



# NIAGARA REGIONAL POLICE SERVICE

## Police Service Board Report

**PUBLIC AGENDA**

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**Subject:** Annual Report – Problem-Oriented Policing, Community-Based Crime Prevention and Community Patrol  
January 1 to December 31, 2024

**Report To:** Chair and Members, Niagara Police Service Board

**Report Date:** 2025-06-27

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### **Recommendation(s)**

**That the Niagara Police Service Board (Board) receive this report for information.**

### **Key Facts**

- The purpose of this report is to advise the Board that the Niagara Regional Police Service (Service) is in compliance with Board By-Law 493-2024 – Problem-Oriented Policing, By-Law 472-2024 – Community-Based Crime Prevention, and By-Law 473-2024 – Community Patrol.
- The Chief of Police is required to make a written annual report to the Board with respect to problem-oriented policing, community-based crime prevention, and community patrol.
- This report provides a summary of requirements to ensure the Service is compliant in following these By-Laws.

### **Financial Considerations**

There are no financial implications relating to the recommendations contained in this report.

### **Analysis**

#### Problem-Oriented Policing By-Law 493-2024

The Chief shall make a written report to the Board on or before August 30 of every year in respect of problem-oriented policing. This report will contain:

- a) a summary of the written procedures regarding problem-oriented policing;
- b) the status of Service compliance with the said procedures;
- c) the steps taken by the Service to promote, implement and evaluate problem-oriented policing initiatives.

The following is a detailed response to the above-noted requirements:

- a) *“... a summary of the written procedures regarding problem-oriented policing...”*

General Order (GO) 149.05 - Community Patrol and Problem-Oriented Policing, provides members with written procedures on how to initiate problem-oriented policing initiatives to address community issues concerns. This GO is reviewed bi-annually and is set for review in 2025.

- b) *“... the status of Service compliance with said procedures...”*

In accordance with GO 149.05, all officers and supervisors assigned to general patrol shall promote, plan, and implement directed patrol and/or problem-oriented policing initiatives to address public safety concerns, high incidents of crime, public disorder, and road safety.

- c) *“... the steps taken by the Service to promote, implement, and evaluate problem-oriented policing initiatives...”*

Recruit officer training, from the onset, includes preparing and delivering problem-oriented initiatives. This training prepares officers to recognize key elements of community safety concerns and respond with initiatives and/or directed patrol efforts throughout their career. The following directed patrol and/or problem-oriented policing initiatives are an overview of several implemented during this reporting period. Many of the initiatives are operationalized in all districts across the region, while others are exclusive to the concerns in a specific community.

#### Summary of 2024 Initiatives and Community Patrols

Traffic and Safety Awareness Day: This annual initiative was conducted to remind drivers that kids are back in school. Patrols aimed to target impaired drivers, drivers who are speeding, disobeying school bus protections, disobeying stop signs, and other Highway Traffic Act (HTA) violations that endanger the safety of the students. This initiative has been developed to establish safe roadways and a safe environment for the students in the Niagara Region. Officers issued 142 Provincial Offence Notices (PONs) and warnings for HTA offences.

Stop and Look Initiative: This initiative focused on community concerns regarding vehicles failing to stop at stop signs in a small residential neighbourhood within 1 District. Uniform members attended the area over the course of the summer months, as traffic increases due being close to Sunset Beach. Uniform members were visible near the intersection of Cindy Drive and Arthur Street where they had many occasions to speak with the residents of this community. As a result of this initiative, 11 PONs were issued and a suspension notice. Uniform members took the time to educate drivers on the importance of coming to a complete stop at stop signs.

We Can't See You Initiative: This initiative was designed as a result of growing concerns from St Catharines residents involving cyclists obeying the rules of the road within St Catharines. The target was to educate cyclists on road safety to avoid motor vehicle collisions and injuries. As a result of this initiative five PONs were issued, one warning and seven positive service tickets were issued. This initiative was a success as uniform members interacted with community members of all ages.

2 District Community Safety Initiatives: These initiatives were conducted by 2 District platoons to address community concerns related to traffic safety. A myriad of initiatives occurred throughout the year that targeted speeding, careless driving, unnecessary noise, and distracted driving. Two additional initiatives were conducted, proactively targeting open alcohol consumption and conducting Liquor License Act inspections at problem establishments. Nine PONs were issued, and multiple liquor license inspections were conducted with the assistance of the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario.

