

Date: March 16, 2020
File: 0100-01
To: City Manager
From: Brent Mundle, Superintendent Kelowna RCMP Detachment
Subject: RCMP Report to Council, Year End 2019

Recommendation:

That Council receive the RCMP Update report from the Superintendent, Kelowna RCMP Detachment dated March 16, 2020.

Purpose:

To provide Council with an update on the activities of the RCMP and on progress toward goals and outcomes in the 2016-2019 Crime Reduction Strategy.

Background:

The 2016-2019 Crime Reduction Strategy consisted of four main goals, each with multiple strategies within. The four goals included:

1. Taking a proactive approach to crime;
2. To work with partner agencies for more effective policing;
3. To maximize the effectiveness of resources using an intelligence-led model;
4. Leveraging effective communications

Taking a proactive approach to crime

Serving Kelowna's ever-growing community, now at 133,800 residents, the RCMP Kelowna detachment has a diverse number of specialized units to address the range of complex, dynamic and evolving crime and safety issues the community is experiencing.

In 2019, proactive policing initiatives have focused on targeting street level drug activity, foot patrols, traffic enforcement and crime prevention initiatives.

The Street Enforcement Unit, Target Team and Drug Unit continues to proactively target drug activity and prolific offenders: several investigations resulted in the seizure of cocaine, heroin, fentanyl & methamphetamines. The Target Team alone in the fourth quarter of 2019 conducted investigations which resulted in over 100 charges against several prolific offenders and the recovery of stolen vehicles, firearms and other property.

The Street Level Drug Trafficking Project initiated in May of 2019 has resulted in 113 charges against 73 individuals as of Jan. 11, 2020.

In summary, these teams are effectively targeting the removal of drugs, firearms and prolific and dangerous offenders from Kelowna streets through complex, coordinated and precise investigations.

The Serious Crime Unit teams' investigations have resulted in the recent arrest and charges in the 2019 Beauregard homicide case. In 2019 the team secured a conviction in the 2014 Ausman homicide, sentencing in the 2017 Forman triple homicide and an arrest in the 2018 Carriere homicide. These complex investigations require significant resourcing to meet charge thresholds and to move through the courts.

The downtown core and other business/shopping districts continue to be a focus for officers for crime reduction and to help residents feel safe. A new Foot Patrol Team established in October is staffed by two dedicated officers to enhance RCMP visibility downtown and address safety issues. An expansion of the team is planned in 2020 with the additional resources approved in the 2020 Budget. Complementing the foot patrols is the four-officer RCMP Bike Patrol teams, which will resume on April 1.

The Traffic Services unit conducted 342 impaired driving investigations during the year – these stemmed from a combination of proactive police checkpoints and complaint calls received. The unit also issued 582 tickets for distracted driving. Seven members of the Traffic Services unit made Team Alexa for 2019: a provincial program that recognizes police officers who make an extraordinary contribution to reducing the number of impaired drivers on our roadways. Six fatal collisions were investigated.

We all have a role to play in crime prevention and the proactive Crime Prevention Team has been engaging with the community for collaborative opportunities by: conducting 31 block watch presentations, 17 crime prevention presentations, 20 bike registration events and attending 85 business meetings in 2019. In addition, RCMP volunteers contributed more than 8,500 hours to support active RCMP and promote community safety in 2019, while the Auxiliary Constables worked 2,067 hours to assist with Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) presentations in schools, urban patrols, traffic control & community events.

To work with partner agencies for more effective policing

The RCMP continues to partner with the Child Advocacy Center (CAC) in Kelowna, which officially opened Jan. 20, 2020. There are four dedicated RCMP officers embedded in the centre who collaborate with other social and health support workers to support children in cases of child abuse and neglect (youth 10 and under).

The Kelowna Outreach and Support Table (KOaSt) consists of approximately 12 partner agencies who meet weekly to support individuals who are at immediate risk of crisis. In 2019: 67 referrals were made; 23 originating from the RCMP.

A second officer was added in October to expand the successful Police and Crisis Team (PACT) to seven days a week coverage. Most clients were between the ages of 25-64 with the youngest being 8 years old. The admission rate was 87.5% to Kelowna General Hospital (KGH). PACT diverted 176 clients from KGH to other community health and social support agencies

In partnership with the City of Kelowna, Downtown Kelowna Association and RCMP, a pilot CCTV registry program was launched to help save time in the initial stages of an investigation. The voluntary program specifies the location of business security cameras in the downtown core that officers can canvas to obtain video footage when a crime is suspected of having occurred.

The Central Okanagan Crime Stoppers received 1,341 tips in 2019 which led to 76 arrests, including 58 fugitives. Crime Stoppers publicizes crime maps, mug shots (on Global) as well as Kelowna's most wanted. They identified three suspects responsible for graffiti in the Bag a Tagger initiative, leading to two suspects currently facing charges.

