

City outlines 2023 priorities for community safety

(Penticton, BC – March 3, 2023) – A report to Council will outline the City’s safety priorities for the upcoming year, addressing the findings of the Community Safety Resource Review and advancing Council’s Safety and Resilient community priority.

“Council has established Safe and Resilient as one of its four priorities and we’re well-positioned to make this happen,” says Anthony Haddad, the City of Penticton’s general manager for community services. “The leaders of each of our protective services departments carefully considered the findings of the Community Safety Resource Review in identifying these initiatives and have put together a solid roadmap for moving forward.”

The report includes plans for each of the major protective services areas including the RCMP, Fire Services, Bylaw Services, as well as the City as a whole. Some of the key initiatives that have been approved or will be considered by Council at future meetings in 2023 include:

- The RCMP are seeking to add two officers to focus on proactive policing and to further the restorative justice program.
- The Penticton Fire Department have approval to add four firefighters to meet the industry standard of four personnel per fire engine and are taking steps to increase the medical response training for firefighters.
- Bylaw Services are proposing to introduce new bylaws that will provide them with more authority to address inappropriate use of public spaces when efforts at intervention and connection to support services fail. Community Safety Officers are also planning to implement ‘hot spot’ targeted patrols that will see a focus on locations of high call volumes.
- The City will also more strongly advocate for assistance from the province beginning with the Car40 program and the need for more funding for emergency health services.

As well, a new organizational working group will focus on improving interoperability amongst the key agencies and co-ordinate and implement the outlined initiatives, including involvement from the Province. Key members of the group are the RCMP, Bylaw Services, Penticton Fire, Interior Health, Social Development and private security.

“Improving relationships, providing better information sharing and coordinating efforts will help develop shared visions and goals, improve communication and collaboration, put an emphasis on better data sharing and begin to develop metrics and performance indicators that will enable improved performance and decision making,” he writes.

At the same meeting, RCMP Superintendent Brian Hunter will present Council with the latest crime statistics which will show a decline in property crime in 2022 and an overall decline in the number of files.

Both reports will be presented at the March 7 meeting, which can be viewed in person or online at www.penticton.ca. Initiatives that are proposed will be considered as part of the 2023 Budget or at future meetings of Council.

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