



City of Kelowna

Police Service Model Review

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Our role is advisory only. The City of Kelowna is responsible for all management decisions and functions related to this engagement, including evaluating the adequacy of the scope of Services, maintaining internal controls, and determining whether and how to implement any recommendations. The City is also responsible for any outcomes resulting from the use of this Report.

Our work was limited to the procedures and analysis described herein and is based solely on information made available to us as of February 9, 2026. Changes in circumstances after this date may affect our findings.

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How to use this report

This report is designed to provide a summary of key findings of the Kelowna Police Service Model Review to support City Council, City leadership and community stakeholders in evaluating Kelowna's policing model options.

It brings together current-state analysis, comparative assessments, financial modelling, and insights from engagement to provide an evidence-based examination of the trade-offs between a contract policing model and a municipal policing model. Each section can be read independently, but together they form a comprehensive evidence-base to inform long-term decision-making about policing in Kelowna.

The report does not make a recommendation; rather, it seeks to compare and evaluate the current contract policing model and a municipal policing model using a consistent evaluation framework.

Over the past several years, the City has taken steps to improve oversight and alignment of RCMP services with local priorities, including establishing performance reporting frameworks and de-regionalizing the detachment to increase local visibility into operations.

In this context of Kelowna's unique characteristics and policing needs and with RCMP contracts expiring in 2032, Council has directed a comprehensive review to assess the strengths, limitations, risks, and financial implications associated with both continuing under the RCMP model and transitioning to a municipal police service.

This report provides the foundation for that assessment.

Acknowledgements

The project team would like to formally acknowledge the contributions of the following individuals who served as special contributors to this review:

- W.M. (Bill) Sweeney, O.O.M., MStJ, RCMP Sr. Deputy Commissioner (Retired)
- Doug LePard, O.O.M., M.A., Police Chief (Retired)
- Curt Griffiths, Professor Emeritus, School of Criminology, Simon Fraser University and Associate Faculty Member, Royal Roads University

Their experience, subject-matter expertise, and professional insights meaningfully informed the analysis and strengthened the overall quality of the work. We are grateful for the time, perspective, significant effort, and thoughtful input they provided throughout the engagement.



Background and purpose

Background

The City of Kelowna

Kelowna is one of the fastest-growing cities in Canada, with rising complexity in public safety demands, including increased mental-health-related calls, persistent property crime challenges, and significant seasonal population fluctuations.

Kelowna is the largest urban centre in the Okanagan and the third-largest city in British Columbia outside the Lower Mainland. The city anchors a regional population of more than 225,000 residents and supports surrounding municipalities including West Kelowna, Lake Country, Peachland, and several unincorporated and First Nations communities. This regional role shapes Kelowna's public safety landscape. Residents, businesses, service agencies, tourists, and commuters from across the valley rely on Kelowna's infrastructure, hospitals, nightlife, and commercial districts, creating policing pressures that extend well beyond its base population.

Annually, the city welcomes approximately 2 million visitors, with nearly half arriving during the summer months. This influx is uncommon among comparably sized Canadian municipalities and alongside Kelowna's role as a service hub for the Central Okanagan, drives increased usage and need of City services – including policing.

The City is currently served by the Kelowna RCMP detachment under the Municipal Police Unit Agreement, a long-standing model used by more than 150 municipalities across Canada.

Through this model, Kelowna benefits from access to federal and provincial policing resources but also operates within a governance structure where key operational and financial decisions are made outside the municipality.

Historically, Kelowna has also operated as the regional “hub” for RCMP policing across the Central Okanagan, providing shared leadership, administrative functions, specialized units, and forensic services to neighbouring communities through a regionalized deployment model.

As the region's population and policing needs intensified, this model has been re-evaluated and Kelowna is currently in the process of de-regionalizing some elements to increase local control, visibility into costs and alignment of policing resources with local priorities. While the City of Kelowna now operates as a standalone detachment, several specialized RCMP services continue to be shared regionally through cost-sharing or provincial arrangements.

