



NIAGARA REGIONAL POLICE SERVICE

Police Services Board Report

PUBLIC AGENDA

Subject: Annual Report – Community-Based Crime Prevention
January 1 to December 31, 2021

Report To: Chair and Members, Niagara Police Services Board

Report Date: 2022-04-22

Recommendation(s)

That the Niagara Police Services Board receives this report for information.

Key Facts

- The purpose of this report is to advise the Board that the Service is in compliance with By-Law 192-2000 – Community-Based Crime Prevention.
- The Chief of Police is required to make a written annual report to the Board with respect to community-based crime prevention.
- This report provides a summary of requirements to ensure the Service is in compliance with the By-Law.

Financial Considerations

Not Applicable.

Analysis

In Accordance with By-Law 192-2000, a By-Law respecting Community-Based Crime Prevention, was enacted as a result of Provincial Adequacy Standards Regulation CP-002, which requires the Chief to make a written report to the Board annually with respect to 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.

General Order 149.04 provides direction on a Police Officer's duties including "Crime Prevention". Section 42(1) of the Police Services Act of Ontario, R.S.O. 1990, 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. The current pandemic and associated restrictions impacted proactive Crime Prevention initiatives throughout the year. These restrictions also contributed to the cancellation of Crime Prevention based educational opportunities such as the CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) course.

- c) a summary of current Crime Prevention initiatives and an indication of their success.

The following is a summary of Crime Prevention initiatives during 2021:

School Resource Officers (SRO) – SRO's are involved with students in the Niagara Region from grades 9-12. SRO's are a physical presence in the schools to positively impact at risk youth through community engagement. Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic - officers adapted their model to online presentations and virtual engagement to students from grade 7-12. Officers also assisted outside of the school to address concerns throughout the region.

In September 2020, the SRO program was paused by the District School Board of Niagara (DSBN) to allow for a review and community consultation. In September, the DSBN advised that this pause will remain in effect until further notice.

1 District – St. Catharines and Thorold:

Foot Patrol: Two officers were dedicated to foot patrol in the downtown core of St. Catharines. Officers continued to include enforcement and education of COVID-19 regulations with businesses and those in attendance in the downtown area. In addition to foot patrol officers, all new recruits were required to spend one full day walking the beat

with the dedicated officers. This new initiative emphasizes the importance of close relationships with the community. Foot patrol officers assisted or generated 1066 calls for service resulting in 56 arrests. These officers frequently assist the City of St. Catharines with controlling or eliminating homeless encampments and work closely with Housing Help to find suitable living arrangements for the homeless. Officers continue to regularly visit community support agencies such as the Breakfast Club, Start Me Up Niagara, and the Out of the Cold Program. Clients of these programs have expressed their appreciation for the consistent police presence. Police presence helps the most vulnerable members of society to assist them with various issues, including human trafficking, assaults, sexual assaults, robbery, thefts, frauds, and drugs.

Queenston Street Trespassing/Vandalism/Drug Use: Places of Worship in the Queenston Street area reported an overwhelming problem with trespassing, encampments, vandalism, and drug use on their properties. Police engagement with the individuals involved greatly reducing the unwanted behaviour with limited use of enforcement actions under the Trespass to Property Act and Criminal Code over the course of several weeks. The positive effects of this action have continued and have been met with appreciation by members of the community. As part of this initiative, police worked with Niagara Assertive Street Outreach to offer those experiencing homelessness opportunities to move to transitional and permanent housing.

St. Patrick's Day Off Campus Living Noise Patrol: This initiative was a joint project with Brock University Off-Campus Living and the 1 District Community Policing Office. Due to COVID-19 restrictions there were no issues reported.

Project Sunset: This initiative focused on the ongoing problems with out-of-town people from areas in lockdown attending the Niagara area beaches. This initiative focused on disturbances, noise complaints, impaired driving, Highway Traffic Act (HTA) offences, and COVID-19 related municipal By-Laws. This project was highly effective and addressed numerous citizen complaints. Police did not observe any offences during the targeted patrol, and it was not necessary to generate additional calls for service. This initiative is a prime example of the effectiveness of police presence in suppressing crime.

Project Safe Haven: This initiative focused on increasing a visible police presence, liaising, and improving relations with Bethlehem Housing staff and residents, resulting in decreased calls for service through proactive patrols around the property. A noted reduction in calls for service was observed. This project will continue into 2022.

