

## President's December Update

**SACA is volunteer-based representative governance in action:** SACA functions as a 'voluntary governance body' for the community, so we represent you at all levels of government and before other organizations. We interact, contribute and advocate within the City dynamic as many parties request our perspectives, our assistance, our leadership, our best practices and experience concurrently as we advocate for Scenic Acres' interests. SACA operates within the Community to ensure that it functions well not only within our boundaries but in the context of the City. SACA's results take the form of events, programs, services, community maintenance and these activities involve months of planning, organizing, preparing and meetings and in many cases, go unnoticed. When it comes to tangible assets that involve City spending, it generally requires years of lobbying, justifying the need, specifying requirements and complying with detailed stipulations. When initiatives require money, we research the best way to fund them which often involves seeking out grants, competing for them and completing detailed administrative pre and post qualification requirements. SACA has become a 'master of leveraging restricted funds' (funds with strings attached) since we have limited discretionary funds. In a COVID-19 world where grant funding options are shrinking and the community centre had been closed for months not generating revenue and is open now with significant restrictions, fund management has become increasingly challenging.

**Safety and Security:** I'd like to discuss safety and security within Scenic Acres. I have often written about traffic safety activities, guidance and measures we have actioned related to school zones, street parking restrictions, signage, crosswalks and any other matters related to vehicular and pedestrian circulation within and around the community. These are common issues community associations handle and we have some unique and dynamic challenges as Scenic Acres is positioned adjacent to a major LRT station and at the junction of major road systems. SACA also works in cooperation with the schools to monitor poor behaviour and engage in traffic safety monitoring and education initiatives.

This month, I'd like to discuss other areas where SACA is involved in safety and security and potentially further involve you. Scenic Acres is generally a safe community and City statistics demonstrate infractions are less common here than other communities. You can view crime reporting statistics by community at <https://www.calgary.ca/cps/statistics/crime-map.html>. Most importantly, a resident should contact 9-1-1 in case of an emergency situation and 403-264-1234 in cases of a police non-emergency; do not contact SACA.

The SACA Board has regular engagement with a dedicated CPS liaison officer who periodically attends board meetings, provides education and gives assistance. If we have specific problems within the Community, we work with the liaison officer to help us address them. This help could take the form of targeted police monitoring and enforcement for a period of time or guidance on further actions we should take. Some examples over the last few years related to parking violations around the schools, hate graffiti applications, drug exchange areas enforcement, joy riding incidents, destruction of public property. We do all we can in these situations, but your help to the police and SACA helps to identify the culprits so further action can be taken.

**Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED):** CPTED is an important urban design term and involves creating an environment that discourages criminal or other disorderly behaviour. I went through this exercise a number of years ago, when designing the LRT station and parking lots to ensure all spaces were visible, lit appropriately and had sufficient public traffic and pedestrian circulation. As a member of the Subdivision and Development Appeal Board, this is an important component we review and assess with respect to new developments. CPTED measures promote natural surveillance and control without having to rely on enforcement. Adding street parking along Scurfield Drive around the schools and LRT station last year was designed, among other reasons, to narrow the road and naturally discourage speeding.

Lighting and opening up spaces for easy public views are common CPTED measures and this is why it is important that your home should have a visible front entry and windows so you can view the street and passerby folks can easily see any unusual behaviour. Keeping trees trimmed so they don't block views is important. Please don't advertise that you are away! Ensure you have someone pick up your mail, use light timers in visible window areas, keep your lawn mowed and snow shoveled. If you have vehicles parked outside, ensure they are locked and valuables are not stored in them. When I walk the community, I am amazed how many people don't take these basic steps to discourage crimes of convenience.

CPTED measures have improved over time and unfortunately were not readily available when Scenic Acres was designed, so we have secluded areas that don't provide this natural surveillance. Scenic Acres has lots of large trees in public green spaces and ravines that create secluded areas; these are areas we monitor and take corrective action as needed.

**Graffiti:** On my walks through the community, I regularly take note of graffiti, take pictures and send them through the 3-1-1 online service website. Many of you are out and about as well and could complete this task as easily as I can. You can also use the 3-1-1 app to accomplish the same thing. Not only are you keeping our community clean and safe but the graffiti 'tags' are downloaded into the police service database and culprits are identified for further legal action which includes fines and in extreme cases, imprisonment. Graffiti attracts further vandalism as well as other crimes and is often associated with these dark, secluded areas I mention under CPTED. Graffiti's presence suggests that residents don't care about their community. It should always be removed within 24 to 72 hours of its appearance and after reporting it. If graffiti is left up longer, the location can attract additional attention from other vandals. If the graffiti is located on your own property, you can remove it right after recording and reporting it to Bylaw Services at 3-1-1.

**Education:** SACA also educates on safety and security measures regularly through our social media. Some of our community events include our CPS liaison officer who will present materials and answer questions. Please review and take appropriate corrective action based on the guidance available to you.

**Virtual Block Watch:** Scenic Acres had a robust Block Watch program in its past. There is a virtual program called 'Building Safer Communities Block Watch' that provides essentially the same service through Facebook with the benefits of electronic media, involves many communities and works directly with the Calgary Police Service. The service is centrally

maintained but each community has to provide a focal point to enable it for their respective community. If you are interested, let me know. Here is the link to the service <https://www.buildingsafercommunitiesblockwatch.com/>.

**SACA Membership:** We value your support by purchasing an annual community association membership. Our hope is that you will join us and transition from engagement phases of initially, joining and supporting SACA as a member; to helping at a specific event or program; to assisting on a SACA committee; and even to becoming a board member!

However you choose to celebrate the 2020 Holiday Season, please continue to follow protective measures to keep yourselves and others healthy and don't forget to stay connected to maintain your emotional well-being even if that has to be via virtual means.

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