



## CITY OF VANCOUVER

### ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Report Date: November 15, 2012  
Contact: Superintendent Daryl Wiebe - VPD  
Contact No.: 604-717-2703  
RTS No.: 9820  
VanRIMS No.: 08-2000-20  
Meeting Date: November 27, 2012

TO: Vancouver City Council  
FROM: Chief Constable Jim Chu  
SUBJECT: Community Safety Program

#### RECOMMENDATION

THAT City Council receive for information details of a new three-year Community Safety pilot program, planned for implementation in April 2013.

#### CHIEF CONSTABLE'S COMMENTS:

Every day hard working VPD officers go to extraordinary lengths to protect Vancouver's citizens and provide excellent service to maintain quality of life. Despite these efforts, there are currently some significant service gaps that affect both quality of life and service levels for the residents of Vancouver. Lower-priority calls for service are regularly met with lengthy delays. For example, Vancouver residents can expect to wait upwards of six hours, on average, when they report a break and enter to their home, with no suspect on scene. Further, during the busiest periods, Patrol officers are often unable to attend many other low-priority calls due to a lack of capacity and resources.

Police officers are often occupied with mundane and simple tasks, and this requirement regularly takes them out of service, reduces their available proactive policing time, and reduces their ability to respond quickly to higher-priority incidents. Examples of these tasks include tagging property, waiting at insecure premises for a property representative, securing a perimeter around the scene of an incident, managing vehicular or pedestrian traffic in the aftermath of an incident, recovering found property, etc. Many of these tasks could be handled effectively by unarmed staff with peace officer status, in order to free up police officers.

These issues have been a topic of discussion between my Executive Team and the Vancouver Police Union for several months. Much of the discussion has been informed by feedback we have received from our members and our citizens, who are frustrated that we cannot respond to calls sooner. Further, many concerns have been expressed by our officers regarding the time consuming, and ever-increasing, administrative tasks that keep them away from front-line policing and the community.

As a result of these discussions, and to address this identified need, the VPD is presenting a new public safety program to Vancouver City Council, for the 2013 budget. This proposal recommends the addition of "Community Safety" personnel to the ranks of the VPD, with the express purpose of supporting front-line operations by assisting with low-risk tasks currently being completed by police officers, thereby freeing up the police officers for more important work. This proposal has the approval of the Vancouver Police Board.

#### **CITY MANAGER'S COMMENTS:**

The City Manager supports this new initiative, and concurs with the Chief Constable that this project is expected to address identified service gaps for Vancouver residents, businesses, and visitors. This program aligns with the City's Corporate Business Plan goal to provide high-quality police services that make Vancouver safe and enjoyable. The program is also designed to improve police officer availability, increase proactive policing time, and result in a reduction in response times to calls for service.

The City Manager RECOMMENDS that Council receives this report for a three-year VPD Community Safety pilot program. Funding for this program is included in the 2013 Budget Report, which will be presented to Council on December 4, 2012.

#### **POLICY:**

There is no applicable City Council policy.

#### **PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this report is to inform Council of a three-year pilot program, beginning in 2013, which creates a team of 30 full-time equivalent (FTE) Community Safety (CS) personnel. CS personnel will be unarmed peace officers who will wear distinct clothing that identifies them as VPD personnel, while differentiating them from regular police officers. They will support frontline operations, provide a visible presence in the community, and enhance the level of customer service provided to Vancouver residents, businesses and visitors.

#### **DISCUSSION:**

##### *Background*

The VPD is a progressive organization that continually seeks ways to become more efficient and more effective. For example, the creation of the Telephone Response Team in 2001 has

streamlined patrol operations by triaging non-emergency police calls and reducing the demand on limited Patrol resources. In 2006, 19 sworn positions were civilianized, resulting in a redeployment of sworn police officers where the duties they had been performing did not require the authority or credibility of a sworn officer. In 2007, patrol deployment and investigative units were studied extensively as part of the Operational Review, resulting in an improved deployment model in many areas of the Department. The VPD has also invested in improved technology (e.g. PRIME-BC), provided front-line and supervisory training for all members, and enhanced operational accountability through CompStat. Finally, the VPD considers crime prevention to be a priority through partnerships with Community Policing Centres and other volunteer programs.