Purpose of this report

The purpose of this review is to provide an objective, evidence-based assessment of Kelowna's current RCMP contract policing model and to provide a comparison of the strengths and challenges of contract and municipal policing models within Kelowna's context.

As Kelowna continues to grow and policing demands evolve, the City requires a clear understanding of how each model supports service delivery, aligns with community expectations and affects financial sustainability. This review offers a comparison between a contract and municipal policing model across:

- Governance
- Operations and resources
- Community responsiveness
- Cost/value-for-money

It also discusses police model transition considerations and incorporates perspectives from community members, City staff and RCMP members to ensure that the analysis reflects both lived experience and operational reality.



Approach and findings

Examining Kelowna’s current contract policing model and municipal policing options is timely given increasingly complex public safety needs, policing’s status as the City’s largest tax-funded service, and the RCMP contract expiring in 2032. This review provides an objective comparison of the two models, drawing on operational data, financial analysis, jurisdictional research, and engagement with residents, community organizations, City Council, RCMP membership, and City staff.

While it does not recommend a policing model for Kelowna, it outlines the strengths, limitations, and tradeoffs of both models.

Report structure and evaluation approach

The report is structured around major sections which include:

- 1) **“What we heard” Stakeholder Engagement** - provides community and City leadership perspectives and lived experiences related to public safety and policing in Kelowna.
- 2) **Current State Assessment** - establishes the baseline of Kelowna’s policing performance, crime trends and deployment realities.
- 3) **Comparative Analysis** – provides an assessment and comparison of the current contract policing model and a municipal policing model in Kelowna’s context against a defined evaluation framework.

The evaluation framework used in this report compares the RCMP contract model and a conceptual municipal police service model across five pillars. These pillars are intended to reflect the priorities identified by Council, City leadership, and community stakeholders.

- 1 Governance & accountability**
How each model enables local influence over priorities, budgeting, leadership selection, performance monitoring, and oversight of officer conduct.
- 2 Operations & resources**
Differences in staffing capacity, deployment models, specialized services, technology, communications/dispatch, and overall ability to meet Kelowna’s operational needs.
- 3 Community responsiveness**
How effectively each model connects with the community, adapts to emerging needs, supports innovation, and reflects Kelowna’s cultural and demographic context.

4

Financial cost & value for money

Comparative cost structures, long term sustainability, cost growth trends, and the degree to which each model delivers value aligned with community outcomes.

5

Other considerations

Transition implications, risks, timelines, cost drivers, and lessons learned from other Canadian jurisdictions considering or undertaking policing transitions.

Key findings

Each section provides analysis, data and case studies to provide an evidence-informed evaluation for consideration of the City of Kelowna. Each section includes key findings and implications for Kelowna that are supported by the evidence presented.

What we Heard: Stakeholder engagement

From community members

- Broader systemic challenges are top of mind for community members. Investments into health and social programs, alongside justice reforms, are considered longer-term solutions to the community safety challenges facing Kelowna.
- Key priorities for evaluating the effectiveness of a policing model are its ability to achieve community safety outcomes, be tailored to community needs, and integrate with mental health and social services.
- Community engagement highlighted a strong desire for more visible, locally connected policing and clearer communication. Residents expressed concerns about resource levels, transparency, follow-up, and responsiveness.
- Community members are looking for further information, analysis, planning and consultation to inform their sentiments around a policing model transition.

From City staff

- City staff highlighted key benefits of the current model including access to the specialized services and surge capacity, which enable the City to address its complex crime and scale up resources quickly when needed.

- Significant challenges include budget control and transparency, governance decisions and the ability of the RCMP to innovate and adapt to a changing technology landscape.
- City staff noted that the RCMP has generally been slow to adopt new technologies, innovations and process improvements and this limits the City's ability to advance agile, data-driven policing and align policing services with municipal expectations for modernization
- City staff underscored the importance of closer alignment between policing, municipal priorities, and City service delivery. Effective collaboration, timely access to information, and the ability to jointly plan and adapt services are critical to responding to evolving community safety needs and advancing integrated, data-informed approaches.

