

Prince Edward County

Police Services Board
Strategic Plan

2021-2024

Message from the Chair of the Police Services Board

On behalf of the Prince Edward County Police Services Board, it is my privilege to introduce the Police Services Board OPP Detachment Strategic Plan of 2021 to 2024. This Strategic Plan represents many months of collaborative work within our community, including input by residents, youth, business owners, community organizations & agencies, and County counsellors.

The plan addresses the needs and concerns brought forth in these consultations: visibility on the highway, greater participation in the community, valuing diversity & inclusion in the community, supporting victims of violence & managing violent crime, acquisition of specialized mental health staff for emergency response, and more.

With the support and involvement of the municipality, the PEC OPP Detachment and the PEC Police Services Board are a leader in developing and implementing one of the first Community Safety and Well-being Plan in the province of Ontario.

The Police Services Board will continue to take the leadership role in the monitoring and implementation of PEC's Community Safety and Well-Being Plan. With ever-changing and new challenges in The County, our goal will be to become more inclusive in our service to all County residents.

The Prince Edward OPP Detachment and the Police Services Board have taken the leadership in the province of Ontario implementing educational series for first responders, in a lunch and learn format (Using grants from proceeds of crime and Huff Family Fund)—these sessions focus on providing information and support on mental health for oneself, partners/spouse and co-workers

The Police Service Board along with County Huff Foundation will continue this innovative program for the next 4 years. The Board committed to investing in mental health education for the welfare of our first responders, and the safety and wellbeing of our citizens.

Our accomplishments are a demonstration of the commitment of PEC detachment police officers, staff, Commander John Hatch, past and present members of the Police Services Board, and our community partners. A special thanks to Ann McIntosh, Noah Lister-Stevens and Emily Cowan for their guidance and assistance regarding this document.

This document is a testament to that collaboration and reflects the ongoing commitment of a progressive Police Services Board and OPP Detachment, committed to improving public safety through transparency, accountability, relationship building and partnership within our community.

Sincerely,

Richard Gwozdowski
Chair, Police Services Board



Board Members, 2019-2022

Richard Gwozdowski, Chair

Councillor Janice Maynard

Kevin Gale

Mayor Steve Ferguson

Heather Campbell

Staff Sergeant John Hatch, OPP

Our Mission

The Prince Edward County Police Service works in partnership with the community, to protect and promote the safety and quality of life for members of The County's community.

Our Vision

Prince Edward County Police Services will strive to bring progressive, effective, and community-oriented police services to our residents, by supporting and engaging our citizens.

Our Values

Our core values remain as Respect, Integrity, Professionalism, Leadership, and Excellence.

Summary: Priorities

- 1. Higher Visibility*
- 2. Improving Highway & Roadway Safety*
- 3. Valuing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion*
- 4. Supporting Victims of Violence & Managing Violent Crime*
- 5. Mental Health Support*
- 6. Auxiliary Support*

Rationale: Why and What is a Strategic Plan?

Under the *Comprehensive Ontario Police Services Act* of 2019, every four years each Police Services Board is required to submit a Strategic Plan for their region. A Strategic Plan is a guiding document that outlines commitments and priorities for the police, and areas of strategic focus for the four-year period in which it is active.

This Strategic Plan sets out (among other things) how the Board will ensure the provision of effective police services tailored to our community; the objectives, priorities, and core functions of the police service; performance objectives and indicators for responding to crime in the area, etc. This Plan is then used by the Police Services Board to give guidance and direction to the local chief of police, who sets priorities for local officers and carries out the mission of the plan in accordance with the Board's direction. As implementation is expected to last through the lifetime of the Strategic Plan, and given the heightened uncertainty of public health measures, this Plan does not include timelines for each respective goal.

While this Strategic Plan has been developed with the COVID-19 pandemic in mind, and has included features that adapt to the Hastings-Prince Edward Public Health united measures, some of its objectives

(e.g., the RIDE program implementation) may be delayed or modified to remain compliant with public health restrictions.

