

Penticton reports steady growth as service demand rises in early 2026

(Penticton, BC – May 15, 2026) – Penticton City Council will receive a first-quarter update next week showing steady growth across development, events and the local economy, alongside rising demand for public safety services.

The reports, going to Council on May 19, outline early 2026 progress on key priorities, including building a livable and accessible community and strengthening community safety and well-being.

“Penticton is growing, and with that comes both opportunity and pressure on our services,” said City Manager Anthony Haddad. “What these reports show is a community that’s active and expanding, while our teams are also responding to more complex health and social needs. We’re focused on staying ahead of that through strong partnerships and long-term planning.”

Steady development and strong community activity

Development activity remained steady in the first quarter, with a shift toward larger, higher-value projects.

The City processed approximately \$28 million in building permits, with several significant projects moving forward, including a 147-unit apartment building and new mixed-use developments.

Planning is also advancing on major initiatives such as the Esplanade Plan and Downtown Plan, both aimed at improving access to the waterfront, supporting housing and shaping growth over the long term.

Community events and tourism activity were also strong through the winter months. Events like Frost Fest, Ignite the Arts and the CSSHL Western Championships brought people into the community and supported local businesses. The hockey championships alone generated an estimated \$6.7 million in economic impact.

Service demand rising across public safety

At the same time, demand for police, fire and bylaw services increased in the first quarter compared to last year.

Calls for service rose across all areas:

- RCMP calls increased 17 per cent

- Bylaw calls increased 18 per cent
- Fire responses increased 29 per cent

Despite the increase, overall violent and property crime continues to track below five-year averages in Penticton.

Staff say much of the increase in service demand is tied to health, addiction and social challenges rather than a broad rise in crime.

Medical calls to the fire department increased by 55 per cent, including a significant rise in overdose responses during the first three months of the year.

Police data also shows many calls involve wellbeing checks and interactions with vulnerable individuals, reflecting the growing role of frontline services in responding to complex community needs.

“This is a trend we’re seeing across many communities,” said Julie Czeck, general manager of public safety and partnerships. “Our teams are responding to more situations where people need support related to mental health, addictions or housing. That’s why we’re focused on working closely with partners and investing in prevention, while continuing to maintain a strong enforcement presence where needed.”

Coordinated response and prevention

The City continues to respond through a combination of enforcement, prevention and collaboration with partners.

This includes increased proactive patrols, targeted work with repeat and high-risk offenders, and ongoing efforts through the Community Safety and Wellbeing Framework.

The City is also working with regional and provincial partners on housing and homelessness initiatives, recognizing that many of the drivers behind service demand extend beyond the municipal role.

Council will review the Q1 results at its May 19 meeting and discuss priorities for the months ahead, including continued work on housing, community safety and supporting a strong local economy.

Residents can watch the meeting live or access the full reports by visiting: [Penticton.ca/council](https://penticton.ca/council).

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