Current state assessment

- **RCMP's organizational structure is relatively rigid, limiting its ability to tailor or expand functions to better meet community needs.** For example, cost sharing administrative functions with the City and developing specialized local units (like liaison teams) are more difficult.
- **The RCMP Officer in Charge (OIC) does not have the same level of authority or ability to act independently** in the RCMP contract model without provincial or federal approvals. This is a lesser degree of decision-making authority than what is typical in municipal police services for a Chief of Police.
- **Overall call volumes and priority levels for calls for service are decreasing.** Officers responded to fewer calls in general despite increasing population growth; between 2021-2024 calls for service decreased ~5%.
- **The nature of these calls also changed to include a decreasing proportion of high priority calls for service and an increasing number of non-urgent, non-criminal social disorder and wellness-related calls for service.** Approximately 62% of calls for service were Priority 3 or 4 (low urgency) (2021-2024).
- **Priority 4 (low urgency, low risk) calls for service were the fastest growing priority level,** growing while priority 1, 2 and 3 calls for service declined 5-8% (2021-2024).
- **Approximately 1 in 3 calls received were mental health and/or social-disorder related calls.** This trend, alongside a growing share of low-priority calls and Kelowna's high non-violent crime rate, indicates that a significant portion of Kelowna's police workload

could be effectively handled by non-sworn responders which would reduce sworn member workload and provide support better aligned to individual and community needs while reducing costs.

- **Kelowna RCMP has maintained strong response times compared to peers,** indicating that its deployment model is effective for Kelowna’s needs.

Comparative analysis

Pillar 1: Governance and accountability

Comparative analysis

Contract model	Municipal model	Implications for Kelowna
1. Priority setting and strategic oversight		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Province / RCMP set priorities; council priorities must align. • RCMP sets standard policies and procedures federally. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board sets local priorities, goals and policies. • Board defines policies and service standards. 	<p>In a municipal model, priorities are set locally with direct citizen and community input through both the Police Services Board and City Council. This process embeds consultation between the City, Chief and Police Services Board, offering more opportunity to reflect local needs and provide oversight for delivering on those priorities.</p>
2. Financial oversight and budgeting		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City approves budget but has limited insight and control of cost drivers. • RCMP is liable and responsible for insurance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board and Chief develop budget together based on City needs; City approves budget. • City is liable and responsible for insurance. 	<p>A municipal model increases the City’s oversight and the level of transparency of its largest tax funded expense.</p> <p>The City has increased liability and insurance exposure currently held by the RCMP.</p>
3. Performance management		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the federal level, RCMP oversees performance of Officer In Charge and all detachment staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board oversees performance of the Chief; Chief oversees performance of all staff. 	<p>In a municipal model, the Board manages performance of the Chief and can remove them for non-performance. There is strengthened local oversight, accountability and performance</p>

- City must have approval of OIC to review operational effectiveness.

- Board can authorize independent review of operational effectiveness.

management of the police service and its ability to achieve public safety outcomes.

Municipal policing models empower local police leadership to address operational effectiveness and find opportunities to enhance service delivery and consistently meet community needs.

4. Leadership selection and removal

- RCMP oversees performance and has final say in the selection and removal of OIC.
- OIC candidates come from a pool of RCMP employees.

- Police Board oversees selection and removal of the Chief.
- Chief candidates come from any police service in Canada.

A municipal model has access to a broader pool of candidates, which can support improved **candidate quality**. It also **prevents unilateral transfers**, which supports greater continuity of leadership and institutional knowledge.

5. Complaints management and civilian oversight

- Police conduct complaints are handled federally.
- Serious harm/death incidents are investigated independently by the IIO.