In addition to police resources in the city, there are numerous publicly or privately funded civilian resources that protect property and people. These include City of Vancouver bylaw enforcement officers, loss prevention officers, the "Downtown Ambassadors," alarm monitoring, and other private security personnel. All of these resources have a lower level of training and authority to use force than armed police officers and they are used in lower level situations commensurate with their training, role within the larger community, and their legal authority. As an example, the bylaw officers employed by the City of Vancouver focus their enforcement efforts on unoccupied vehicles (such as a parking meter violation). It is outside their training and authority to enforce violations that involve ticketing people (who may be uncooperative), which requires them to make a request for identification.

The VPD is also committed to reducing crime and improving public safety through community engagement. For example, the Business Liaison Unit delivers crime prevention programs and advice to Vancouver businesses. The Community Policing Centres utilize volunteer foot and bicycle teams and assist with perimeter traffic and crowd management during parades, street closures, and the annual Celebration of Light fireworks display. In addition, the Citizens' Crime Watch program engages more than 100 volunteers who monitor neighbourhoods, reporting suspicious activity and identifying stolen cars.

The VPD is committed to improving the safety and quality of life of Vancouver residents, businesses and visitors through partnerships, problem-solving, crime prevention and enforcement. However, the VPD cannot be "all things to all people" and there are service gaps that affect the quality of life in Vancouver. Lower-priority calls for service are regularly met with lengthy delays because patrol officers are busy with administrative duties, court, serious incidents, incoming emergency calls and other police duties. As an example, Vancouver residents can expect to wait upwards of six hours, on average, when they report a break and enter to a home with no suspect on scene. During the busiest periods, patrol officers are often unable to attend certain types of calls such as noise complaints, parking complaints, annoyance complaints, and suspicious circumstances.

Community feedback provided through the 2011 Residential and Business Surveys, conducted by NRG Research Group, confirms there is room to improve the VPD's handling of lower-priority community issues. Both surveys showed that response time and visible policing were two top concerns for Vancouver residents and businesses. When they were asked to provide a single recommendation to the VPD, 30% of all residents and 35% of all business stakeholders suggested increased police presence and visibility.

The VPD believes that there are a number of tasks that could be handled effectively by unarmed staff with peace officer status. Similar deployment models have been used elsewhere in Canada, and internationally, under a number of different program names, including: Auxiliary, Reserve, Cadet, Community Safety Officer, and Special Constable Programs. In these jurisdictions, lower-level, unarmed peace officers handle activities that do not require the presence of a highly trained professional police officer who is armed with a firearm. They engage in visible and proactive duties in support of regular patrol officers. By taking on these lower-level duties, regular police officers have significantly increased their capacity for proactive policing, and greater availability and visibility to the community.

For example, the RCMP deploys Community Safety Officers (CSOs) in a number of BC detachments, including Langley, Surrey and Maple Ridge. The RCMP is also exploring the feasibility of introducing CSOs in Burnaby. RCMP CSOs have a primary mandate to improve safety through operational support, as well as assisting with crime prevention and public education programs.

To fill the current service gaps, and allow regular patrol officers increased visibility and proactive policing time, the VPD is proposing a three-year pilot program to deploy 30 FTE peace officers, who are tentatively called Community Safety (CS) personnel. This group will be comprised of 20 full-time and 20 part-time CS employees (or an equivalent combination). These unarmed peace officers will contribute to community safety by supporting frontline operations, proactively addressing quality of life issues and responding to the concerns of Vancouver residents, businesses and visitors.

The personnel assigned to the CS team will be a new category of frontline VPD employees. They will be an addition to existing patrol resources, but are not intended to be a replacement or substitute for fully trained police officers. A status report will be submitted to the Vancouver Police Board and City Council before the pilot program ends. This status report will include a detailed evaluation of the program, measure its impact using predetermined metrics, and may recommend the continuation and formalization of the CS program if the evaluation supports it.

### *Duties*

The personnel assigned to the CS team will be unarmed peace officers who will respond to lower-priority, lower-risk, and lower-complexity tasks, while focusing on community engagement, quality of life issues and customer service. More specifically, the full-time and part-time CS employees will be responsible for five operational functions:

1. Patrol Support and Response to Lower-priority Tasks
2. Traffic Control
3. Investigation and Patrol Support
4. Proactive Activities
5. Logistical Support

The expectation is that the personnel assigned to the CS team will engage in low-risk tasks. They will not undertake any task where there is a dangerous suspect. This includes primarily, but not exclusively, property crime reports, parking complaints, quality of life issues, and other customer service calls at the discretion of a patrol supervisor. The personnel assigned to the CS team will be involved in "cold" incident reports and may assist regular patrol

officers with various tasks including picking up supplementary documents, perimeter security at crime scenes, and assisting with the transportation of property to facilitate tagging. CS employees will free up regular patrol officers from these tasks, enabling them to spend more time on proactive policing activities, address more serious crime or disorder issues, and remain more readily available to respond to other calls. Combined, the CS employees and the regular patrol officers with more proactive time will be much more visible in the community.