Driving Complaints: 3 District received driving complaints from vehicles not stopping for red lights/stop signs/school buses, speeding, loud mufflers, heavy trucks, and off-road vehicles. Subsequently, traffic initiatives were conducted by recruit officers in identified areas with officers monitoring intersections and conducting radar/lidar enforcement in order to address these community complaints.

5 District Traffic Enforcement Project: 5 District conducted a special project related to traffic enforcement in areas of Fort Erie. As part of a platoon initiative, officers attended elementary schools in the Greater Fort Erie area during morning and afternoon bell times for increased visibility and to curb speeding and other traffic offences in these areas. Officers also took this opportunity to engage with students and parents who appreciated the uniform presence.

As part of a 5 District platoon initiative, officers conducted foot patrols throughout the year in the Fort Erie downtown core (Jarvis Street area). This was an effort to increase visibility in high crime areas for the benefit of the small businesses that line Jarvis Street.

Directed Patrol near Sherkston Shores: In an effort to address ongoing community concerns in the area of Sherkston Shores in Port Colborne, 6 District officers conducted enforcement relating to speeding and impaired driving. Enforcement was focused on long weekends however additional patrols and uniformed presence were added throughout the operating season. A total of 73 PONs were issued, and 2 drivers were arrested for impaired driving.

Overweight Trucks: 8 District officers along with members from the Traffic Enforcement Unit responded to complaints regarding overweight trucks on west Niagara roadways. Education was pushed out over the District's social media account. This led to a heightened awareness of the approved truck routes within west Niagara. A considerable number of charges were laid under the Highway Traffic Act, and a significant reduction in the number of commercial motor vehicles traveling on restricted roadways.

The 2024 Ministry of Transportation initiative that coincides with the overweight truck enforcement took place 7 times throughout the year. This initiative is run by the Ministry of Transportation, assisted by the Town of Lincoln, to contend with commercial trucks bypassing the Lincoln Ministry of Transportation scales, causing traffic concerns through the town's infrastructure. The Ministry of Transportation and the Service's joint initiative statistics for 2024 included 101 vehicle inspections, 15 vehicles removed from the highways due to serious defects, 455 total charges laid.

The Fleming Centre community policing initiative was conducted due to youth complaints received by the Service from residents. Uniform members attended the Fleming Centre 103 times in 2024 to foster new relations and build trust within the community. This was a year long project spreading across all shifts that has taken place yearly since 2021.

Bicycle Safety: Police and Wendy's Restaurants once again partnered in the 'Free Frosty Campaign' where 10,000 coupons were provided to frontline officers to distribute to youths displaying good bicycle safety by wearing helmets and obeying the rules of the road. Once again Wendy's, with the assistance of officers, gave away 500 bicycle helmets on kick off day. Officers also assisted the Niagara's Safety Village with their 2 summer bicycle safety courses that are 1 week, respectively.

The Community Oriented Response and Engagement (CORE) Unit: The CORE Unit continued their collaborative efforts in 2024, focusing on building relationships with key community partners and identifying problems and resolutions together. This has brought about greater police visibility and easier accessibility to police by members of the public and partner agencies in the community to address an array of topics.

Bicycle and Foot Patrol Initiatives: Throughout the year, to adopt a stronger focus on community policing and visibility, bicycle and foot patrols were initiated in downtown cores and recreational areas. While walking the beat, officers routinely engaged with local shop keepers and citizens identifying problem areas and concerns. Issues related to homelessness, unwanted persons, thefts, property damage, drug use, and discarded drug paraphernalia were identified and addressed.

Homeless Persons: During 2024, the City of Welland continued to see an increase in homeless persons and tents constructed on both public and private properties. With the onset of cooler weather, police collaborated closely with the staff from Niagara Assertive Street Outreach, Gateway Niagara, and The Hope Centre. These partnerships were valuable and assisted persons who were living in tents, or vehicles, by providing them with temporary and/or permanent shelter. The 3 District CORE Unit has joined a city lead task force to address homelessness concerns in the City.

