Report to Council

City of
Kelowna

Date: March 11, 2024

To: Council

From: City Manager

Subject: RCMP 2023 Year End Report

Department: RCMP Superintendent

Recommendation:

THAT Council receive the RCMP 2023 Year End Report from the Officer in Charge, Kelowna RCMP Detachment, dated March 11, 2024.

Purpose:

To present Council with a year-end update based on 2023-year end, public safety and crime data.

Background:

In spring 2023, City Council established Crime & Safety among its 2023-2026 priorities. To ensure alignment, Kelowna RCMP updated and presented its 2024-2026 Strategic Plan in fall 2023, which includes the following commitments:

- Target recurring property theft;
- Be present in districts and neighbourhoods to deter crime and improve road safety; and
- Promote the right providers for mental health and addictions care and housing needs.

The Kelowna RCMP is committed to providing timely information about current and emergent policing issues and outcomes. This Report offers a general overview and analysis of select crime data in Kelowna between January 1, 2023 and December 31, 2023.

In 2023, Kelowna RCMP generated nearly 57,000 files. Kelowna detachment experiences relatively higher calls for service, Criminal Code of Canada offences, and officer caseloads compared to similar-size communities across the province. The addition of 16 police officers in Budget 2024 will position the detachment to keep pace with annual population growth as well as start to address changes in legislation, caselaw and respond to changing social conditions. It is acknowledged that there is a collective interest to shift incrementally from reactive to more proactive, community-based, policing.

In service to this objective, we are improving efficiency and effectiveness through intelligence-led policing, operational excellence initiatives, and innovation. With the integration of more data-led

analysis, hot spot patrols, and Repeat Offender Management programming in 2023, we are having a positive impact. As a detachment comprised of more than 300 policing professionals, sworn and civilian, our commitment to public safety and to serving with excellence is unwavering.

Trends & Themes:

Data indicates a 15% reduction in overall property crime compared to 2022 and 16% compared to 2021. Meanwhile, reported persons offences increased 5% compared to 2022 and 2% compared to 2021.

Files Generated: Downtown & Rutland

Visible and responsive policing Downtown and in Rutland is an established priority for Kelowna RCMP. In 2023, 20% fewer files were generated in the Downtown area while 31% more files were generated in the Rutland area, compared to 2022.

Caution is urged in the interpretation of this data as it does not reflect a direct and commensurate decrease / increase in actual crime. The changes can be attributed to multiple factors including the purposeful shifting of police resources from Downtown to Rutland. By having additional police resources on the ground, our members generated additional files in the Rutland area given their proximity to incidents coupled with the public's support in reporting.

Property Offences Overall

In 2023, significant improvement in relation to some property offences drove an overall decline of 15% compared to 2022. However, shoplifting continued to increase; 7% from 2022 and 26% from 2021. Similarly, arson offences increased each of the last two years; 7% from 2023 and 40% from 2021.

Reported Thefts

Last year, Kelowna observed a 39% decrease in auto theft, 29% decrease in theft from vehicle, and 40% decrease in bike theft compared to 2022. Crime data is complex, and it is difficult to pinpoint the drivers for these positive changes. However, research indicates that repeat offenders, a small facet of our community, commit a disproportionate number of crimes and Kelowna RCMP is, increasingly and relentlessly, focused on repeat offenders.

Over the past year, Kelowna RCMP implemented the Provincial Repeat Violent Offending Intervention Initiative and initiated a made-for-Kelowna Repeat *Property* Offender Management Program. The notable reductions in 2023 may indicate that we are on the right path. By continuing to target identified repeat offenders, we will optimistically see lower incidence of these crime types in 2024.

Break & Enters

In 2023, there were 482 Break & Enter (Business) compared to 867 incidents in 2022. Noteworthy, the number of reported Break and Enters (Business) declined regionally and provincially in 2023, though Kelowna experienced a significantly greater reduction:

- Kelowna   44% ↓
- South East District   20% ↓
- BC   8% ↓

Conversely, Kelowna experienced a 10% increase in reported Break & Enter (Residential) in 2023 compared to 2022, although figures were still lower than 2021. Kelowna RCMP acknowledges the impact of property crime on our business owners and residents. Using data-led enforcement initiatives, and strategies targeting repeat offenders, we will continue to proactively engage on this issue. Given the integral role of citizens in crime prevention, the RCMP and City Community Safety Department launched a Community Safety Toolkit and Business Safety Toolkit in 2023.