The level of customer service for priority 3 and 4 calls will also improve because response times for these categories of incidents will be significantly reduced. With CS employees taking on lower priority tasks, the city-wide average response time to “cold” break and enter and property report calls is expected to decrease by at least 50%. CS employees will assist in providing the quality of service that citizens expect but that the VPD can’t always deliver due to workload pressures, resource constraints and higher priority issues.

In addition to creating increased availability and visibility for regular patrol officers, the CS employees themselves will be visibly active and add a VPD presence in the community. They will interact with the community and engage the public, with a particular focus on customer service and community liaison. The personnel assigned to the CS team will assist patrol officers by providing additional “eyes and ears” on the streets. They will deploy in “hot spot” areas, where regular patrol officers often do not have as much available time to work (e.g., the West End, beaches, etc.). The effective deployment of part-time CS employees on traditionally busy Friday and Saturday nights will enable the VPD to better meet the higher weekend call demand.

The personnel assigned to the CS team will have the training, supervision and increased legal knowledge to enforce bylaw offences not generally enforced by City of Vancouver bylaw officers, such as off-leash dogs or unauthorized parking, especially when the subject of the complaint is uncooperative. This training and authority will enable better enforcement in our parks, on our beaches, and in other public spaces.

When needed, the personnel assigned to the CS team will provide additional support for traffic control duties, freeing up regular patrol officers for proactive police work. They can also assist regular patrol officers with routine investigative tasks such as canvassing commercial areas to locate potential evidence (e.g. video evidence) and maintaining perimeter security at low-risk crime scenes. Finally, the personnel assigned to the CS team will be available to provide logistical support during large-scale deployments, major events, emergencies or disasters.

### *Risk Management*

The personnel assigned to the CS team will have distinct clothing that identifies them as VPD personnel while differentiating them from regular police officers. They will not be equipped with firearms. They will, however, be issued safety equipment such as ballistic vests and handcuffs. They will also be trained, certified, and supervised in the use of intermediate weapons like OC (pepper) spray and batons.

The personnel assigned to the CS team will not be placed in situations where there is a high degree of risk, or where the CS employees could likely come in contact with a potentially violent suspect. Within the patrol setting, various steps will be taken to protect CS employees and mitigate risk. Their work assignments will be overseen by patrol supervisors

within the four patrol districts. In cases where there is a potential safety risk, the NCO will confirm whether a CS employee can be dispatched safely. Where there is doubt, the CS employee will not be deployed.

To ensure that the personnel assigned to the CS team can properly recognize possible threats and can react properly in case of emergency, they will be provided with training and equipment that is far superior to the training and equipment provided to bylaw officers and private security guards. Since the personnel assigned to the CS team will be special constables, they will fall under the authority of the BC Police Act, the Office of the Police Complaint Commissioner (OPCC), the Independent Investigations Office (IIO) and the Vancouver Police Board. This provides for enhanced civilian oversight and accountability if there is an allegation of professional misconduct.

### *Recruiting Standards*

Applicants for the CS program are anticipated to be individuals who have an interest in policing, or are hoping to become regular police officers, but require additional work or life experience. Although the pre-employment qualifications for CS employees may be different than the qualifications expected for regular sworn officers, the CS program is expected to be a useful source of candidates for the regular VPD recruiting program. Regular applicants with CS experience will possess some of the requisite police training and will have a better understanding of the challenges and rewards of a policing career. VPD recruiters will also have greater insight into the applicant's skill level and aptitude for the profession.

### *Training*

The training for CS employees will include a curriculum covering 240 hours of instructional time. It will include job-specific curriculum required to fulfil CS duties in the community, and ensure that they are trained adequately to deal with a wide variety of situations. The proposed training will be coordinated and delivered by the VPD Training Unit.

For full-time CS employees, the training will take six weeks, with candidates attending class five days per week. For part-time CS employees, the training will take place twice a week during the evenings and one full weekend day, for a total of 14 hours of training per week. This approach will extend the overall training period for part-time CS employees to just over 17 weeks.