The Prolific Offender Monitoring Program participants include Crown, Probation, Bail Supervisors, Parole, Corrections, the Target Team, and both the West Kelowna and Lake Country detachments. They meet once per month and currently monitor 39 prolific property crime & nuisance offenders.

In partnership with Crime Prevention and the John Howard Society, the Restorative Justice program saw an increase to 138 adult referrals in 2019, compared to 57 in 2018. Youth referrals also rose to 90 in 2019, compared to 65 in 2018. The program diverts youth and first-time offenders from the court system, helping reduce backlog. It also has shown success in reducing the likelihood of re-offending and redirecting the individual away from a path of crime.

The Kelowna detachment partnered with the City and multiple safety, health and social agencies during the December Emergency Winter Shelter implementation at two dedicated sites in Kelowna's North End. Dedicated resources facilitated the implementation, function and security at these emergency sites and they also supported our most vulnerable population group during the sub-zero temperature stretch.

To maximize the effectiveness of resources using an intelligence-led model

Kelowna continues to be one of Canada's fastest growing regions and is increasingly facing the pressures of social issues, crime and safety noted as citizens' top issues in the 2018 Citizen Survey.

While a bigger need exists to meet community challenges, the new positions added to the Community Safety Unit (CSU) in 2019 are a good start and include two permanent foot patrol officers who started in October and two additional CSU positions. The seven new RCMP Members approved in the 2019 budget have been hired and are in operation.

Kelowna Detachment Investigative Services has been re-organized to include a General Investigations Support Team (GIST), Sex Assault Unit and Robbery Unit.

A comprehensive review by the RCMP National Headquarters Sexual Assault Review Team (SART) of Kelowna sexual assault files from 2018 and 2019 was conducted last year. The review found that 29 files were incorrectly scored, and 12 files have been recommended for further investigation. The new Sex Assault Unit will be responsible for reviewing all sexual assault files to ensure all investigations are consistent, complete, accurately documented, trauma-informed and scored correctly. This team will provide Kelowna Detachment with in-house expertise in sexual assault and investigative best practices, including bias awareness. These members will work closely with community partners such as the Elizabeth Fry Society and Crown Counsel, our Domestic Violence Unit and the new Kelowna Child Advocacy Centre (CAC).

To alleviate the deployment of officers to non-emergency calls, the Online Crime Reporting (OCR) tool went live on June 26. There were 322 incidents reported to the OCR in 2019. OCR allows reporting of non-emergency complaints to be made online, rather than deploying an officer. The community can access the OCR via the RCMP website, at kelowna.ca/police and is a quick access button on the kelowna.ca homepage. The goal for 2020 is to increase public awareness and use of the OCR tool.

The Critical Incident Stress Management Team (CISM) provides peer support and assistance with critical incident debriefs: 20 RCMP & Municipal staff were trained last fall and will be provided ASSIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Training).

CompStat meetings with partners and stakeholders are held monthly and highlight criminally active offenders for targeted enforcement. Identified offenders are assigned to specific units and/or general duty members for investigation, which results in targeted individuals being apprehended at a higher rate.

Leveraging effective communications

The new Kelowna detachment Media Relations Officer, Cpl. Jocelyn Noseworthy took over MRO duties after Cpl. Jesse O'Donaghey accepted a position at Southeast District. Kelowna produced 211 media releases in 2019. Proactive releases included special events, fraud awareness, and traffic safety.

Throughout the last quarter of 2019, officers participated in a variety of community events including: Bring Your Kids to Work Day, Christmas Cheer Campaign, Salvation Army Christmas Drive, a charity volleyball game with OKM, Cram the Cruiser, and Remembrance Day Celebrations throughout the Southeast District.

Upcoming events in 2020 include: Police Motorcycle User Course, Slow Down Move Over Campaign, the RCMP Jean MInguay Memorial Youth Academy and the Canadian Police Canine Association Competition.

Internal Circulation:

S. Jackson, Police Services Manager
C. Cornock, Crime Prevention Supervisor
D. Caul, Director of Community Safety
A. Bazett, Communications Consultant
T. Wilson, Media Relations Manager

Considerations not applicable to this report:

Legal/Statutory Authority:

Legal/Statutory Procedural Requirements:

Existing Policy:

Financial/Budgetary Considerations:

Personnel Implications :

External Agency/Public Comments:

Communications Comments:

Alternate Recommendation:

Submitted by:

B. Mundle, Superintendent Kelowna RCMP Detachment

Approved for inclusion:



Joe Creron, Deputy City Manager, Operations