

Report to Council



Date: May 27, 2024
To: Council
From: Mayor's Task Force on Crime Reduction
Subject: Recommendations for Community-Driven Initiatives to Reduce Crime
Department: Office of the City Clerk

Recommendation:

THAT Council receives, for information, the report from the Mayor's Task Force on Crime Reduction dated May 27, 2024, with respect to recommendations for community-driven initiatives to reduce crime in Kelowna;

AND THAT Council accepts the recommendations of the Mayor's Task Force on Crime Reduction, as outlined in the report dated May 27, 2024;

AND THAT Council directs staff to report back to Council on the costs and implications of implementing the Task Force's recommendations, as appropriate.

Purpose:

To accept the recommendations of the Mayor's Task Force on Crime Reduction and advance implementation.

Background:

The Mayor's Task Force on Crime Reduction was established on June 5, 2023. The Task Force's Terms of Reference provide for a 13-member body, chaired by the Mayor, with a mandate to develop actionable recommendations to Council focusing on the following objectives:

- Reduce crime and increase sense of safety in the community;
- Engage the public in crime prevention;
- Increase integration between all stakeholders involved in crime reduction; and
- Improve public awareness around the reality and perceptions of crime through the use of data and evidence-based research.

The Task Force was established with an initial term of 12-months, with the option of extension. The Task Force held its first meeting on July 12 and has since met nine times.

Discussion:

Following an orientation session, the Task Force followed a process of ideation, brainstorming, vetting and validation. Through its discussions, the Task Force agreed to focus on six overarching priorities:

1. Additional Housing Resources
2. Complete Care Housing
3. Neighbourhood Safety Initiatives
4. Repeat Offending
5. Community Training
6. Policing Presence

Members of the Task Force proposed ideas for specific projects and strategies to advance these priorities. As part of this process, the Task Force considered City initiatives and advocacy currently underway. Finally, the Task Force identified and prioritized the most impactful and actionable proposals with a vision to bring forward a balanced approach of tactical, strategic and aspirational recommendations that serve to:

- Enhance City efforts and deliver results for residents, neighbourhoods, and businesses, alike;
- Increase and enable resident and business participation in effective crime reduction strategies;
- Explore new partnerships locally and regionally;
- Advance comprehensive housing, health, and enforcement-based approaches; and
- Focus advocacy efforts on provincial and federal matters of importance to our community.

Based on these considerations, the Task Force agreed on the following list of final recommendations:

1. Enhance Business Improvement Area (BIA) community safety programs

- 1.1 Support and enable BIA Ambassador/On-Call Programs.
- 1.2 Expand the Kelowna Gospel Mission Business Coaching Workshops.
- 1.3 Increase the use of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) through BIA Ambassadors and audits for business.
- 1.4 Renew and expand the Business CCTV Registry Program.
- 1.5 Increase RCMP police visibility in business districts, particularly foot patrol during peak periods.
- 1.6 Enhance support (i.e., funding advocacy and volunteerism) for restorative justice programs, as well as the use of restorative justice by police and businesses.

2. Increase resident engagement and education in crime prevention/reduction

- 2.1 **Expand community programs:** Increase community participation in the City's Block Connector Program, improve the ability of neighborhood associations to focus on community safety, explore a residential CCTV Registry Program, and support the RCMP to re-establish their Auxiliary Police and Speed Watch Programs.
- 2.2 **Promote CPTED principles:** Increase resident accessibility to, and use of, CPTED principles through neighborhood associations, Block Connectors, and building stratas.

3. Increase support for treatment and recovery

- 3.1 Expand City social development grant programs to support existing treatment and recovery programs; and
- 3.2 Establish an incentive program that encourages and enables the development of treatment

and recovery facilities.

4. **Partner with regional and provincial government and non-government organizations to establish** Sobering & Assessment Centres (youth and adult) providing temporary sheltering (i.e., <24 hours) in a non-police-based site for people experiencing intoxication to enable timely pathways to care and wellness.
5. **Through partnerships, explore the creation of a full-continuum multi-care site** offering co-located and culturally responsive social, health, housing, and employment supports to transition individuals in need from streets to self-sustainability.
6. **Advocate for continued follow-through on the 2022 Provincial Government Report, "[Transforming Policing and Community Safety in BC](#)",** specifically recommendations enabling a tiered response to community concerns by different categories of police and public safety professionals.
7. **Continue to advocate for measures that address repeat (property) offending and increase public confidence in the justice system**
 - 7.1 Follow-through on the 2022 Provincial Government Report, "[A Rapid Investigation into Repeat Offending and Random Stranger Violence in BC](#)", including an interior region site like Redfish Healing Centre for Mental Health & Addiction for patients with complex mental health and substance use needs (Recommendation 5).
 - 7.2 Significantly more BC Prosecution Service Crown Counsel in the Kelowna office; and
 - 7.3 More effective bail outcomes.

Conclusion:

The Task Force is recommending a set of actionable and aspirational initiatives to reduce crime and improve community well-being immediately, and into the future. Should Council endorse the recommendations, staff would be directed to begin implementation of tactical recommendations achievable within existing budget targets, and to otherwise investigate implementation costs and return to Council for other, as appropriate. It is expected that the Task Force be extended and reconvene in fall 2024 to review progress made.

Considerations applicable to this report:

Financial/Budgetary Considerations:

Staff will explore financial implications of the recommendations that are not within existing budgets and report back to Council, as appropriate.

Considerations not applicable to this report:

Existing Policy:

Legal/Statutory Authority:

Legal/Statutory Procedural Requirements:

External Agency/Public Comments:

Communications Comments:

Submitted by:

Mayor Dyas, Chair, Mayor's Task Force on Crime Reduction

cc:

L. Bentley, City Clerk

D. Caul, Community Safety Director

D. Edstrom, Divisional Director, Partnership & Investments

J. Gabriel, Divisional Director, Active Living & Culture

S. Leatherdale, Divisional Director, Corporate & Protective Services