

# Report to Council



**Date:** June 22, 2020  
**To:** Council  
**From:** City Manager  
**Subject:** RCMP Report to Council  
**Department:** Human Resources & Community Safety

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## **Recommendation:**

That Council receive the RCMP Update report from the Superintendent, Kelowna RCMP Detachment dated June 22, 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 City's 2016 – 2019 Crime Reduction Strategy and investments in police funding focus on directly addressing the concerns of residents and safety in Kelowna. In the 2019 statistically significant public safety survey, the primary reason cited by residents for rating their neighbourhood as unsafe is the presence of people without homes and open drug use. Citywide, residents think the most important crime-related problems are breaking and entering/property crimes and drug use. RCMP units including the Community Safety Unit, foot and bike patrols work to be a visible presence in business areas and neighbourhoods to reassure residents as well as address crime proactively. .

The 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**

The Kelowna RCMP 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 2020, our proactive policing initiatives have continued to focus on enhanced visibility, problem residences, targeting street level drug activity, traffic enforcement and crime prevention initiatives. In some instances, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, we've had to adjust our approaches to better manage issues given the changing environment.

The Community Safety Unit has continued being a visible presence in our business areas and addressing problem residences in local neighborhoods.

Our new Foot Patrol Team established in October is staffed by two dedicated officers to enhance RCMP visibility and address safety issues. Their regular foot beat includes patrols in the Downtown, Rutland, Pandosy and other business districts within the city. The team will be expanded to four dedicated officers later this year allowing for seven day a week coverage. This increase in foot patrol officers is a direct result of the additional resources approved in the 2020 Budget. Our four officer RCMP Bike Patrol team resumed operations April 1st. They have been a visible presence in our parks, trails and business areas.

In late April, the Community Safety Unit commenced deploying our bait bike to combat bike theft. These efforts have resulted in seven thefts of the bait bike and subsequent charge recommendations forwarded to Crown Council.

Since March, the Community Safety Unit has investigated and executed search warrants at five residences located in the Downtown, Rutland and Lower Mission neighborhoods. These investigations have recovered drugs, firearms, and stolen property including bicycles.

Enhanced Policing Shifts will be continuing three evenings a week in the downtown. These will assist in ensuring visible police presence during the expanded retail and hospitality services offered on Bernard Avenue this summer. Bike and Foot patrol teams have adjusted their shift pattern to provide more early evening coverage.

Our Street Enforcement, Target Team and Drug Units continue to proactively target drug activity and prolific offenders. They have completed investigations targeting auto thieves resulting in the recovery of stolen vehicles and executed search warrants related to drug and firearms trafficking.

The Traffic Services Unit conducted 54 Provincial & Criminal Code impaired driving investigations from March 1 – June 1 of 2020. In this same period, 571 tickets and 309 warnings were issued.

### **To work with partner agencies for more effective policing**

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 meet once per month. Regular meetings have been interrupted by COVID-19, however, exchange of information has continued between agencies. Meetings resumed on June 17.

Criminality and homelessness are not one and the same. RCMP use an enforcement approach when necessary but officers also conduct outreach daily to connect people with the services they need. Often situations are de-escalated and redirected to support services. The RCMP partners with social development groups to address both sides of the issue, with the goal of protecting the most vulnerable, the public and businesses from those involved in criminal activity.

The Kelowna Outreach and Support Table (KOaSt) consists of approximately twelve partner agencies who meet weekly to support individuals who are at immediate risk of crisis. Meetings were suspended during COVID for six weeks with teleconferences commencing on April 28. Since that time, five referrals have been made to the table.

The Police and Crisis Team (PACT) has been involved in multiple consultations/interventions/assessments: 85 March / 121 April / 107 May, plus 22 MHA Apprehensions. The increased numbers observed in April and May are consistent with springtime trends.

In partnership with Crime Prevention and the John Howard Society, the Restorative Justice program has seen 31 youth referrals and 53 adult referrals to date in 2020.

#### **To maximize the effectiveness of resourcing using an intelligence led model**

Kelowna Detachment will be implementing the eleven new positions approved by Council in the 2020 Budget later this year. The new resources will be dedicated to the Community Safety Unit including additional foot and patrol officers. One position will be used to enhance the existing School Resource Officer program and four will go to the General Investigation Support Team.

The Griffiths Resource Report has been reviewed. We are currently preparing responses to the various recommendations and developing a suggested implementation plan for future positions.

CompStat meetings with partners and stakeholders are held monthly and highlight criminally active offenders for targeted enforcement. During April and May formal meetings were suspended. Detachment Crime Analysts continued to prepare and disseminate the monthly reports providing intelligence on active offenders to our investigators. This resulted in focused enforcement on a small group of active property crime offenders resulting in multiple criminal charges.

Employee wellness has been a continued focus for the Detachment. The Detachment Wellness Group was successful in receiving a Civil Forfeiture Grant to provide further training in the area of Critical Incident Stress Management to our employees. It is anticipated that this training will be arranged this fall after the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions.

#### **Leveraging effective communications**

Our Media Relations Officer and Community Safety Officer have completed several proactive releases educating the public on a variety of topics including: Bike Theft Prevention, Traffic Safety, and Fraud Friday and Traffic Tuesday Tips.

Unfortunately, several of our upcoming community related events including the Canadian Police Canine Association Competition have been cancelled due to COVID-19 imposed restrictions.

## **Statistics**

Early this year we observed an increase in property related crime compared to previous year comparisons. A decline in offences commenced in early March. It is believed that this is a result of the apprehension of a small group of property offenders who were very active in the early part of the year. It is also felt that COVID-19 restrictions imposed in March contributed to the decrease.

Persons crimes, primarily in the area of common assault, also trended higher in the early part of this year compared to the previous year. Numbers are currently returning to rates comparable with the previous year. This area will be carefully monitored as the year progresses. An increase in assault files has been noted within the greater RCMP Southeast District year to date.

### **Internal Circulation:**

Police Services  
Community Safety  
Communications

### **Considerations applicable to this report:**

Legal/Statutory Authority:  
Legal/Statutory Procedural Requirements:  
Existing Policy:  
Financial/Budgetary Considerations:  
External Agency/Public Comments:  
Communications Comments:

**Submitted by:** B. Mundle, Superintendent Kelowna RCMP Detachment

**Approved by:** S. Leatherdale, Divisional Director, Corporate & Protective Services

Attachment: 1. PowerPoint

cc: S. Jackson, Police Services Manager  
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