

News Release

penticton.ca

Car 40 showing dividends, new programs planned for public safety

(Penticton, BC – May 3, 2024) – The latest statistics from RCMP show a slight decline in the overall crime rate, an increase in some types of property crimes and enough data to show the Mobile Integrated Crisis Team, also known as Car 40, is having success.

"Although the ICRT has only been up and running for three months the initial reports have given us reason to believe it is a complete success. Data collection revealed that since January 2024, there have been 300 interactions which includes client contacts where meaningful interactions were had, resources were provided, partner meetings and or other outreach was conducted," writes RCMP Superintendent Beth McAndie in her report that will be presented to Council on Tuesday.

While the report shows an increase in sex offences and intimate partner violence. Superintendent McAndie notes several considerations for the change.

"The creation of the Penticton RCMP's Special Victims Unit in 2019, improved relationships and collaboration with the South Okanagan Women in Need Society, an increase in training and engagement with youth resulting in an improvement in supporting victims of sexual violence, leading to an increase in reporting to police," she writes. "In the province of B.C. from 2020 to 2024 there was a significant increase in reported incidents involving the accessing, possession and distribution of Child Sexual Abuse Material. These increases were observed locally and are reflected in the statistics."

And while property crime has seen a 23 per cent in overall property crimes, there was an increase in reported bike thefts, break-and-enters and shoplifting. "Bicycle thefts are often reported in this quarter due to the transition from fall to spring, the theft often occurring sometime between when the bike was stored in the fall and not being noticed as missing until the spring. Other bike thefts frequently occurring outside the owner's residence, unsecured in the yard," says McAndie.

She also notes the detachment has adopted new methodology for the Repeat Offender Management program and that a pilot Inadmissible Patron Program will be in place this summer at a select group of licenced establishments and large hotels.

A report from Bylaw Services noted the top five enforcement issues within the Safe Public Spaces Bylaw included: loitering, abandoned property, display or use of controlled substances in public spaces, removal of encampments and disorderly conduct.

The report also notes the provincial government has indicated it will ask Health Canada to recriminalize use of drugs use in public places, which is line with the City's Safe Public Spaces Bylaw passed in 2023. Staff will work with RCMP on any needed operational changes in anticipation of the request being granted.

Media contact:

250-490-2339

communications@penticton.ca