

Report to / Rapport au:

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

29 September 2025 / 29 Septembre 2025

Submitted by / Soumis par:

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

Contact Person / Personne ressource:

**Deputy Chief Paul Burnett, Community Police Command / Commandement de la
police communautaire
BurnettP@ottawapolice.ca**

SUBJECT: CORE STRATEGY AND NEIGHBOURHOOD OPERATIONS CENTRE

**OBJET: LA STRATEGIE DU CORE ET DU CENTRE DES OPÉRATIONS DE
QUARTIER**

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

Residents and businesses in the downtown core continue to voice significant concerns regarding social disorder, open drug use, and the concentration of services in their communities. OPS recognizes these important issues, and they continue to be the primary focus of our CORE Strategy. The initiatives described in this report directly address community concerns through a combination of proactive police presence, targeted enforcement, and stronger partnerships with residents, businesses, and service providers.

While implementing CORE remains a top priority, staffing limitations have impacted our ability to sustain a consistent police presence in high-priority areas. To address this, recruitment and training are ongoing, with new officers being added to frontline patrol and Neighbourhood Resource Teams as they become available. Additionally, OPS is

working closely with City partners, including social services, housing, public health, OC Transpo, and By-law Services, to coordinate our responses more effectively. Achieving meaningful progress requires collective effort, and OPS will continue collaborating with our partners to ensure that our response matches the scale and complexity of these challenges.

Through the Neighbourhood Operations Centre (NOC), the Integrated Community Situation Table (ICST), and targeted Hot Spots Policing, OPS is strengthening its ability to:

- Maintain a visible, proactive presence downtown,
- Provide timely support for people facing elevated risks, and
- Work in partnership with community agencies, businesses, and residents to create lasting solutions.

This report provides an update on the progress of CORE in 2025.

DISCUSSION

Neighbourhood Operations Centre (NOC)

The Neighbourhood Operations Centre has become a hub for proactive presence and partnership in the downtown core. It brings together OPS, city partners, businesses, and residents to address ongoing safety concerns.

Partnerships in Action

- The Frontline Taskforce meets regularly at the NOC, bringing together OC Transpo, Community Engagement Teams, Community and Social Services, Public Works, Ottawa Public Health, Ottawa Community Housing, and By-law Services.
- Daily drop-ins from OC Transpo Special Constables, CET members, and the Market Paramedic Response Unit ensure constant collaboration and rapid problem-solving.
- Business engagement is ongoing through Cadillac Fairview Rideau, which has hosted tenant meetings on shoplifting and loitering, as well as emergency preparedness sessions.
- Residents use the NOC to raise concerns ranging from open drug use to theft, with OPS and partners responding jointly.
- The NOC also functions as an OPS hub for Neighbourhood Resource Team (NRT) projects and operational planning.

Community Access

The NOC hosts monthly open doors events, focused on themes like CamSafe, recruiting, and outreach. OPS units such as Outreach and Recruiting and Crime Stoppers participate, strengthening trust and visibility.

CAMSafe – Community Camera Registry

CAMSafe is a forward-looking community safety initiative that connects residents and businesses who own security cameras with police investigators. First launched in Belleville and now championed in Ottawa by Community Policing Officers, the program allows camera owners to securely register their contact information—**not live footage**—so police can quickly reach out if an incident occurs nearby.

- More than 600 residents and businesses in Ottawa have already registered.
- CAMSafe has demonstrated clear value: the OPS Missing Persons Unit recently used the registry to identify nearby camera owners and request video footage that provided crucial investigative leads.
- Since launch, the camsafe@ottawapolice.ca inbox has received strong engagement from both OPS members and the public, showing rapid uptake.
- OPS recently welcomed Belleville Police Service Inspector Jeremy Ashley to the NOC, alongside OPP colleagues who have successfully implemented CAMSafe elsewhere, to discuss the program's next steps.

Looking forward, CAMSafe will be launched internally to OPS members, making it a widely accessible investigative tool for frontline officers, dispatchers, and specialized units. Beyond its investigative value, CAMSafe gives residents and businesses a meaningful role in community safety, strengthening frontline operations, enhancing investigations, and deepening collaboration between police and the communities we serve.

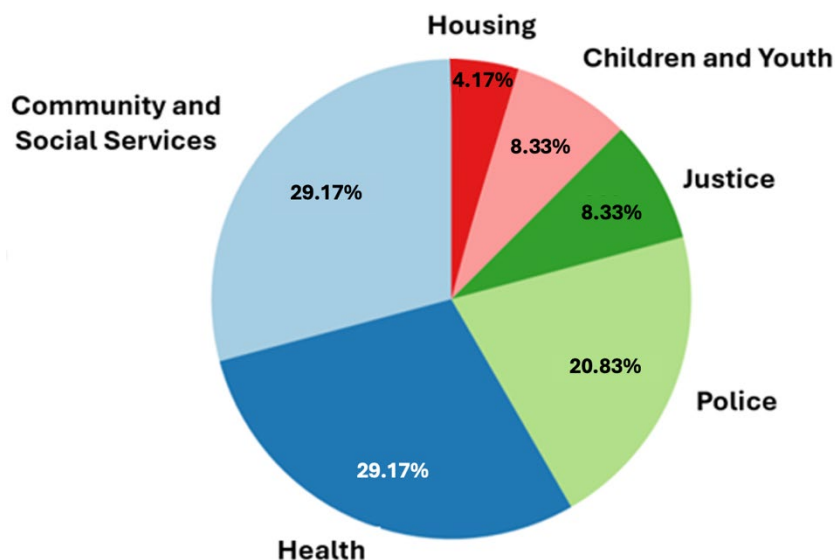
Integrated Community Situation Table (ICST) – 2025 Progress Update

The ICST focuses on people most in need of assistance, providing rapid, coordinated interventions for individuals and families facing acutely elevated risk. Meeting bi-weekly, the table brings together more than 30 agencies spanning health, housing, social services, justice, and policing.

