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Urban renewal key to inner city crime crackdown, say advocates

By [KATIE SCHNEIDER](#), SUN MEDIA

Crime invading inner city communities Inglewood and Ramsay can be prevented by attacking its root social causes and revitalizing undeveloped areas, the author of two reports said today.

Urban planners Lyons, Venini and Associates Ltd. and the Community Life Improvement Council released two Safe Streets-Safe City: Crime Prevention reports, one for Ramsay and one for Inglewood — two inner city communities plagued by their proximity to the crime-ridden East

Village, said Glenn Lyons, one of the authors of the documents.

Undeveloped areas left untended and located off the beaten path in both communities act as a magnet for people involved in the drug trade, he added.

“When you are close to the downtown, vacant land and under-utilized land can be misused,” he said.

“We’ve realized the nether lands along the railway are being misused.”

Lyons called for increased supervision in those hidden areas, as well as stepped-up enforcement and patrols along the city’s downtown river pathways — feeder areas for the criminal element that migrates into the two southeast communities.

Revitalizing adjacent neighbourhoods in the East Village and Victoria Park would also stem the flow, he added.

And since both Ramsay and Inglewood have high rates of homelessness stemming from mental illness, other potential solutions cited by Lyons include building more affordable and transitional housing, increasing minimum wage and AISH payments, and expanding drug treatment and detention.

However, crime rates in the two communities are not out of the ordinary, said Lyons, although he noted an exception was the brutal murder of 37-year-old Tara Landgraf last month in Ramsay.