Background

Prince Edward County is a single-tier municipality in southeastern Ontario, with a full-time resident population of just over 25,000 individuals, most of whom are over the age of 50. The County's economy is principally built around agriculture and (more recently) tourism, as it has come to be seen as a popular tourist destination given its plenitude of wineries, sand, and rock beaches (notably Sandbanks Provincial Park), and many hiking/biking trails as well as nature conservation areas. As a result, The County's population increases dramatically in the summer season, attracting over 600,000 visitors to Sandbanks each year, of which there can be over 30,000 on any one day.

Despite this population influx, County residents generally feel safe there: 96% state that they feel "safe", with 76% saying they feel "very safe". Crime also remains low in absolute terms and relative to the rest of Ontario. Most forms of crime—including theft, mischief, collision deaths, break & enters, etc.—are trending downward when comparing the past three-year average (2017-19) to the previous six-year average (2011-2016) - indicating a range of decline from 13% to 40%. However, many expressed concerns regarding the increased traffic on our streets and roadways. Other areas where crime has increased are identified and actionable: fraud (mostly via internet and phone scams) and property damage/alcohol & animal related collisions. Strategic Plan has been designed with these factors in mind.

What We Heard

In the summer of 2020 and at the commissioning of the Police Services Board, Farrell Insight Market Research conducted a public opinion survey on local policing issues, contacting 400 County residents for their thoughts. They also facilitated five focus groups representing targeted groups within the community (business, youth, youth at risk, seniors, and residents). In parallel, the municipality's Department of Community Services, Programs & Initiatives (CSPI) conducted an online consultation using The County's "HaveYourSay" platform. These findings informed the Strategic Plan.

Survey respondents indicate a high level of confidence in the OPP (87%), a slight decline from 2016. Residents generally feel positive about the PEC OPP on all metrics, though some areas more than others: for example, residents generally feel that satisfied with their ease of contacting the OPP, (87% satisfaction), however they felt that access to officers working with the community could improve (82% satisfaction). The areas in need of most significant improvement are visibility: general satisfaction with visibility sits at 76%, down 9% from 2016, and roughly a quarter (24%) feel that the OPP is not involved with the community, up 12% since 2016. Residents also place a high premium on the importance of keeping in touch with the community for the mission of policing.

All considered, residents feel that while the OPP's actions and activities are generally quite good, it is important for the PEC OPP to remain involved in the community, visible to community members, and actively engaged in the welfare of the residents they serve. This Strategic Plan has been written with these important elements in mind, and acts on each to improve the OPP's relationship and connection with the community in each facet.

Strategic Priorities

Each strategic priority for the OPP is listed below, in further detail. Each action is accompanied by an implementation plan, measurements of success, and the overall goal for each measure.

1. Increase Visibility of Police and Police Activities within the Community

Residents expressed a desire for increased OPP visibility on highways, trails, and in general, a greater participation in the community, as a result, increasing visibility stands as one of the OPP's highest priorities. A cornerstone of this Plan is to cultivate activities that encourage positive, nonenforcement contact between police officers and the public.

Action	Implementation
1 Increase officer visibility in the community.	Increase foot patrols by 10%.
2 Expand police participation within the community by being present (in-uniform and without uniform) in schools, attending fall fairs, visiting local businesses, regular contact with seniors, etc.	By Fall 2021, take the first steps to expand police participation via the launch of local programs that engage the community.
3 Improve transparency and accessibility of Police Services Board meetings.	Hold meetings in the evening and in a more publicly accessible community location, rather than Shire Hall, and recording and making available records of PSB meetings.
4 Develop a collaborative Communication Plan that leverages the community engagement activities and messaging/advertising of local partner organizations/agencies to include local policing information and CSWB Plan information.	Begin working towards a realistic timeline for communication plan, depending on public health restrictions for in-person interactions.
5 Continue to recruit local auxiliary staff to assist with community initiatives.	Recruit 2 more auxiliary support staff in the detachment.
6 Work with the community to implement a new County Crime Watch program.	Launch program by 2022, depending on public health restrictions.

2. Increase Highway & Roadway Safety

Aggressive driving and property damage collisions remain The County's most prevalent incidents of interest to the OPP, as a result, improving highway & roadway safety and making both residents and visitors/tourists safer on our roadways is a policing concern.