### *Pay and Hours of Work*

It is expected that the hourly compensation for CS employees will be aligned with VPD Jail Guards, although this is subject to negotiation with the VPU. Full-time CS employees will work 1,825 to 2,080 hours per year and will receive employee benefits. The pool of part-time CS employees will have no guarantee of work, but their aggregated hours of work will be equivalent to 10 FTE positions. Part-time CS employees will receive the same hourly wage, along with a percentage in lieu of benefits for the duration of the contract.

### *Shifting*

The pilot program will start with 20 full-time and 20 part-time CS employees, for an equivalent total of 30 FTE positions. An analysis of call load shows that a 4-on/4-off rotation schedule, similar to the existing patrol shift schedule, will be an efficient and appropriate deployment model for the full-time CS employees. They are best scheduled into one 11-hour day shift and one 11-hour evening shift.

Part-time CS employees will primarily be available to assist patrol officers and supplement full-time CS employees on Friday and Saturday nights, when the VPD experiences a higher call volume and work load.

### *Evaluation*

In order to determine the effectiveness of the CS program, an evidenced-based evaluation framework will be developed. In particular, the metrics for evaluation will focus on patrol performance and internal and external satisfaction. The evaluation framework will include the following measures.

1. Response time to calls for service: Since the personnel assigned to the CS team will be taking on support tasks for lower priority calls, it is expected that the response times for lower priority calls will decrease significantly. By freeing up regular officers, the average response time to emergency calls may also decrease.
2. Average utilization rate: It is expected that VPD patrol officers will have more proactive time and the average utilization rate should decrease.
3. Correlation coefficient between police staffing and call load: If part-time CS employees are deployed on weekend nights, when call load is higher, the correlation coefficient between police staffing and call load will increase to reflect a more efficient deployment model.
4. Community satisfaction: As part of the annual residential and business surveys, the VPD will measure community satisfaction specifically with the CS program.
5. Internal satisfaction and support: Internal satisfaction surveys and focus groups will be administered to confirm whether patrol officers feel that their proactive policing opportunities increased with the addition of the CS personnel. Feedback from the CS employees themselves will also be compiled.

The Vancouver Police Board will be updated on a regular basis and a formal status report will be submitted to the Board and City Council before the pilot program ends. This report may recommend the continuation and formalization of the CS program, depending on the evaluation results.

### *Alternatives*

In 2007, the VPD introduced the Metro Team concept which was endorsed by the joint City/VPD Operational Review Steering Committee, and subsequently approved by the Vancouver Police Board and City Council. The goal was to create two Metro Teams, each

comprised of 14 Constables and one Sergeant, deployed on a 4-on/4-off schedule. The Metro Teams were designed to be highly mobile uniform patrol resources deployable city-wide, seven days per week in the areas of the city experiencing the greatest demand for service. The result would be to fill service gaps that occur during activity spikes and smooth out daily fluctuations in the activity level by district.

The implementation of Metro Teams would lead to significant efficiency and performance gains in various aspects of VPD patrol operations. The 30 Metro Team officers would represent roughly 36,500 additional unit-hours annually that could be deployed proactively investigating suspicious activities, addressing street disorder issues, gathering intelligence, enforcing traffic laws, conducting follow-up investigations and providing a high-visibility police presence. While the Metro Team is working, the average number of patrol units available to take incoming calls for service in each patrol district would be expected to increase by approximately 20%. With the creation of Metro Teams, the average priority 1 response time would be expected to decrease by up to 42 seconds city-wide. The average response time to priority 2, 3, and 4 calls would also be expected to decrease by 95 seconds, 8 minutes, and 23 minutes, respectively. With the creation of Metro Teams, the coefficient of correlation between patrol staffing levels and call load would be expected to increase from roughly 0.77 to 0.82, an efficiency gain of roughly 6%.

Although funding for the additional officers needed to staff the Metro Teams was approved by City Council in 2007,<sup>1</sup> with a phased in approach, budget constraints have resulted in the VPD holding 57 sworn police officer positions vacant in 2011 and 2012, and the Metro Teams have never been created or deployed. Combined with workload pressures, these vacancies have exacerbated the service gaps in patrol and reduced the Department's ability to adequately respond to lower-priority calls, including street disorder, annoying circumstances, bylaw violations and other quality of life issues. This situation is anticipated to continue and get worse over time if these vacancies remain unfilled.

### *Union Considerations*

The Vancouver Police Union (VPU) has been consulted on this project, beginning in January 2012. The VPU has asserted that the scope of work the CS employees will perform is best described as VPU work. Other civic unions have also been briefed on this project.