- Police conduct complaints are handled provincially
- Serious harm/death incidents are also investigated independently by the IIO.

A municipal model **provides increased opportunity to hold police accountable for their actions at the local level**. Complaints are handled provincially vs. federally, providing the potential to strengthen public trust in the police.

Key implications for the City of Kelowna

- **Local oversight and accountability are strengthened in a municipal policing model.** The contract policing model is governed primarily by the Federal Government and through contractual agreements. The City has very limited local oversight or involvement in police governance. In a municipal model, governance and oversight shift to the local level with a much higher degree of direct community involvement and oversight of policing through the role of the Police Services Board.
- **In a municipal model, role of Council shifts rather than expands.** For instance, while offering greater budget influence, it has less direct involvement in setting priorities, which becomes the responsibility of the Police Board. These priorities are set locally by the Police Services Board and are not in competition with provincial and federal policing priorities.

- **In the current contract model, the City funds the police service but has very limited influence, control or oversight** into how the budget is spent, what outcomes are provided for dollars used and how costs can be allocated to strategically reduce impacts to taxpayers. The difference is that decisions about how police budget is spent and the outcomes are driven by a local police board with greater local oversight.
- **A municipal policing model provides access to a deeper and broader pool of leadership candidates** which can allow for candidates with deeper qualification and experience levels to compete to be the Chief of police, which can in turn impact the performance of the department.
- **Oversight and accountability to the local community is significantly strengthened in a municipal model through a local Police Services Board.** This includes performance management of the Chief and the policing service in its operational efficiency, effectiveness and the outcomes it realizes for community safety priorities. While Police Services Boards do strengthen local oversight, they are an additional cost and add administrative burden to the City to run.

Pillar 2: Operations and resources

Comparative analysis

Contract model	Municipal model	Implications for Kelowna
1. Workforce capacity		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High attrition and vacancy rates impacts staffing continuity. • Staffing controlled nationally; Kelowna has limited ability to recruit/retain locally. • Overtime used to meet workload needs; less operationally efficient. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attrition and vacancy rates typically much lower. • Local hiring, promotion and retention; officers generally stay long term. • More control over staffing models and workforce planning. 	<p>A municipal model gives direct control over hiring and retention, helping reduce long-standing vacancy and turnover challenges. This would likely support more stable staffing levels, less overtime pressure and greater continuity in service delivery and connectedness to the community.</p> <p>Municipal policing models do not face the same degree of challenge in recruitment and retention that the RCMP do.</p>

2. Operating model / service delivery approach

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to national specialized services (ERT, Air Services, Explosives Disposal Unit) at no added cost. • Surge capacity is valuable but expensive; could be mitigated to an extent by lower vacancies and attrition. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must fund specialized units directly or create partnerships/integrated teams. • Surge capacity is the responsibility of the service but the need for large surge can be offset by lower vacancy rates and hiring FTE rather than paying overtime rates resulting in more officers consistently available. 	<p>While the contract model limits local customization, it offers integrated access to provincial and federal specialized services and surge capacity.</p> <p>There is a risk Kelowna may find these capabilities difficult or expensive to replace independently under a municipal police service.</p> <p>Some specialized services are provided through the Provincial Police Services Agreement and would likely be accessible to Kelowna without additional cost.</p>
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3. Communications and dispatch

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The provincially funded RCMP Operational Communications Centre provides dispatch at no direct cost; high vacancies (43% nationally). • Watch Support Officers handle Priority 3 & 4 calls; paid for by Kelowna. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipal police services use E-Comm 9-1-1 or operate their own dispatch at full cost to the city. 	<p>Kelowna currently benefits from dispatch through the RCMP's existing national system at no additional direct cost. Kelowna would have to assume full costs of procuring or setting up its own dispatch in a municipal police service.</p>
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4. Assets, infrastructure and technology