Partnership Growth

- Co-chaired by the OASIS Program at Sandy Hill Community Health Centre and Youville Centre, the ICST follows the Ministry's four-filter process to ensure privacy and confidentiality.
- Since 2024, the ICST has received 36 referrals, including 18 in 2025. While most came from Wards 12 and 17, cases now originate across the city.
- Referrals primarily come from community/social services (29%), health (29%), and police (21%), with smaller numbers from justice, youth, and housing.
- In 2025, six new organizations joined, including Indigenous-led services and school boards, expanding cultural responsiveness and geographic reach.

ICST Referrals by Source Sector (2024 – 2025)



OPS Role and Internal Engagement

OPS supports the ICST through officer training and proactive identification efforts:

- Downtown officers received field training in spring 2025 to improve awareness and referral quality.
- The Adult Pre-Charge Diversion Unit is developing a systematic, intelligence-led referral framework to better identify individuals at risk based on police and community data.

Trends and Systemic Issues

The most frequent risk factors include housing insecurity, unmet basic needs, mental health challenges, and substance use. Protective factors often involve access to services, stable housing, and community supports. Broader systemic challenges flagged include homelessness, problematic opioid and methamphetamine use, and gaps in discharge planning from hospitals and shelters.

The ICST demonstrates how CORE partnerships are diverting vulnerable people from the justice system and connecting them to more appropriate supports.

Hot Spots Policing – 2025 Six-Month Progress Update

CORE Hot Spots Policing continues to focus on places most in need of attention, using proactive presence and engagement to reduce demand and crime in priority areas. An analysis of March–August 2025 compared to the same period in 2024 highlights the following:

Key Results

- Citizens are calling police less often (**28% decrease in citizen-initiated calls**)
- Officers are proactively engaging more (**29% increase in officer-initiated calls**)
- Overall demand on police is dropping (**11% decrease in total calls**)
- Reported incidents are lower (**12% decrease overall**)
- Crime severity is trending down (**-12% non-violent, -25% violent**)

Variation by Location

- **Rideau/Sussex/Colonel By:** Calls and incidents rose (+54%), with severity also higher. This remains the most challenging location, requiring intensified multi-agency focus.
- **William St/ByWard Market Square:** Overall incidents stable, but violent crime severity increased, linked to more assaults and a firearm discharge.
- **Other hot spots:** Areas such as Daly/King Edward, Clarence/Parent, and Rideau/Besserer showed decreases, with Daly/King Edward recording the strongest improvement (-49% incidents).

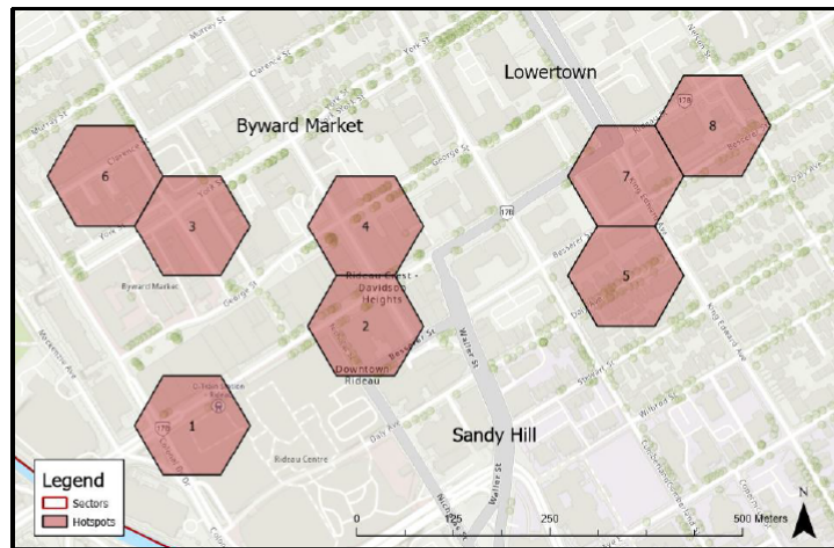
Community Feedback

Officers are prioritizing engagement over enforcement, often connecting vulnerable individuals to housing, mental health, and addiction supports. Businesses and residents

continue to express appreciation for the visible police presence and report stronger feelings of safety.

Hot Spots Policing shows how CORE combines place-based problem solving with community partnerships, reinforcing safety while addressing the root causes of disorder.

Hotspots	Location
1	Rideau Street near Sussex Drive/Colonel By Drive
2	Rideau Street near Dalhousie Street
3	William Street and Byward Market Square between George Street and York Street
4	Dalhousie Street between Rideau Street and George Street
5	Daly Avenue between Cumberland Street and King Edward Avenue
6	Clarence Street between Sussex Drive and Parent Avenue
7	King Edward Avenue between Besserer Street and Rideau Street
8	Rideau Street and Besserer Street between King Edward Avenue and Nelson Street



CONCLUSION

The CORE Strategy is helping the OPS focus on the places and people most in need of assistance, supported by strong partnerships across the downtown core.

- The NOC provides a hub for proactive presence, coordination, and community access.
- The ICST mobilizes partners to deliver timely interventions for people at high risk.
- Hot Spots Policing is reducing reactive demand, lowering crime severity, and building stronger connections with residents and businesses.

OPS will continue refining CORE through collaboration, evaluation, and adaptation to ensure it remains responsive to community needs and a cornerstone of safety and well-being downtown.