

**OPSB Meeting-Chief Eric Stubbs**  
**Verbal Report January 26, 2026**

Good afternoon, members of the Board,

I want to begin by congratulating Chair Fakirani and Vice-Chair Carr on your re-elections.

Je tiens d'abord à féliciter le président Fakirani et la vice-présidente Carr pour leur réélection.

Thank you both for continuing to step forward and providing strong leadership to the Board and to the Ottawa Police Service. We are looking forward to working with you in 2026 as we tackle the work ahead and build on the progress we've made together.

Speaking of elections, during the December meeting, I neglected to congratulate all the members who were elected to the OPA leadership team that included President Matt Cox. President Cox has been a strong advocate for the members of the OPS and I'm pleased to see him continue in this role. He and I have a strong history of dealing with some difficult issues, disagreeing at times but both have a goal of member wellness, fairness and of course the safety of this community. He also has a team of Directors, some re-elected, some are new but he's fortunate to have such a strong team. Congratulations to all of you and I and the Command Team look forward to working with you.

Le commandement et moi-même avons hâte de continuer notre travail avec vous.

#### STRATEGY & PRIORITIES

The Command and Senior Leadership Teams have been holding several strategic discussions about where we need to focus and how we deliver better service across the city. This includes the long range financial plan and that work will begin in February with the established committee.

We've been listening closely to our communities and the messages are consistent.

People want to see faster response times. They want better case outcomes. They want a safer downtown core. They want to see us more, both on the streets and through our digital and social channels. And they expect better customer service and more timely responses when they reach out to us.

Several initiatives are being developed to carry out this work and we will be briefing the Board in the months ahead on how we are achieving the benefits of the investments in policing.

Following that theme about ramping up our operations....the board will recall that in December, we increased the number of Neighborhood Response Team officers in the Downtown Core by 14. This increase is seeing benefits already

On January 12, 2026, the NRT in Centretown initiated Project Pantry, a targeted shoplifting reduction initiative focused on the Bank Street corridor. A comprehensive review of general occurrences was conducted to identify priority locations.

Our analyst identified an Independent Grocer Store as a significant hotspot, accounting for approximately 60% of reported incidents among identified addresses in the corridor that included 671 incidents in 2025, a 34% year-over-year increase.

An operational plan was developed with Targeted enforcement at the location. A minimum of two NRT officers were deployed to support Loss Prevention Officers over a two-week period that totaled seven shifts at approximately six hours per shift.

As a result of these efforts, 12 people were arrested and 78 Charges

The initiative yielded a measurable reduction in theft-related incidents and associated calls for service at this location.

The reduction in repeat calls for service also enabled for more effective allocation of front-line police resources to other priority community needs. Project Pantry demonstrates the effectiveness of intelligence-led deployment, proactive enforcement, and partnership-driven problem solving in addressing chronic crime locations.

Simply, if we have the time to do these projects.....positive results will follow. Thanks to the team led by Sgt. Ryan Cuthbert for getting this work done.

## COMMUNITY-CONNECT

I also want to share a quick update on Community Connect that we recently launched in the City.

It's both a platform to update citizens who call our service and a survey feedback system. It's an important step forward in how we communicate with the public.

The system launched on January 15th, and the early returns have been encouraging.

We're seeing a healthy response rate to the surveys, and the feedback so far has been positive. That tells us that people appreciate being kept informed and having a chance to share their experience.

Callers receive a text confirming their call was received, a case number, and information about next steps. If there's a delay, they're informed of it. And once the call is cleared, they're invited to provide feedback. It's simple, but it matters.

This applies only to Priority 3 and 4 calls. High-risk and in-progress incidents are excluded. Safety always comes first.

What's also important is what we do with this information.

Executive Director Steinbachs and Director Hopgood are already working on a dashboard, with the first set of data expected in April. That will give us a clearer picture of what's working, where we need to improve, and how residents are experiencing our service across the city.

It's an encouraging start, and we'll continue building it as we move forward.

## DRUGS & GUNS

What we are doing to address guns, gangs, and drugs has a direct impact on safety in this city.

Our proactive approach is putting real pressure on the people driving violence in this city. We're seeing it in the arrests. We're seeing it in the charges. And we're seeing it in fewer shootings on our streets. Down 22% from last year.

This work isn't easy. It's resource intensive. It takes time, coordination, and persistence. But the results speak for themselves, and we're going to stay the course.

A recent example.....After a year-long investigation, our Drug Unit, working with partner agencies, dismantled a local drug-trafficking network.

Earlier this month, officers executed eight search warrants across Ottawa and Gatineau. Seven people were arrested. Sixty-one charges were laid. A significant amount of drugs and firearms was seized.

Three individuals are still outstanding, and we're actively working to bring them before the courts.

I want to recognize the members of our Serious and Organized Crime Directorate for leading this work.

#### NEW WARRANT APPREHENSION TEAM

Effective February 2, we will be launching a pilot Warrant Apprehension Team. The team will focus on locating and safely apprehending individuals with outstanding warrants, using an intelligence-driven, coordinated approach, with an initial focus on violent offenders.

A big part of this work is about tackling our existing backlog of warrants, which is significant. This pilot is designed to strengthen how we track, follow up on, and ultimately clear warrants.

