



**CONCLUDED
PROBLEM REPORT
PS-1**

Problem ID: 71

Reporting Division : NORTH

District: CLAREVIEW

Neighbourhood :

Address: 140 AVENUE/48 STREET

Reg	Rank	Last Name	First Name
1239	CST	FACEY	D.

Key Description : THEFTS FROM AUTO

Problem Description:

The Clareview LRT Station is the northern most facility of our transit system, the end of the line so to speak. It lies in an unpopulated, industrial stretch of land bordered by open fields, railway lines, and warehousing. By day, the several acre parking lot accomodates the vehicles of commuters who themselves are present during the morning or afternoon rush hour only. For the most part during the day, the lot is unsupervised and unattended, just as it is at night when it is essentially deserted.

Because of its somewhat isolated location, the LRT lot became plagued by both thefts from auto, and outright auto thefts. With easy access from the downtown and other areas of the city (by train), as isolated as it was, the lot had become a collection point for young criminals. Daytime thefts from auto inundated nearby Clareview Community Station and Clarveiw LRT was identified as the second highest problem location for auto theivery in the city. Only West Edmonton Mall was worse.

Problem solving strategies and results :

Transit Security confirmed this was the most problematic Transit facility with respect to property crime. As long as security was present, there would be no problems. The wide open, flat field allowed culprits the sightlines to interrupt their criminal activity as long as supervision was present. With only the one vehicular access route, security was just as noticable when they arrived as when they departed again. Further, there was just enough pedestrian traffic for the culprits to "blend in with the crowd". Close supervision was labor intensive, but not very effective in reducing incidents.

Cst. Facey met with Transit officials to try something different. A "police warning notice" was drafted that clearly identified the lot as a problem location for the crimes mentioned. It reminded commuters to not leave property in plain view in their vehicles, much the same as other problem locations have been warned. It further suggested the use of an anti-theft device (such as the "club") to curtail the incidence of auto theft.

The police warning was copied on a full sheet brightly colored paper for maximum visibility. Volunteers assisted police in placing the notice on **every** windshield in the lot. This operation was carried out on a particularly busy business day and over 800 such **leaflets were** distributed. The nature of commuter traffic is such that nearly every LRT user could be contacted by just the one distribution as most use the facility on a daily basis as part of their routine.

To reinforce the message with those who received the notice, and notify those who were only casual lot users, a portable sign was erected at the entrance. Again, lightly visible, the sign advised of the problem. The portable, billboard format of sign was chosen as opposed to a permanent sign. It is felt that permanent signs (such as those an Northlands) eventually become "part of the landscape" and slowly lose their effectiveness. The temporary nature of the sign was meant to underscore the fact that this was (hopefully) a temporary situation, perhaps at its troublesome peak.

An informal survey of lot users revealed that the use of devices such as The Club" roughly doubled with two weeks of the police notice. While it is difficult to determine the impact on auto thefts, it did demonstrate a greater public awareness.

The introduction of these simple initiatives led to a dramatic decrease in property crimes. A few weeks later, a major constrction site arrived and the regular presence of workers appears to have made culprits less enthusiastic about this

location. Edmonton Transit now uses "light duty" employees to maintain a vigil over LRT lots. All these factors have combined to make LRT lots more secure for daytime users.