

Report to / Rapport au:

**OTTAWA POLICE SERVICE BOARD
LA COMMISSION DE SERVICE DE POLICE D'OTTAWA**

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Submitted by / Soumis par:

Chief of Police, Ottawa Police Service / Chef de police, Service de police d'Ottawa

Contact Person / Personne resource:

**Kevin Maloney, A/Superintendent District Revitalization Program
MaloneyK@ottawapolice.ca**

SUBJECT: DISTRICT REVITALIZATION PROGRAM UPDATE

OBJET: PROGRAMME DE REVITALISATION DES QUARTIERS

REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Ottawa Police Service Board receive this report for information.

RECOMMANDATIONS DU RAPPORT

Que la Commission de service de police d'Ottawa prenne connaissance du présent rapport à titre d'information.

BACKGROUND

In the 2024-2027 Strategic Plan Semi-Annual Report presented to the Ottawa Police Service Board in March, the District Revitalization Program committed to providing a more detailed and comprehensive update in April. This report aims to fulfill that commitment by highlighting significant changes and proposing a path forward for the program. We will showcase the progress made, delve into the challenges encountered, and outline the strategic initiatives planned to ensure the continued success and impact of our revitalization efforts.

The District Revitalization Project (DRP), a cornerstone initiative for the Ottawa Police Service (OPS) and the Ottawa Police Service Board (OPSB), was officially launched in 2023 to revitalize and enhance community policing in Ottawa. Rooted in the principles of Community Safety and Well-Being (CSWB) and the Community Safety and Policing Act (CSPA), the project aims to address the evolving safety needs of the community through a comprehensive and strategic approach. Recognizing its transformative potential, the

DRP was prioritized in the OPS budgets for 2024 and 2025, underscoring the critical investment required to bolster community safety, rebuild public trust, and foster deeper engagement with residents and community partners. The project has generated substantial interest and meaningful discussions at both Ottawa Police Services Board meetings and City of Ottawa Council sessions, reflecting its importance in shaping the future of policing in our city.

The DRP conducted the necessary research and led a review of the existing service delivery model in late 2023. This review guided the development of recommendations, informed by leading practices, to build a more effective and community-focused service delivery framework. The Service is focused on creating a District Policing Model that fosters geographic ownership, encourages cultural responsiveness for tailored policing, strengthens community partnerships, and ensures the effective allocation of resources to better serve the residents of Ottawa.

A phased-in approach [known as Pilot Deployment Model (PDM) - Parts I, II, III] was introduced and approved in April 2024.

The PDM Parts I, II, III, was an iterative proof-of-concept design, aimed at establishing foundational elements for an effective and efficient Service transition. The PDM, Part I ran from May - August 2024 inclusive and planned to:

- Evolve and refresh the Ottawa Police Service's *Community Policing Strategy* to serve as a fundamental framework for community policing
- Enhance communication, transparency, and police legitimacy by improving engagement with Councilors, community groups, and stakeholders
- Implement a proof of concept to significantly enhance public safety in our downtown area through the Community Outreach Response and Engagement (CORE) Strategy
- Establish consistent channels for community access to OPS, enabling public input on community safety priorities
- Focus on ways in which to streamline issue intake, improve coordination, and strengthen resolution to optimize a coordinated approach
- Improve capacity for better access to Senior Officers who have the authority to influence and direct resources to community-specific concerns

- Strengthen capacity within the Neighbourhood Policing Directorate (NPD) by increasing resources to stabilize and expand Neighbourhood Resource Teams (NRT), Community Police Officers (CPO), and Traffic Enforcement officers.
- Undertake a thorough review and analysis of existing geographic boundaries to design a new South District as part of the eventual transition to a four-District Model. This essential work is required to identify necessary boundary adjustments to improve service delivery across rural, suburban, and urban areas, while ensuring response times for both emergency and non-emergency calls for service are maintained or enhanced.

The Board has been kept informed of the progress of the District Revitalization Project (DRP) through regular reports tabled in 2024, as well as a detailed Technical Briefing presentation delivered to Ottawa City Council in September 2024.

Over the past year, the DRP team, in collaboration with key members of NPD, have made significant strides in advancing the development of a District Policing Model.