Project Roehampton Park: This initiative was created as a result of 64 calls for service involving this area, including assaults, disturbances, and drug related offences. Police were able to utilize a proactive approach to lessen ongoing issues at this location, conducting foot patrols in the area to deter crime. Officers also provided security enhancement tips to Public Works, such as improved lighting to the area.

Project Quiet Times: This initiative was created in response to ongoing noise, mischief, and Emergency Order violation complaints. Juneberry Road and Winterberry Blvd, Thorold quickly became known as a gathering party area for Brock students as hundreds of people attend this location every Friday and Saturday night. This created a large increase of calls by residents and local politicians to Service. A committee of community stakeholders was created in response to this issue, including the Service, the Thorold Mayor, City of Thorold By-Law, Brock Student Union, and Brock Security. A total of 2 arrests, 70 noise complaints, and 82 Provincial Offence Notices were issued.

2 District - Niagara Falls and Niagara on the Lake (NOTL)

Lock It or Lose It: This initiative was carried out throughout the fall in response to a request from the Niagara Outlet Collection in NOTL for increased police presence. Police liaised with management to conduct directed foot patrols and facilitate the Lock It or Lose It campaign. Officers conducted patrols throughout the mall and the parking lot, checking for unlocked cars and placing a pamphlet on the windshield of parked vehicles that had been left unlocked. This initiative incorporated police visibility along with awareness for motorists of securing items in their vehicles out of plain view.

Operation Royal: This initiative was created in response to complaints of vehicles being broken into within the neighbourhood of Royal Manor Park in Niagara Falls. This initiative was conducted throughout the fall. Checks of the area continued daily with Police directed patrols occurring 37 times. Residents in the area observed the increased police presence and were very appreciative limiting further crime in the area.

Foot Patrol Community Policing Initiative: In response to incidents of unwanted persons, panhandlers, COVID related calls along with an increased focus on community policing, foot patrols were initiated throughout 2 District. A total of 407 foot patrols were conducted within the Casino District, Queen Street in Niagara Falls and NOTL downtown areas. The business community and local residents continue to applaud this initiative and have expressed an amplified feeling of safety.

Community Support Officer Program: This program is in its fourth year and continues to flourish with the necessity of the program increasing each year. A dedicated Community Officer is in daily communication with the homeless community, responding to calls specific to the homeless while also placing them in contact with an Outreach Worker when required. Having an officer that is consistent each and every day relating to the homeless provides a reciprocal relationship ultimately reducing calls for service. This program was expanded and dedicated officers were assigned to this role as a Community Support Officer on weekends or when the dedicated Officer in Charge is absent.

Covid/Quarantine Enforcement: This initiative was based upon community safety working in conjunction with Public Health of Canada and Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA). Beginning May 30, Officers were either called to attend or deployed to the international border crossings by way of a special duty to enforce the Quarantine Act. The

Service responded to 314 calls for service and issued 314 Quarantine Act charges. This initiative was above and beyond the Provincial health measures that were also being enforced.

3 District - Welland and Pelham

Downtown Core Visibility: Platoon's continued to set initiative goals to address the illicit drug activity, loitering and trespassing around the area of East Main Street/Division Street and King Street, which included businesses around the downtown core, including the Courthouse and City Hall.

Foot Patrol Initiatives: Throughout the year, officers spent time in visible areas in the downtown area of Welland and Pelham Town Square. Officers walked the beat, meeting patrons and business owners; visiting new businesses primarily near the Rex Hotel, and along through to the Downtown core. In Pelham, officers focused their attention on businesses in the Pelham Town Square area. Numerous compliments were received from local businesses and residents. No additional costs incurred for this project.

Homeless in Tents: Throughout the year, given the COVID-19 restrictions, officers were kept busy with monitoring and removing individuals from public parks in Welland. Areas included but not limited to: Lincoln Street at Plymouth Street, Trelawn Park and Merritt Island.

Operation Lock It or Lose It: This ongoing initiative provided education on the importance of securing vehicles and not leaving personal property in plain view

All terrain vehicle (ATV) Patrols of St. Lawrence Seaway Property and Surrounding Areas: This initiative was jointly funded by the St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation and 3 District. The targeted areas included Hunters Point, Seaway Service Roads and both East and West sides of the canal. Uniformed Officers drove ATVs along Seaway property enforcing HTA and Trespass to Property Act violations.