Lock it or Lose It: This initiative is an annual public reminder. Using social media posts and increased police visibility, the community is alerted to the risk of theft from vehicles. Officers conduct foot and bicycle patrols throughout open-air malls and businesses, making themselves visible to patrons and business owners. Furthermore, while onsite, officers also walked through the parking lots, visually checking for unlocked cars, and placed an educational pamphlet on the windshield of parked vehicles. This initiative incorporated increased police visibility along with awareness for motorists to secure items in their vehicles out of plain view.

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED): The Service completed several CPTED audits for businesses, community groups, and homeowners who requested to have an officer come out to their property and offer suggestions to discourage crime. Police were able to collaborate with homeowners and business owners to make recommendations for improved safety. In an effort to mobilize community partners to work with the Service in accomplishing the goals of our Strategic Plan, the 2 District CORE Unit hosted a CPTED training course which trained approximately 40 staff from various community agencies on how to conduct CPTED audits.

High School Beach Day: District officers, CORE Unit members and members of the Public Order Unit planned for and were present during the annual high school unsanctioned beach day across the Region. Officers utilized All Terrain Vehicle (ATV) patrols and foot patrols to engage with the thousands of students who attended this event. Police enforced the Criminal Code, Liquor Licence Act, and the Trespass to Property Act throughout the day in multiple municipalities.

Beach Patrols: The beaches of Niagara remained popular destinations in 2024 and quickly overwhelmed local infrastructure. On weekends, beaches were often at, or over, capacity and parking issues arose at various locations. Affected Districts worked with local Municipal By-Law offices to address the influx of people and address parking concerns. Additional patrols were also conducted around nearby cottages to deter break and enters from occurring.

#### Community Based Crime Prevention By-Law 472-2024

The Chief shall make a written report to the Board on or before August 30 of each year in respect of community-based crime prevention initiatives. The report shall include:

- a) a summary of the written procedures concerning community-based crime prevention initiatives;
- b) the status of Service compliance with the said procedures;
- c) a summary of current crime prevention initiatives and an indication of their success; and
- d) a summary of current concerns, as voiced by the community through the community partnership initiatives.

The following is a detailed response to each of the above noted requirements:

- a) *“...summary of the written procedures concerning community-based crime prevention initiatives...”*

GO 149.05 - Community Patrol and Problem-Oriented Policing provides direction on a police officer's duties including "Crime Prevention". In addition, section 82(1) of the *Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019*, establishes specific statutory duties for police officers that include: preventing crimes and other offences, and providing assistance and encouragement to other persons in their prevention.

- b) *“... the status of Service compliance with the said procedures...”*

The Service is committed to working with municipalities, school boards, community organizations, neighbourhoods, businesses, and neighbouring municipalities or jurisdictions, to develop and implement community-based crime prevention initiatives. The Service ensures the community-based crime prevention initiatives are consistent with the Ontario Mobilization and Engagement Model of Community Policing.

- c) *“... a summary of current crime prevention initiatives and an indication of their success...”*

The following is a summary of Crime Prevention initiatives during 2024:

1 District CORE officers initiated Project 3P (Past the Point of Purchase) to address the recent surge in retail theft offences. The project was conducted for 14 days during October through December and resulted in over 90 arrests and 71 criminal charges. There was a 70% drop in retail theft offences in one particular location during this period.

As mentioned above, 2 District officers conducted proactive Liquor License Act inspections at local establishments in an attempt to prevent alcohol related offences from occurring. As Niagara Falls holds a large entertainment district, over consumption of alcohol can have a negative effect on public safety. This initiative was designed to prevent breaches of public safety before they occurred.

5 District conducted ATV patrols in certain areas of Fort Erie and Crystal Beach. This initiative was in response to community requests for higher police visibility in these areas. Locations of a particular concern were along shorelines, cottage rentals, and private properties. Certain properties belonging to the Town of Fort Erie were focused on. The Service utilized uniform members on marked ATVs to enforce and educate violators.

The Service has acknowledged that CPTED is an important tool in addressing community complaints. As mentioned above, the 2 District CORE Unit hosted a CPTED training course over 2 days to teach officers and community partners how to properly conduct CPTED audits. Throughout the year, CORE officers also completed over 50 CPTED audits for local businesses and residences to help with crime prevention.