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kelowna benefits from RCMP national procurement, systems and modernizations at no additional cost. • HQ is new but may be facing capacity constraints; new builds are expensive. • Innovation can be slower due to federal procurement, IT integration constraints, and limits flexibility and pace of procurement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must procure and maintain all IT systems and equipment independently. • Greater flexibility to modernize quickly / pilot initiatives and integrated systems with City IT. • Directly funds fleet lifecycle and equipment. 	<p>Kelowna currently receives access to IT systems, digital infrastructure and specialized equipment without bearing the full cost of development or lifecycle replacement within the contract policing model. However, many of these systems are aging or may not have modern functionality.</p> <p>A municipal police model must maintain all IT, fleet and equipment independently, which adds complexity and cost but provides control, opportunity for</p>
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Key implications for the City of Kelowna:

- **Municipal police models appear to have less difficulty in managing officer vacancies and attrition.** Since 2022 Kelowna RCMP have operated significantly below budgeted and target authorized strength. Improved resourcing would mitigate the City's need for overtime and surge capacity (to an extent) while also offering cost savings on personnel. Municipal police services often have lower attrition and vacancy rates than their RCMP peers.
- **Kelowna benefits from access to the full suite of RCMP specialized services at no additional cost;** shifting to a municipal service would require Kelowna to build, contract, or negotiate ongoing access to these capabilities (i.e., Emergency Response Team or Explosives Disposal Unit). Many specialist services are provided at no direct cost to Kelowna (and across the province) through the Provincial Police Services Agreement and should be available to Kelowna in both an RCMP or municipal model. Specialist services provided by the RCMP today include:
 - E-Division air-services
 - Crisis Negotiation Team (CNT).
 - Critical Response Unit B.C. (CRFSEU).
 - Unsolved Homicide / Provincial Major Crime.
 - Police Liaison Team (PLT).
 - Integrated Collision Analysis & Reconstruction (ICARS).
 - Integrated Municipal Provincial Auto Crime (IMPACT).
 - Integrated Road Safety Units (IRSU).
 - Operational Communications Centre (OCC).
- **Many specialist services are provided through the Provincial Police Services Agreement (PPSA).** These services would likely remain available to Kelowna at no additional cost and the City would not be required to maintain the infrastructure to provide those services.
- **Kelowna's current RCMP contract provides substantial operational and financial supports** including national IT systems, specialized services and federally

managed infrastructure that the City would need to assume or replace if it pursued a municipal model.

- **A municipal model has increased local flexibility to innovate, but less economies of scale** and integrated systems that currently offset Kelowna’s technology, equipment, and lifecycle costs under the contract model.

Pillar 3: Community responsiveness

Comparative analysis – Community responsiveness

Contract model	Municipal model	Implications for Kelowna
1. Connection to community		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centralized deployment model. • Kelowna has frequent leadership turnover (average 14 months per inspector). • High attrition rates and frequent turnover of constables. • RCMP communications are controlled federally and, as a result, can be limited in timing and transparency. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Officers are often hired locally and remain in community for long durations. • Chiefs generally serve 5-10 years, and other senior leaders typically rise within the ranks. • Lower attrition rates and higher proportion of long serving members. • Local leadership has full control over communications and transparency. 	<p>A municipal police service model offers the opportunity for better connection between the police service, its members and the community.</p> <p>Officers are more likely to be recruited from the community and stay longer, and leadership is more likely to be invested long term in the safety of the community.</p> <p>Communications are also within the sole control of the Chief of Police – meaning they can be tailored to improve transparency and timeliness of communications to support public confidence.</p>
2. Innovation capacity		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economies of scale and federal funding. • Procurement is nationally standardized which limits flexibility and can slow the pace of procurements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smaller economies of scale; require capacity for innovation and procurement. • Decisions can be nimble and aligned to community needs. 	<p>A municipal model ultimately offers greater potential for Kelowna to adopt new technologies, implement alternative and tiered service models, and form tailored partnerships more quickly.</p> <p>This flexibility is a critical lever that municipal police services</p>

- OICs can form local partnerships; changes to service models may require approvals.
- Frequent leadership turnover can impact continuity or sustainability of initiatives.
- Chiefs have full authority to rapidly form partnerships and tailor service models. **apply** to offset officer workloads, improve effectiveness of police response and support financial sustainability.

