

# Acton policing used in U.S.

Police in Clinton, Iowa hope what they are learning in Acton will help rid an area of their city of crime.

Key Clinton officers are visiting Halton to learn how the community policing program works and spending time with the community policing officer in each division.

This week, two lieutenants from Clinton are in Acton to learn first hand how the pro-active policing program works.

Last week Clinton officer Ric Martinez shadowed Acton Village

Constable Bill Riddle to see how the program works.

The program puts officers back on the beat and promotes police and citizen crime prevention and Iowa cops hope it will help them reclaim a violent riverfront neighbourhood overrun by drug lords and thieves.

"The police department and the Chief of Police realize that crime prevention is more effective than reacting after the fact," Martinez said in an interview last Tuesday.

"Clinton is setting up its first community policing program and nothing like this has ever been done before. This program in Acton and Halton are innovative and we can learn from them," Martinez said.

When told he would be Clinton's lone community policing officer Martinez said he was disappointed because he would lose his cruiser.

"Once I found out about the program I was excited to have been picked and now look forward to walking the beat next year. My biggest worry is getting a pair of comfortable shoes."



**COP CONFERENCE:** Officer Ric Martinez (left) of the Clinton, Iowa police force was one of four U.S. police to visited Acton last week to learn about the local community policing program which Clinton police want to implement. Martinez spent time with Acton's Village Constable Bill Riddle. (Elizabeth Kessler photo)

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# Vision needed for downtown Acton, Quinn advises BIA

**BY FRANCES NIBLOCK**  
 Acton merchants must do their homework and come up with a vision for development of the downtown.

That is the advice from Heritage Canada's John Quinn who recently toured Acton and spoke to a meeting of the Business Improvement Area (BIA).

"The BIA apparently wants to tie-in with the 300,000 visitors who come to shop at the olde Hide House and its satellite stores," Quinn said in an interview from his Cambridge office on Wednesday.

"Before I went to the meeting I was told that some BIA members wanted to re-do the streetscape to

spruce up the shopping area. I told them that is one of the last things I would do.

"The first thing to do is to get the BIA to agree on some common ground and set out a vision for the downtown that will describe the kind of place they want it to be in the future," Quinn said.

"Part of that description will tell us what the role of the downtown is in terms of economics and that would tell us whether that role is to meet the needs of the local people or attract visitors, or a bit of both. They need to agree on what they are trying to do. Most BIAs don't do this kind of planning but it is the first step. First you decide what you want and the second step is to check it against the reality of things in the marketplace and do your homework."

Quinn recommends the BIA also take careful stock of what Acton has to work with and then deal with the list of opportunities and lists that the factual analysis uncovers. "If getting the tourists to spend

more in town is the goal, then they need to cater to the kinds of things those people want and the over-all, image they are looking for when they visit a community. The olde Hide House features quality, stylish merchandise for people with higher incomes. If Acton merchants want to appeal to those buyers they need to develop restaurants, unique stores and entertainment-type opportunities that will interest and attract those visitors," Quinn explained.

Quinn also recommends that Acton highlight Fairy Lake. "It is a unique resource that is not well-known. It is a good tie to the heritage of Acton with its original use for the old tannery. It's not packaged with anything else and visitors don't know about it and aren't drawn to it."

Quinn says there will be problems if that is the direction the BIA takes. "Some of the businesses in the downtown now, by adjusting things a bit, may be more in tune

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Meanwhile, mix together 1-1/2 cup brown sugar, 1 cup walnuts, 2 eggs, 3 tbsp. flour, 1/2 tsp. baking powder and 1 tsp. vanilla.

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