Fraud
In 2023, reported frauds increased 41%, driven by tap fraud, communication scams, and online scams. Our team prioritizes these files with added educational seminars delivered to the community. To learn more about this rapidly escalating issue, we encourage the public and media to visit the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre as the national leader in crime prevention, education and technology.

Persons Offences Overall:
Overall, reported persons offences increased marginally over the last two years, although there are notable changes with certain categories. While reported sex offences and violent assaults increased 27% and 16%, respectively, robberies declined 26% compared to 2022.

Traffic
Increased "traffic safety presence" is identified among City's Council's 2023-2026 priorities. The Kelowna RCMP is committed to working in coordination with the City and the Province to enhance education, enforcement, and engineering toward safer roads. In 2023, Kelowna RCMP engaged in more proactive blitzes, augmented by news releases, to increase driver awareness and change drive behaviour; particularly targeting texting while driving, speeding, and impaired driving.

In response to Council's Priority, additional traffic related metrics were adopted in 2023 and are reflected in this Report. "Interactions" will now be reported which include a combination of Motor Vehicle Act tickets and warnings issued within the city. Further, a breakdown of different collision categories is now displayed. In 2023, there was a baseline of 6,291 "traffic interactions", collisions – property decreased 6%, collisions – injury increased 4%, while four people tragically died in motor vehicle crashes, compared to eight in 2022.

2023 Metrics
The following includes standardized indicators from the Canadian Police Performance Metrics Framework. All indicators relate to the City of Kelowna:

Police Capacity & Response	2021	2022	2023	% Change (since 2022)
Total Files Generated	63,888	60,181	56,870	-6%
Total Files Generated from Downtown area	7,394	9,808	7,887	-20%
Total Files Generated from Rutland area	-	4,095	5,374	31%
Files Generated Priority 1 & 2	22,415	20,674	19,121	-8%

Response Time for Priority 1 Calls (in minutes)	8.3	8.1	8.1	0%
Response Time for Priority 2 Calls (in minutes)	10.3	10.2	10.0	-2%
Property Offences	**11396**	**11261**	**9618**	**-15%**
Auto Theft	521	561	344	-39%
Theft from Motor Vehicle	2474	2130	1505	-29%
Break & Enter – Business	679	867	482	-44%
Shoplifting	1412	1653	1776	7%
Break & Enter – Residential	296	237	261	10%
Bike Theft	520	580	350	-40%
Fraud	1251	686	970	41%
Mischief	2254	1779	1769	-1%
Arson	115	149	160	7%
Persons Offences	**3272**	**3191**	**3336**	**5%**
Assault (Common)	1271	1189	1267	7%
Intimate Partner Violence	944	743	811	9%
Sex Offences[vii]	177	181	230	27%
Robbery	76	108	80	-26%
Assault Cause Bodily Harm/ Assault with Weapon	410	425	494	16%
Traffic Safety				
Traffic Interactions	-	-	6291	-
Collisions – Property	1614	1587	1490	-6%
Collisions – Injury	332	333	345	4%
Collisions – Fatal	7	8	4	-50%
Relevant Social Indicators (reflecting policing complexity in Kelowna)				
Files Generated with Mental Health Component	3104	2398	3073	28%
Files Generated MHA Apprehensions	599	636	726	14%
Files Generated Overdose	31	109	177	62%

Conclusion:
The metrics and related data provided within this report are continuously monitored and used by the RCMP to inform, through evidence-based analysis, our decisions and responses to crime and public safety in Kelowna; including that of advocacy for system changes at the Provincial and National levels. The Kelowna RCMP Officer in Charge (OIC) continues to drive transformative change with a focus on sustainable workloads, appropriate staffing levels, and wellness of all members of Kelowna Detachment. By taking care of our people, increasingly using intelligence and data-led targeted enforcement to deploy finite resources, the Kelowna RCMP is "Policing for Greater Impact" in our community.

Internal Circulation:
Community Safety Department
Communications Department

Considerations not applicable to this report:
Legal/Statutory Authority:
Legal/Statutory Procedural Requirements:
Existing Policy:
Financial/Budgetary Considerations:
Consultation and Engagement:
Communications Comments:

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