop or lights at Fairview & King St.
- Traffic calming measures (speed bumps esp. on Agnus during soccer season, in new subdivision, downtown)

Resident Suggestions Continued

- Engage residents, support volunteerism
 - use collaborative platforms such as I Love Thorndale (ILT)
 - Neighbourhood Watch & Block Parent Programs
- Have a pro-active approach (for development, infrastructure, programs that engage/support demographics esp. Youth, how municipal land changes affect community ie. Gravel pits & their traffic, etc)
- Re-route heavy traffic around town

Residents Questions for OPP

- What are community based groups that can support the OPP's efforts to curb crime in our village?
 - A: Neighbourhood Watch, Citizens on Patrol (COP), Community Policing Committee . Work with auxiliary officers for outreach programs.
- Please share how the pros and cons of each community initiative. And, please share how the OPP is involved with the work of these groups.
 - A: direct link with OPP and community. Training & supports available. Engages residents/volunteers.
- How can our community support your efforts?
 - A: Call us! Use the non-emergency number 888-310-1122 (they repeated this several times all night. Call them!!!!)
 - Report anything suspicious. Report stolen property (even if you hadn't locked your doors, etc).
 - Use Online Citizen Self Reporting www.opp.ca/reporting
- How does social media help or hinder?
 - A: Yes in that social media helps police reach more citizens (follow them on Twitter).
 - One OPP rep feels that Social Media is hindering youth however (inability to have conversation, changing family dynamics, etc).

- Does the OPP have public safety campaigns that could be promoted by our community?
 - **A: yes. “Lock it or Lose it” Campaign.** Print materials left at library. Basically don’t leave any valuables or keys in your vehicle ever. Close your vehicle windows and lock your doors always. Lock your buildings (garages, sheds, house)
- Do you have one that focuses on distracted driving?
 - “People aren’t getting the message about impaired or distracted driving. So many strategies have been trialed. Until something reaches their heart, they will not change their behaviour...”

OPP Questions Continued

- Regarding OPP presence in Thorndale, how would be request more patrols?
 - **A: call and report things**
- What are your considerations when you allocate more resources to a community? Can we expect more OPP presence once the new municipal building with the OPP office is finished?
 - Resources are shared through the whole county.
 - OPP will be using the new municipal building (firehall) to do some computer work...
- What are best practices for reporting to the OPP? What should our community understand about your services?
 - Call and report things!
 - They want to be able to help. They want to “catch the bad guys and girls.”
 - OPP can’t approach suspicious people without a reason (why you should report things) – even if someone is riding their bike through a field with a backpack in the middle of the night...
 - London is dealing with one of the most significant opioid crises in Canada. Our proximity to London can be cause for criminal activity. People are looking for ways to “earn” \$\$ to support their addictions. Need investments in mental health and substance abuse....

OPP Continued

- When can we expect the speed sign that was requested?
 - A: Don't. There is only one sign for the entire county of Middlesex and it is currently being repaired.
 - Input from council reps. Thames Centre is considering adding a speed radar sign to their budget
- What other technology or techniques are used to address speeding?
 - Speed bumps are effective in school zones (one OPP's opinion)
- Please share stats regarding number of charges or ticket issued in Thorndale. What are the most common offenses? Are they similar to other communities our size? Do you see trends?
 - Stats aren't available for just the Thorndale area. OPP did indicate that there is nothing happening here that isn't happening in other communities. Speeding, etc is a problem everywhere...

OPP Continued

- Has a traffic enforcement study been conducted? If yes, what is the average speed on our main roads? What number of collisions? Where are collisions happening?
- There seems to be an increase in theft and break and entry crimes in the area. How many have been reported recently? Is the number increasing? Why is this happening?
- Already answered on other slides (can't break down stats just to this area...same things are happening everywhere ie. Lucan...)

Resident Questions

- Who designs/plans/approves development plans?
- Can the 70km/hr speed limit be moved east to the new firehall rather than at the library?
 - Councillor Elliott is advocating for this. Might be more feasible when new fire hall is built. Currently Mayor Maudsley has no interest in changing the speed limit there...
- Can we get access to speed radar signs? Can a community group or municipality buy or fundraise & purchase our own? If so, can we rent it out?

A: Some Thorndale community groups have discussed purchasing one. Council reps suggested to hold off as it will be added to budget considerations.

Resident Questions Continued

- Can anything be done about noise/light pollution from industrial area?
- Crosswalk – next steps?
 - if not approved by county this year, will the municipality's \$ earmarked for this carry over to next budget?
 - Potential for a crossing guard?
 - Physical barriers, painted lines/identifying marks in no parking zones?
 - Town beautification efforts/updates?

Community Policing Committee

What it is? “An observe & advise committee”

In attendance: Darrell Kington

→ Spoke about the Thames Centre –Dorchester committee that is currently active.

Meet 4 x/year

-liaison between public & police

-try to come up with solutions

-receive stats from OPP.

-police attend meetings (same officer each meeting)

-monitor trends

-minutes posted on Thames Centre Website

-they operate Citizens on Patrol (COP) in Dorchester.

-residents volunteer to patrol community in pairs. Receive training, supports, sign in-out with police through non-emerg number. Watch for suspicious behaviour, report to police.

County & Municipal Responses & Comments

Crosswalk Policy from Middlesex County was presented to council. Councillor Elliott will continue to see what can be done in Thorndale to promote safer crossing.

-Discussion on poor signage, mixed messages, poor design...

-Councillor Elliott would like to work with Thorndale area to develop a community policing group and work with Darryl Kington and his existing group

Recommendations: be engaged. Know who to contact for concerns & that you can report things ie. Street lights burnt out (<https://www.thamescentre.on.ca/>)

-“be better engaged during budget deliberations”

-Comment about diverting heavy traffic off of main street

-Councillor Elliott & Municipality would prefer heavy trucks use county roads as then County is responsible for maintenance costs, plus these roads are built to withstand that type of traffic

-Put pressure on county & municipality for wider roads, proper sidewalks, amenities...all of these things need growth to happen though...

-Does Thames Centre have Strategic Plans like other communities for recreation and services???

Thank-you for attending!



Watch for updates on our website
www.ilovethorndale.ca
& Facebook page "I Love Thorndale"

Contact us: info@ilovethorndale.ca