COVID-19 Education, Engagement and Enforcement: Due to the pandemic, officers were required to adapt to the ever-changing guidelines and restrictions implemented by the Province. Significant resources were used throughout the year to educate and engage members of the public, including conducting compliance checks for air and land-border crossings.

3 District Twitter Account: The 3 District Twitter Account (@nrps3district) continued to showcase officer involvement within the communities of Welland and Pelham, in addition to educating members of public about district initiatives, crime prevention and enforcement activities in response to citizen concerns. The re-invigoration of the Twitter account and community outreach has already resulted in a significant increase in statistics over the 2020 totals:

Year	Followers	Tweets	Visits	Impressions
2020	29	11	818	24,900
2021	136	56	10,102	150,100

5 District - Fort Erie, Ridgeway, Stevensville, and Crystal Beach

Community Engagement Officer: An officer was dedicated to be directly involved with community engagement. The officer was responsible for several initiatives related to community issues, established open lines of communication with several community stakeholders, directly responded to community issues and has become a consistent resource for all the communities within 5 District.

Beach Patrol: In a continued effort between Town of Fort Erie (TOFE) and 5 District members, an on-going beach initiative was conducted. Uniform members utilized this initiative to educate beachgoers with the local By-Laws. Uniform members assisted Municipal Officers along with staff members on site to enforce Liquor Licence Act and the Trespass to Property Act. Officers also conducted foot patrol and ATV patrol at Waverly Beach due to numerous complaints of persons on private property. In August 2021, TOFE installed private property, no motorized vehicle and no dogs sign at the public and private beach property line.

ATV Patrol Initiative: 5 District members and the TOFE worked jointly with ATV patrols at various locations which included Waverly Beach, Crescent Beach, Bernard Avenue Beach, Bay Beach, Crystal Beach Waterfront Park and the Friendship Trail. This initiative ran from February to November.

Friendship Trail Patrol: The Friendship Recreation Trail extends 16 kms across Fort Erie to the Port Colborne border. Police received a high volume of complaints from the public regarding Off-Road vehicles such as ATV's on the Friendship Trail which are prohibited in accordance with local by-laws. The Service utilized uniform members in marked ATV's to enforce and educate violators.

Cottage Checks: As part of the Service's commitment to crime prevention and patrols of summer vacation properties (cottages), uniform members utilized foot patrol, ATV patrol and marked cruisers to conduct checks along the Lake Erie Shoreline. The cottage checks consisted of ensuring doors/windows were 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.

Splash Pads, Parks & Playground Initiative: As Emergency Measure Restrictions were lessened during the summer months and citizens began to attend these various locations, members of 5 District began an initiative to offer a visible presence. Police attended various splash pads, parks and playgrounds to engage with community members and to offer directed patrol, enforcing various Criminal, Provincial and Municipal Legislation.

Special Projects / Crime Patrol Initiatives: Crystal Beach Co-Op (Esme Lane/Weber Court) contacted the Service regarding drug related issues, suspicious persons and trespassing concerns on the property. Uniform members conducted regular checks of the property via foot patrol and mobile patrol which led to identifying units involved in drug sub-culture. The Service worked with the property manager which led to the eviction of occupants of a known drug house. Recommendations were made to the Co-Op applying the Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles to install/update cameras and lighting on the property. Uniform and plain clothes members worked together to make an arrest of an individual involved in numerous vehicle thefts. Plain clothes members conducted various crime patrol initiatives throughout the year which led to arrests of individuals wanted on warrants and breaching their conditions.

6 District - Port Colborne and Wainfleet

Port-All Situation Table: The Service, along with several community agencies representing a variety of the human services sector formed the multiagency "Port-All" situation table. The group has worked with various subject matter experts from different community agencies, effectively assisting persons suffering elevated risk of harm within the Port Colborne Community. Participating agencies look forward to the benefits that "Port-All" brings to the Port Colborne community, specifically as it relates to community safety and well-being. The officer assigned to "Port-All" investigated over 100 incidents where acute risk factors were mitigated using this collaborative community engagement model which directly led to a significant decrease in requirement for frontline calls for service. There are no additional costs associated with this program.