Progress includes:

- Structuring and evolving OPS' Community Policing Strategy (CPS) in line with OPS' draft Community Safety & Well-Being (CSWB) principles/framework
- Restructuring NPD to include four districts (East, Central, South, and West), each led by a District Inspector. These Inspectors are playing a pivotal role in building strong relationships with city and community members within their assigned Wards.
- Incorporating the four elements of the CPS —Access, Affect, Act, and Account into the operational practices and approaches of Neighbourhood Policing, wherever feasible.
- Realigning the Strategic Partnership & Engagement Unit under the CSWB Branch to streamline collaboration, enhance community outreach, and align with key strategic initiatives.
- Launching recruitment and onboarding initiatives for civilian roles—District Analysts, Research Analysts, and Community Intake & Relationship Specialists—to support and shape District activities within the NPD.
- Staffing 16 of the 52 officer vacancies in 2024 into the NPD District Model to strengthen and advance resource stabilization efforts. Resource allocation is expected to increase in 2025, evidenced by the assignment of 12 officers to NPD in April 2025

- Implementing the CORE Strategy for the downtown area by partnering with community stakeholders and agencies to establish a Neighbourhood Operations Centre (NOC) on Rideau Street, introducing and operationalizing the Integrated Community Situation Table (ICST), implementing Hot Spot policing, enhancing the safety and security of downtown businesses and residential areas through Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) assessments, and forming a Community Advisory Board to align with city-wide stakeholder engagement initiatives.
- Initiating and conducting a comprehensive and collaborative District Mapping exercise to align neighborhoods into four districts. Using a data-driven approach, the team analyzed Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD) data (January 2023 - June 2024) while factoring in community needs, geography, socio-demographic characteristics, neighborhood similarities, ward boundaries, past district models, operational challenges, and best practices. This mapping process will optimize the operational response to service calls by ensuring they are addressed at the appropriate service level without introducing barriers or risks to officer response effectiveness and safety.
- Conducting community policing research and reviewing leading practices to identify innovative approaches that align with the Community Policing Strategy components of Access, Affect, Act, and Account. This includes examining strategies that enhance accessibility and inclusivity, strengthen community relationships, support proactive and effective actions, and promote accountability and transparency within policing operations.

DISCUSSION

In Q3 2024, the DRP team acknowledged that, despite the notable progress made, the scope and complexity of the project exceeded initial expectations, highlighting its transformative nature. This realization necessitated a strategic pause to thoroughly assess the emerging risks and complexities, including those associated with current staffing constraints within the Service and associated logistical hurdles. The team demonstrated exceptional foresight and agility by promptly seeking guidance to identify the required adjustments to the approach and overall plan.

In January 2025, the DRP team began efforts to establish a clearer and unified vision of the district model, which served as a guiding blueprint for the program's transformation. This vision clarified goals, the impact to operational structures, and service delivery expectations. Following this, the “project” evolved into a “program” and introduced an appropriately scaled framework and structure to navigate the heightened complexities of

the program. This structured approach involved validating project objectives, developing a program strategy, identifying key deliverables, setting clear milestones, identifying the integration and dependencies of other ongoing strategic initiatives, rebaselining the schedule, and implementing comprehensive risk management strategies to address identified challenges. Leveraging program management disciplines, the team then strengthened governance mechanisms, identified program resourcing and capability gaps, and enhanced collaboration across key stakeholders.

In addition to these efforts, a strategic risk materialized during the Organizational Design Modeling phase, highlighting critical dependencies tied to resource allocation and other complexities. This necessitated further adjustments to our course.

What's Changing?

1. Expanding and Implementing the District Policing Model by 2027

Ensuring adequate resourcing is critical for the effective delivery of services by the NPD's District teams, NRTs, CPOs, Traffic Enforcement Officers, and Youth Officers—including the establishment of the South Platoons within Frontline (FLD).

A review of the Staffing Stabilization Strategy completed in Q1 2025 determined that, although hiring targets were met, prioritizing staffing placements remained a challenge due to critical shortages across various sections. Specifically, Frontline Patrol, Sexual Assault Child Abuse Unit, Intimate Partner Violence Unit and the Homicide Unit. In addition, while funding investments from the Provincial and Federal governments has been a positive development, the need to resource new and unplanned projects has also contributed to low staffing placements for the DRP and NPD.

These complex placement decisions required a risk-based approach to allocating resources to areas of greatest need. Consequently, the 2024 plan to allocate 31 officers to replenish a shortage of 52 officers in the NPD did not fully materialize, restricting the capacity of NPD Districts to address identified issues and concerns raised by City Councillors, community partners, and residents in a consistent, sustainable and impactful manner. However, with the first installment of 12 officers in Q2 2025 and more expected to join throughout the year, we are better positioned to build up the NPD and enhance its operational capacity going forward.

OPS has recognized that the expansion of the full District Policing Model at the intended pace is not feasible. Besides resource constraints and budget limitations, there are also logistical, planning, and workload complexities to consider.

To illustrate, an initial assessment estimated that establishing South Platoons alone would require an additional 20-25 FTEs to implement a command structure similar to West, Central, and East platoons. While constables currently deliver police services citywide, including in the south, creating a distinct South Platoon would also necessitate additional Sergeants and Staff Sergeants. It is important to note that this estimate excludes the additional roles needed to complete the expanded four-District Model's structural design, which is at a 75% completion rate and will be reported to the OPSB at a later date.