Over the past eight months, there have been a number of informal discussions with the VPU, in addition to more formal briefings as a part of ongoing labour management processes. There is complete agreement that the workload for the regular sworn members is increasing, given the complexity of the work. Discussions are ongoing with the VPU to determine the optimal way to increase the capacity of the regular sworn members, and agreement with the VPU is desired before moving ahead with the CS program.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

The total cost of the three-year pilot program is approximately \$6.5 million, spread out over four budget years. This includes approximately \$475,000 in one-time start-up costs and operating costs of approximately \$2.0 million per year.

---

<sup>1</sup> RTS No. 7008 (November 27, 2007) and RTS No. 7017 (December 11, 2007).



### CS Program Costing Summary

	Apr - Dec 2013	2014	2015	Jan - Mar 2016	3 Year TOTAL
<b>One time start up cost:</b>					
Fleet	\$ 219,000				\$ 219,000
Uniform and equipment	135,560				135,560
Facilities	80,000				80,000
Office and computer	40,430				40,430
	<u>474,990</u>	-	-	-	<u>474,990</u>
<b>Annual operating cost:</b>					
Salary and benefits	1,299,810	1,733,080	1,733,080	433,270	5,199,240
Fleet	30,450	40,600	40,600	10,150	121,800
Office and miscellaneous	71,475	95,300	95,300	23,825	285,900
Uniform and equipment	102,750	137,000	137,000	34,250	411,000
	<u>1,504,485</u>	<u>2,005,980</u>	<u>2,005,980</u>	<u>501,495</u>	<u>6,017,940</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 1,979,475</b>	<b>\$ 2,005,980</b>	<b>\$ 2,005,980</b>	<b>\$ 501,495</b>	<b>\$ 6,492,930</b>

One-time start-up costs include administration, clothing, facilities modification and additions, computers and six marked *hybrid* vehicles. The salary and benefit estimates are subject to final classification. On-going costs include salary and benefits, vehicle operating expenses, office and computer supplies, clothing maintenance and laundry, equipment and outside levies to E-Comm.

Assuming the CS program is implemented in April 2013, the total investment for 2013 will be approximately \$1.98 million, comprised of \$475,000 in start-up costs and \$1.504 million in operating costs. The annual operating costs are approximately \$2.0 million in each of 2014 and 2015 and the cost for the final three months of the pilot program in 2016 is approximately \$502,000. A project status report will be submitted to the Police Board and City Council well before the end date of the pilot, with recommendations on the future of this project beyond the 2015 budget year.

Some financial offset is available to the City, as a result of the projected bylaw enforcement duties of the CS team. This will reduce the net cost of the pilot project by \$588,000 annually, or 27%.

## CONCLUSION:

To address service gaps around lower-priority calls for service and quality of life issues, the VPD is proposing the April 2013 implementation of a three-year pilot program for the deployment of 30 FTE Community Safety employees. This three-year pilot program would transform how some policing services in Vancouver are delivered.

The personnel assigned to the CS team will be unarmed peace officers wearing distinct clothing that identifies them as VPD personnel while differentiating them from regular police officers. They will support frontline operations, provide a further VPD presence and enhance the level of customer service provided to Vancouver residents, businesses and visitors.

The personnel assigned to the CS team will support regular patrol officers by assuming tasks and duties that do not necessarily require the skills and qualifications of a fully trained, fully equipped professional police officer. This will allow regular patrol officers to focus on proactive policing and enforcement duties, and increase their visibility to the community. The personnel assigned to the CS team will assist in providing an enhanced service level to the public that the VPD is currently unable to meet, partly because the City's budgetary constraints have resulted in the VPD maintaining a significant number of vacancies. Finally, the personnel assigned to the CS team will enable the VPD to deliver more visible police patrols and quicker police response times for lower-priority calls. This service gap has been identified as the most significant community concern in both external community surveys and in the Department's own internal analysis.

The total cost of the three-year pilot program is approximately \$6.5 million. This includes approximately \$475,000 in one-time start-up costs and on-going operating costs of approximately \$2.0 million per year.

The CS program is based on a new deployment model and is intended to be a pilot project. The personnel assigned to the CS team will not replace regular patrol officers and do not eliminate the need to fill existing vacancies. An evaluation report will be submitted to the Vancouver Police Board and City Council prior to the completion of the program.

\* \* \* \* \*