Foot Patrol Initiative: Officers conducted high visibility daytime/nighttime foot patrols providing officers an opportunity to engage with both business owners/pedestrians. Patrols were conducted at various locations throughout Port Colborne including the Vale Centre, the Downtown Core and the East Village. Officers engaged with residents and business owners all of whom were appreciative of police presence. This initiative had a primary goal to strengthen Community/Police relations. Enforcement being the secondary goal did result in the issuance of several Provincial Offence Notices and apprehending wanted individuals in addition to Intelligence gathering. Social media was used to highlight these foot patrols to bring additional community awareness to police efforts. No costs were associated to this initiative as on-duty personnel were utilized. This initiative will continue into 2022.

6 District Twitter: 6 District officially launched a Twitter account in August 2018 with 470 followers and by the end of 2021 this number had increased to 765 followers. The site has proven to be an integral component of an interactive community engagement strategy. The 6 District account has sought to improve community relations by proactively addressing community concerns, highlighting District crime prevention/enforcement activities and our participation in local community engagement events.

ATV Patrols/Cottage Checks: ATV patrols were utilized to provide enforcement in rural areas, open areas and those trails normally accessed by members of the public. Officers conducted cottage checks along the Lake Erie shoreline, patrols along the Friendship Trail, St. Lawrence Seaway properties and areas of concern reported by the community. Officers enforced offences under the Trespass to Property Act and the Off-Road Vehicles Act. The cottage checks consisted of ensuring doors were locked with no obvious signs of damage or break in. Cottage check signs were left for owners to inform them that police had conducted a premise check of the dwelling and served notice that officers were active in the area conducting these patrols. Social media was used to inform the public of this initiative which received positive feedback.

Beach Patrols: As a result of the COVID-19 safety restrictions many normal summer activities were modified across the Region and Province. This resulted in many people trying to find alternative ways to spend time with their families. Wainfleet and Port Colborne beaches became popular destinations, with many at capacity during weekends. Members worked with local By-Law to help address the influx of people. Officers utilized social media to inform residents that their concerns were being addressed. From the May long weekend until the Labour Day weekend additional officers assisted with the influx of people and related call volume associated to the beaches. Members will meet with stakeholders in early 2022 to prepare for the upcoming season.

Project Compliance: The purpose of this project was to conduct compliance checks on persons that were bound by specific terms of Release Orders/Probation Order and to apprehend wanted persons within the community. A secondary purpose was to have an increase presence in identified areas of concern relating to potential criminal activity. As a result of this project, 20 arrests were made in relation to wanted persons or people failing to comply with conditions of their Release Orders. Numerous address verifications were also conducted to ensure compliance with specific conditions.

Project Capture: Project Capture was a proactive crime prevention initiative aimed at identifying emerging crime trends and associated Persons of Interest. The initiative involved officers gathering and sharing intelligence relating to local community issues which led to 82 information reports which assisted in identifying various Persons of Interest within specific geographical areas and timelines. These centralized reports led to focusing various high visibility directed patrols and associated arrests.

8 District - West Niagara (Grimsby, Lincoln, and West Lincoln)

Lock It or Lose It: In the fall, officers attended various neighborhoods conducting foot, bicycle and vehicle patrols to deter thefts from unlocked vehicles. Officers distributed Lock It or Lose It cards and identified various unsecured vehicles and residences taking a proactive approach and helping to educate residents.

Bicycle Patrols: Throughout the summer, officers utilized Bicycles to interact with the community at local parks throughout West Niagara. The 8 District Twitter Account (@8Nrps) was utilized to showcase these interactions.

Park & Premise Checks: Officers utilized time between calls for service to conduct proactive checks to prevent vandalism and damage to municipal parks and private premises.

Alternatives Reviewed

Not applicable.

Relationship to Police Service/Board Strategic Priorities

To comply with the provisions of the Niagara Regional Police Services Board By-Laws and to maintain compliance with the Provincial Adequacy Standards Regulation CP-002.

Relevant Policy Considerations

By-Law 192-2000, Crime Prevention

General Order 149.04 Community Patrol and Problem Oriented Policing.

Other Pertinent Reports

162-2021 Annual Report - Crime Prevention January 1, 2021, to December 31, 2021.

This report was prepared by Sergeant Erin Madill, Community Engagement Unit, reviewed by Inspector Patrick McCauley, #3 District Commander and Superintendent Marco Giannico, District Operations and recommended by Brett Flynn, Deputy Chief, Operational Services.



Submitted by:

Bryan MacCulloch, M.O.M. #5835
Chief of Police

Appendices

Not Applicable.