Given this reality, the DRP Executive Steering Committee (ESC) approved taking a more measured approach to mitigate risks and ensure successful implementation. As a result, the establishment of the South Platoon and the broader expansion of the four districts across the entire service has been rescheduled to January 2027. This revised schedule allows time to build the required back-end infrastructure, ensuring that staffing requirements and ***budget needs*** are adequately met.

It is essential to recognize that the tailored, proactive initiatives in all Wards will continue and even intensify throughout 2025 and 2026, as detailed below. The notable delay is specifically associated with the Frontline platoon structure within the South District.

2. Advancing NPD's District foundational infrastructure in 2025-2026

In 2025 and 2026, the DRP will concentrate on developing essential infrastructure, systems, and processes, alongside fostering a cultural shift towards community policing. These efforts aim to ensure that back-end structures are robust enough to securely manage information, streamline workflows, enable comprehensive reporting and tracking, and uphold service standards. This will minimize manual work and enhance overall efficiency and build additional capacity for our community operational teams.

The Program's efforts in 2025 will be structured to deliver the following in 2026:

i. Monitoring the staffing stabilization of the Neighbourhood Policing Directorate

The primary focus for 2025/2026 is to stabilize staffing within NPD through the recently revised Workforce Management Staffing Prioritization Strategy. This strategy ensures that as new recruits become road-ready, a corresponding proportional number of FLD officers can be transferred off frontline duties and allocated to NPD. While the exact number of transferable officers remains uncertain from quarter to quarter, we are currently allocating **a total of twelve additional officers to NPD in Q2**. Although significant changes may take time, this approach lays the groundwork for steady advancement as resource levels improve.

As neighbourhood resources are scaled up, communities will experience enhanced police presence and engagement. NPD Districts will work progressively to implement the Community Policing Strategy, fostering strong partnerships with community and Ward stakeholders. This will involve identifying local concerns and collaboratively developing actionable solutions to address them effectively. Residents can expect more proactive and responsive policing, including traffic management and youth engagement, tailored to the unique needs of their neighbourhoods.

ii. Building a CSWB & Community Policing Culture

The Service's CSWB Branch is currently developing OPS' CSWB framework. This overarching framework integrates key strategies, such as the Community Policing Strategy, to ensure a consistent and cohesive approach to serving our communities. It is essential for each member, each leader, to fully understand these concepts to advance the culture effectively. Advancing culture goes beyond raising awareness; it requires a strategic approach to embed CSWB and Community Policing into the organization's fabric by adapting structures, processes, and daily operations. The DRP will facilitate the development of the culture strategy and propose an implementation plan.

iii. Organizational Design Work for expanding the four-District Model

A comprehensive organizational design for a service-wide four-District Model is currently in development. This work includes several key activities: establishing organizational design principles (ODPs) to guide and evaluate the proposed models, analyzing functions to identify and categorize each district's responsibilities, designing the structure to ensure proper alignment, hierarchy, and reporting lines, assessing the appropriate span of control, and evaluating the impact on workflow, resource allocation, and processes. Additionally, budgetary analysis is conducted to understand the financial implications, including restructuring costs and potential savings. Effective implementation planning is crucial, involving detailed timelines, milestones, and change management strategies. This includes considering the impact on HR activities, such as promotions, expressions of interest for staffing South Platoons, and the 2026 Annual Leave selection process for 2027. These activities are essential for integrating the four-District Model into the larger organizational framework and minimizing any disruptions to operations.

iv. Community Relationship Management Intake System

A structured Community Relationship Management (CRM) Intake System is being developed to effectively manage concerns and priorities raised by residents,

community partners, and stakeholders. This system will include clear intake channels, standardized processes for prioritizing issues, assignments, defined service standards and mechanisms to track and report on resolutions—ensuring transparency and accountability. By transitioning from a predominately manual, decentralized process to a more efficient, automated system, we will ensure community issues are promptly received, addressed and managed, enhancing confidence and alignment with core customer service principles.

v. Completing Geographic Deployment Work

The geographic deployment model will be finalized in the coming months. Currently, a significant focus is being placed on determining the boundaries and resource requirements of zones within each District. Each zone will reflect the unique characteristics and needs of its area, enabling more targeted and efficient service delivery. This localized approach allows the team to better understand and address specific concerns, leading to quicker resolutions and improved community satisfaction. This foundational work is crucial as it affects essential infrastructure, systems, and processes across various areas. These include radio channels, fleet and equipment levels at each facility, dispatch services, facility requirements such as working space and lockers, data analytics and reporting, RMS workflow, CAD, mapping systems, and MDTs in patrol cars, among others. This work will be planned for 2026, setting the stage for the full launch of the District Policing Model in 2027.