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As part of the Service's commitment to crime prevention and patrols of summer vacation properties, uniform members utilized foot patrols, ATV patrols, and marked cruisers to conduct cottage checks along the Lake Erie shoreline. The cottage checks consisted of ensuring doors, as well as windows, had been locked and secured with no obvious signs of damage or forced entry. Cottage check signs were left at the property for owners to inform them that police were active in the area patrolling and conducting these checks.

- d) *"... a summary of current concerns, as voiced by the community through the community partnership initiatives..."*

The Service regularly monitors and evaluates the effectiveness and on-going need for community-based crime prevention initiatives in collaboration with municipalities, school boards, businesses, and community organizations. Property crime and crime prevention strategies remain a community concern. Crime prevention and engagement initiatives with youth also continue to be a concern. Crimes related to the societal issues of illicit drug use are an ever-growing community concern. The Service remains cognizant of these issues and strives to address them through continued collaboration with community partners and continuing with proactive community-based crime prevention.

#### Community Patrol By-Law 473-2024

The Chief shall make a written report to the Board on or before August 30, of each year in respect of community patrol. This report shall include:

- a) confirmation of compliance with the Directed Patrol procedure.
- b) the high and low numbers of members assigned to the patrol unit, with particulars and reasons for any period that the patrol unit numbers were less than those required under Section 4.3.1.
- c) costs of Directed Patrols; and
- d) the status of the outcome of the Directed Patrol initiative including the effect of Directed Patrol on crime, calls for service, public disorder analysis and road safety.

#### Detailed Response

- a) *"... confirmation of compliance with the Directed Patrol procedure..."*

GO 149.05 - Community Patrol and Problem-Oriented Policing provides direction to supervisors that they shall monitor and evaluate all Directed Patrols to ensure compliance with procedures. During this reporting period, the Service has remained compliant with all procedures.

- b) *"... the high and low numbers of members assigned to the Patrol Unit, with particulars and reasons for any period that the Patrol Unit numbers were less than those required under Section 3.3.1..."*

Directed Patrol, as part of addressing concerns raised within the community, forms the core patrol responsibilities of every uniform member of the Service. When staffing levels permit, front-line supervisors can assign members to problem-oriented policing initiatives, including traffic enforcement. Supervisors are responsible for the deployment of all members when hired on overtime to deal with Directed Patrols targeting concerns raised within the community. Patrol Unit numbers were not less than required at anytime in 2024.

c) “... costs of Directed Patrols...”

Unless otherwise indicated, the projects referenced in this report were conducted by on-duty personnel, during the regular course of their duties and did not incur additional costs to the Service.

d) “...the status of the outcome of the Directed Patrol initiative including the effect of Directed Patrol on crime, calls for service, public disorder analysis and road safety...”

Supervisors are responsible for monitoring and evaluating problem-oriented policing initiatives. The evaluation includes an assessment of the level of success achieved and a consideration of the potential for the initiative to be continued, expanded, or ended. This evaluation is documented by way of a memorandum directed to the District Commander.

### **Alternatives Reviewed**

Not applicable.

### **Relationship to Police Service/Board Strategic Priorities**

To comply with the provisions of the Board By-Laws and to maintain compliance with Adequacy and Effective Policing requirements.

### **Relevant Policy Considerations**

By-Law 493-2024 – Problem-Oriented Policing  
By-Law 472-2024 – Community-Based Crime Prevention  
By-Law 473-2024 – Community Patrol  
GO 149.05 – Community Patrol and Problem-Oriented Policing

### **Other Pertinent Reports**

8.12 – 2024.07.27 - Annual Report – Problem-Oriented Policing, Community-Based Crime Prevention and Community Patrol – January 1 to December 31, 2023



*This report was prepared by Jeff Bootsma, Staff Sergeant, Community Engagement, in consultation with Sarah Rose, Inspector, 1 District, Rob LaPlante, Inspector, 2 District, Mike Ryan, Staff Sergeant, 5 District, Phil Liciskai, Staff Sergeant, 6 District, Dylan Bourgeois, Staff Sergeant, 8 District, and reviewed by Dave Gomez, Acting Superintendent, Community Services. Recommended by Mario Lagrotteria, Deputy Chief, Community Services.*



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**Submitted by:**

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Chief of Police

**Appendices**

Not Applicable.