3. Cultural responsiveness

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|--|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment and training are standardized, not tailored to local needs. • Frequent officer turnover can impact sustained cultural competency. • OIC can institute local cultural training and initiatives. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chiefs and Boards can set local diversity goals, tailor policies and build programs that respond to demographic realities. • Long-term officer tenure can strengthen localized cultural competency. • Cultural trainings at the JIBC reflects B.C. specific context. | <p>While all police services strive to improve in this area, a municipal model has greater potential to reflect community demographics through localized recruitment and training.</p> <p>Whereas an OIC can establish local recruitment practices, cultural training, it is not mandatory. This matters for public trust, perceived fairness and service effectiveness when interacting with diverse communities.</p> |
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Key implications for the City of Kelowna – Community responsiveness

- **Both a municipal police Chief and the RCMP OIC have similar mandates to be responsive the community**, build local partnerships and adopt evidence-driven approaches to achieve operational priorities. Municipal Chiefs have more direct authority to build integrated models and tailor partnerships which are key to the changing nature of modern policing (e.g., increased social disorder) while the RCMP OIC operates under the constraints of national policies and less authority to make decisions at the local level.
- The RCMP staffing and rotational model introduces more leadership and front-line turnover than municipal services, but it also brings officers with diverse operational experience and access to a national resourcing pool.
- **Municipal police services can hire, promote, and retain officers locally, strengthening long-term community knowledge.** Longer officer and leadership tenure in municipal services supports deeper community relationships. RCMP mobility can

disrupt continuity, but it also reduces the risk of entrenched internal cultures and brings in new perspectives.

- **The RCMP contract model provides access to larger economies of scale at the detachment level.** Once RCMP tools or technologies are nationally approved (e.g., body worn cameras), detachments benefit from lower costs, standardized training and national buying power. The benefits of this larger scale organization can come as a trade-off against nimbleness and localized solution

Pillar 4: Financial costs and value for money

Key implications for the City of Kelowna

- **Although Kelowna has historically benefited from the RCMP's economies of scale and 10% federal contribution, this benefit is eroding.** Kelowna has spent substantially more on policing over time than municipal police services or other RCMP contract policing communities.
- **Kelowna's policing costs have risen at an unsustainable rate (66% between 2020-2024),** increasing at roughly double the pace of municipal and RCMP police services across B.C. during the same period (30-35%).
- **Kelowna's rising costs are not clearly related to local service enhancements.** While Kelowna is paying more overtime to cover vacancy gaps, changes to actual strength (+11%), population growth and calls for service are not aligned to cost increases over the same period. Divisional Admin costs are increasing rapidly, and don't appear to be correlated to any change in service delivery.
- **Despite higher costs, Kelowna does not see proportionate improvements in policing outcomes** compared to municipal and RCMP police services. While costs have increased **66% in the past 5 years**, community perceptions of safety and satisfaction with the police decreased over that same period.
- **When measured by actual deployed officers, Kelowna pays more (20%) and has lower service coverage than municipal police services (31% worse population to officer ratio).** Kelowna's true service coverage is also understated given tourism impacts.
- **A "should cost" analysis shows costs would be \$17M (35%) lower in 2025 if costs had grown proportionately with population, calls for service and**

inflation drivers. The expected “should-cost” growth rate is similar to RCMP and municipal averages across the province.

- **Based on cost trends from 2020–2024, Kelowna is projected to reach cost parity with the average municipal police service by 2029**, three years before the RCMP contract expires in 2032.
- **Costs of policing have outpaced population growth, inflation and demand for services, which points to decreasing value for money over time.** This is likely indicative of systemic inefficiency or productivity constraints not related to local factors or service levels.