This work will be supported by our Data Analytics Team, which will help us track performance, monitor outcomes, and make sure we are learning and improving as we go. This is a proactive initiative. Something that is needed to ensure we hold those that have committed crimes, but are not showing up for court, that there are consequences. The team is now preparing to begin proactive operations.

#### SOUTH STATION

At the beginning of the month, we had the chance to tour the South Facility. Thanks to everyone who was able to join us. Many from the Board were there. It's great to see the progress we're making.

This space will give us the tools and capacity we need to better serve our community and support our team.

Most importantly....it's on schedule for May 2027.

#### NEW DISTRICT TRAFFIC

I want to highlight the launch of our District Traffic and Road Safety Units. This is a big step forward in how we deliver traffic enforcement and road safety across the city. District Traffic Units are embedded in each district, focusing on the issues that matter most locally, while the Road Safety Unit provides city-wide support and specialized programs.

We're already seeing results. In just one morning, Constable Lewis addressed a long-standing problem at Featherston Drive and Jefferson Street, in Alta Vista, issuing multiple

tickets to drivers who were ignoring a stop sign in a school zone. This was his first week on the Traffic Unit, and he's already identifying underserved areas and making a real difference.

A big thank you to Constable Lewis for stepping up. This is exactly why embedding traffic resources at the district level matters. Officers have a tangible impact in the neighborhoods they serve.

A few weeks ago, the Road Safety Unit focused on Commercial Vehicle and Tow Enforcement across the City. As a result, they laid 48 provincial charges and 3 criminal charges, conducted 7 commercial vehicle inspections, recovered 2 vehicles from service, and even recovered 1 stolen vehicle. They also arrested 1 wanted person and laid 3 additional criminal charges. We remain committed to enforcement to help keep our roads safe for everyone.

#### MOBILE CRISIS RESPONSE TEAM

Supporting people in crisis is a priority for us, and we've made some important steps in how we respond across the city. In early 2026, we launched a youth-focused Mobile Crisis Response Team with the Youth Services Bureau, CHEO, and Kids Come First. This team pairs a Crisis Intervention Team-trained OPS officer with a youth worker and responds to mental health and safety crises involving children and teens. They're on scene to assess risk, de-escalate situations, develop safety plans, and connect youth with the right support, whether that's counseling, family help, or community programs.

At the same time, we're partnering with The Royal to launch a new Mobile Crisis Response Team in spring 2026. This team will pair an OPS officer with a clinical mental health professional from The Royal's Urgent Care Clinic to respond to adults experiencing mental health or substance use crises. They provide immediate on-scene assessment, de-escalation, and connections to care, filling a critical gap in the system.

Both initiatives reflect the same principle: collaboration saves lives. By working alongside health partners, we're able to meet people where they are, respond quickly, and get them the help they need. These teams don't just intervene, they provide guidance, connect families to services, and help prevent crises from escalating.

## IN CAR & BODY WORN CAMS

Last fall, 30 cameras were deployed to support the Mental Health Change Initiative and respond to recommendations from the coroner's inquest into the death of Abdirahman Abdi. In its first 2-3 months, the pilot has been successful and is being evaluated. We're now working on a plan to expand the program to equip all frontline officers by the end of 2027.

That's roughly 850 additional devices, making AI-enabled body worn cameras standard equipment for our uniformed members.

A full board report on the pilot as well as the proposed expansion is being developed now.

Alongside body worn cameras, we've continued to grow our in-car camera program. We now have 65 vehicles equipped with the systems, including Automated License Plate Recognition. These tools have helped identify suspended or uninsured drivers, recovered stolen vehicles, and gathered evidence for stunt driving and impaired driving cases.

## WINTER SAFETY

Last Thursday, we hosted a snowmobile safety event. It was great to see the community out, learning, asking questions, and engaging with our officers. Our Marine, Dive, and Trail officers are out there this winter doing education and enforcement. Not to spoil anyone's fun, but to keep people safe and get everyone home.

If you're out snowmobiling, stick to designated trails. Stay off waterways, even if they look frozen.

The same goes for skating, sledding, or just being near frozen water. Supervise kids and pets. Don't take chances on ice.

Have fun.....but let's do it smart and safe.

## PIPER

Finally, I want to introduce the newest member of our Internet Child Exploitation Unit, Piper.

Piper isn't your typical police dog. She's specially trained in detecting electronic storage devices, hard drives, USBs, SD cards, and even AirTags.

Piper n'est pas un chien policier comme les autres, elle est spécialement entraînée pour détecter les dispositifs de stockage électronique.

Her training took place in real-world settings, from vehicles to abandoned buildings, ensuring she can find hidden devices no matter where offenders try to conceal them. Piper was involved in a search warrant execution at a residence where the owner was suspected of possessing child abuse material. Piper was able to locate some small storage devices in the house that investigators could have missed.

Detective Dominic Paykarimah is Piper's handler. Their partnership is critical, investigative work at this level relies on trust and communication between handler and dog.

But Piper has another side, too. She serves as a therapy dog for child victims, providing comfort during interviews and helping reduce stress for both children and officers. She's also becoming a community ambassador, with plans for school visits and public events to teach online safety and responsible digital behaviour.