vi. Advancing Community Policing on the Frontline

Despite some delays with the implementation of the South District platoons, Frontline teams will work towards delivering a more tailored and priority service level in the Wards. The focus will be on advancing community policing by enhancing activities that lead to increased community engagement, building awareness of local needs, and fostering collaboration. Officers will integrate these practices into their daily operations as capacity allows, promoting a culture rooted in prevention and problem-solving. Training programs, tools, and support structures will be considered to support this approach. By adopting these practices, officers can lay the groundwork for effective community policing, ensuring strong connections with residents and proactively addressing issues well before the full district model launch in 2027.

vii. Neighbourhood Engagement Strategy: Introduction of innovative approaches

We are dedicated to forming a robust Neighbourhood Engagement Strategy in collaboration with community and city partners. This approach will steer our consultation and collaboration efforts, ensuring each district's development is inclusive and attuned to local needs. The strategy will investigate various approaches to boost collaboration and address local priorities. One potential initiative is the creation and pilot of Community Partner Tables in select areas, dependent on available resources and partner capacity. These tables will act as collaborative platforms where OPS, community partners, and other stakeholders can identify issues, share insights, co-create solutions and monitor progress. Additionally, the strategy will outline processes for scaling initiatives as OPS and community resources grow.

viii. Evidence-Based Policing & Analytics

To gain a clear and actionable understanding of community and district issues, it is important to integrate and analyze crime data alongside community data from the CRM intake system. This comprehensive approach, from both a quantitative and qualitative perspective, will provide a detailed overview of the challenges within a particular community, ward or zone. The DRP Program will partner with our Data Analytics Team and others to build a robust analytics and evidence-based policing framework. This framework will steer decision-making and operational strategies at tactical, operational and strategic levels.

ix. Accountability Framework

A key component of the Community Policing Strategy is "Account", which is essential for monitoring and reporting progress on outcomes. The DRP will focus on creating a structured framework for performance management to enhance both operational and strategic decision-making.

At an operational level, this framework will support the identification of immediate problems, efficient resource deployment, and quick responses to emerging trends. It will also facilitate collaboration among districts to jointly determine connections and patterns, ensuring a cohesive approach to problem-solving and resource allocation. This focus on day-to-day management and tactical adjustments will enhance the overall responsiveness and effectiveness of community policing efforts.

At a strategic level, the framework provides a broader view of long-term trends and outcomes, enabling leaders to make informed decisions about resource allocation and strategic initiatives. This approach may involve partnerships with community and

city stakeholders to respond collectively to complex crime and safety issues, fostering a unified effort to address long-term challenges and opportunities.

This dual-level approach improves overall organizational effectiveness, fosters a culture of accountability, and drives continuous performance improvement. By integrating accountability into the Community Policing Strategy, we ensure that every action is measured, every outcome is evaluated, and every decision is informed by reliable data, ultimately leading to safer communities.

The foundational components mentioned above will lead to significant improvements and benefits in how the districts operate. As we expand the structure service-wide in 2027, these foundational efforts will ensure consistency, continuity, and efficiency across the entire service, directly enhancing the quality of service provided to our communities.

CONSULTATION

The DRP Program will continue to prioritize our consultative and collaborative approach. By actively engaging with both those who deliver policing services daily and community members who experience OPS, we aim to develop effective strategies, processes, and approaches that enhance and advance community policing.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The DRP Program is currently operating within its allocated budget as it relates to the implementation of this project. However, the resourcing requirements for the South Platoon, along with additional positions to support the District Model, will have budget implications. While the work to finalize the exact numbers will be known in the coming weeks, it's expected that the increase in FTE to implement the District Model will be between 20 and 30. These considerations will be addressed during the formulation of the Budget for the fiscal year 2026.

CONCLUSION

The OPS remains steadfast in its commitment to advance community policing. We aim to stay closely connected with the challenges and unique needs of communities across the city. Although community policing is integral to our service delivery today, our efforts to enhance it, through the revitalization of a district model, are not progressing at the pace we anticipated nor at the pace our communities and city partners expect.

We acknowledge that there is a delay in fully expanding the district structure across the Service, and we are informing you of this delay. Rest assured, our ongoing efforts are paving the way for the successful rollout of the full District model, including the South Platoon, by 2027. Throughout 2025 and early 2026, we are focused on building the

essential backend structures, processes, and systems crucial for seamless future operations, while continuing to advance our community policing activities.

Our neighborhood policing teams, including District Inspectors, NRTs, CPOs, and traffic officers, remain committed to working across the city in partnership with our wards, and community partners to improve the safety of our residents. We are confident that these foundational efforts will lead to a more robust and responsive community policing framework, ultimately enhancing the safety and well-being of our communities.