Pillar 5: Other considerations

- **A policing transition is complex, multi-year, and irreversible once approved.** The moment the Province approves a transition plan, Kelowna is legally obligated to complete the move to a municipal police service.
- **Transition costs are substantial and driven by key decisions made about transition strategy.** Major cost drivers and decision points include IT systems, fleet and equipment, facilities, staffing build-out, legal agreements, specialized unit arrangements, and project management capacity.
- **Preliminary estimates for the cost of transition are between \$30-65M.** Provincial support significantly affects financial feasibility. Lessons from Surrey and Grande Prairie show that provincial funding can offset transition costs, reducing the financial burden locally.
- **Workforce planning presents one of the greatest challenges.** Recruitment, badge-overs from the RCMP and training capacity of the Justice Institute of British Columbia are all factors that must be managed and planned for through transition.
- **Technology and data transfer are complex, resource intensive components of transition.** Establishing new secure systems, migrating PRIMEBC data, and configuring digital evidence, dispatch, and IT infrastructure require significant planning and investment.
- **Strong governance and leadership are essential for success.** A well-resourced Transition Management Office, a capable Police Board, and an experienced Chief are critical to manage risks and maintain service continuity.

- **Clear, consistent communication is vital to preserving public trust.** Poor communication can compromise confidence among residents, officers, and partners; the report emphasizes proactive, transparent messaging throughout transition.
- **Lessons learned from other jurisdictions point to the importance of stability and collaboration.** Political turbulence, inadequate planning, and poor coordination drive up cost and risk, while stable leadership and strong provincial alignment support smoother transitions.

Key Transition Risks:

- **Financial risk:** The cost of transition is the most significant risk. Delays, unanticipated transition requirements, extended timelines, and operating two police services concurrently could materially increase overall costs.
- **Reputational and community disruption risk:** A police transition is highly visible and politically sensitive. Once a transition decision is made, any uncertainty, reversal, or breakdown in collaboration—particularly with the RCMP—could create community disruption, increase costs, and undermine public confidence.
- **Technology risk:** Policing technology is among the most complex and costly aspects of transition. Kelowna would need to replace or procure nearly all operational systems currently provided by the RCMP, with risks related to system integration, readiness, timelines, and cost escalation.
- **Legal risk:** As a police-of-jurisdiction, Kelowna would assume full legal responsibility for policing operations, including compliance, liability, claims, misconduct, and data management. The transition itself also carries legal complexity and cost, particularly if inter-organizational relationships deteriorate.
- **Relational risk:** A policing transition affects critical relationships with the public, police members, City staff, the Province, and the RCMP. Poor inter-agency relationships, particularly between a municipal service and the RCMP, can become politicized and result in delays, inefficiencies, and increased costs.
- **Workforce risk:** Transition success depends on recruiting, training, and operationalizing a full workforce within tight timelines. Limited labour supply, training capacity constraints, competition for experienced officers, and uncertainty around RCMP badge-overs could delay readiness and increase costs.



Conclusion

This review was undertaken to provide the City of Kelowna with an objective, evidence-based assessment of its current contract policing model with the RCMP. It compares findings against the structure, governance and operational realities and potential of a municipal police service.

The intention of this report is not to recommend a preferred model, but to equip Council and City leadership with the information needed to make an informed, long-term decision about how policing in Kelowna can best meet the community's needs.

These insights provide an important foundation for determining whether the current model can be adapted to meet future needs or whether Kelowna should consider a transition to a municipal police service.



Our work was limited to the specific procedures and analysis described herein and was based only on the information made available through January 15, 2026. Accordingly, changes in circumstances after this date could affect the findings outlined in this Report. We are providing no opinion, attestation or other form of assurance with respect to our work and we did not verify or audit any information provided to us.

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