Action	Implementation
1 Increase officer visibility on County roads, highways, and hiking trails.	By Summer 2021, deploy 1-2 directed patrols weekly in hot spot areas around The County.
2 Acquire more effective, modern technology for patrol officers to swiftly and effectively enforce <i>Highway Traffic Act</i> offences (e.g., Black Cat Radar).	Begin implementation and installation of Black Cat radar by Summer 2021.
3 Apply for provincial government grants to increase the number of RIDE (Reduce Impaired Driving Everywhere) programs in The County.	Apply to at least 3-4 provincial grants per year to expand and launch RIDE programs.

3. Valuing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The PEC OPP recognizes the essential role that police services play in The County's community, and that it is crucial that the police work and be in contact with its community every day. Especially for those residents who belong to vulnerable and discriminated groups, including people of colour, indigenous people(s), LGBTQ2S+, women, seniors, etc. It is one of the OPP's highest priorities to give all County residents, and particularly those in these communities, a voice at the Board and greater access to police services.

Action	Implementation
1 Institute a new working group/annual focus group of the PSB to work with and report to the parent Board, composed of community members: People of Colour & Indigenous; LGBTQ2S+ Youth & High-risk Youth; Women, and; Seniors.	Begin drafting of recruitment plan and mission statement to enable the next Police Services Board to launch the working group/annual focus group by 2023.
2 Provide access to educational opportunities on diversity and inclusion to Police Officers and PSB members (online courses, guest speakers, etc.)	Offer quarterly learning opportunities via in-person speakers, subject to public health restrictions.

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| <p>3 Work with municipality in encouraging Board members to undertake anti-racism and/or indigenous training courses, as well as any required Ministry courses.</p> | <p>Ensure that all statute-mandated training is completed by Board members via regular check-ins, and regularly update the Board on compliance rate of training by officers.</p> |
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4. Increase Support for Victims of Violence & Management of Violent Crimes

While violent crime remains low in overall numbers, and the OPP is committed to maintaining The County's low rate of violent criminality. As a result, a priority is to improve the access that those victimized by violence will have to victim support services, and provide training to officers in best practices to protect and assist those harmed by domestic violence.

Action

- 1** Develop stronger ties with domestic violence victim support agencies (e.g., Alternatives for Women; Victim Services; Victim Witness Assistance Program (VWAP), etc.)
- 2** Refer those victimized by violent crime (including domestic violence) to victim agencies prior to discharge.

Implementation

<p>By Fall of 2021, report the number of meetings, situation tables, etc. that the detachment has engaged in with the various agencies.</p> <p>Begin referrals to victim agencies by Fall 2021.</p>

5. Mental Health Support

Generally, criminal incidents have declined, as have the frequency of all service calls. However, the decline in mental health incidents remains the slowest type of service calls to decline, and given the heightened interest in the collaboration of police and mental health service providers, the OPP recognizes the need for a more robust system for responding to mental health calls for service. The OPP thus plans to redouble its efforts to appropriately serve the needs of individuals with mental health conditions and linking them to appropriate services, and, whenever possible, diverting them from the criminal justice system.

Action	Implementation
<p>1 Work with and support addiction & mental health services (AMHS) in the implementation of a Mobile Crisis Response Team (MCRT) in the Bay of Quinte area, comprised of mental health professionals trained to respond to service calls first, and assess whether an individual requires mental health support.</p>	<p>Begin deployment of the MCRT by Fall 2021, dependent on training progress of candidates.</p>
<p>2 Continue to collaborate with mental health support agencies (e.g., AMHS, CAMH, John Howard Society, etc.) to reduce the number of police calls to service that concern individuals with mental health conditions.</p>	<p>Continue to update Board on the average number of mental health calls for service, target a 10% reduction in number of calls by 2023.</p>
<p>3 Provide opportunities and training that encourage dialogue, provide information, and access to support agencies to assist police officers in recognizing the signs of mental distress when on a call, in themselves, and/or in their co-workers.</p>	<p>Institute regular training sessions at least once per quarter that promote and foster the health and well-being of officers and their families (e.g., family nights).</p>
<p>4 Institute regular lunch & learn programs for OPP staff to learn about the roles of mental health support agencies (e.g., mental health support programs, Wounded Warriors, Boots on the Ground, etc.)</p>	<p>Hold at least one Lunch & Learn per quarter by Fall 2021.</p>

6. Support Community Safety & Well-Being Plan

Finally, the OPP seeks to better its interactions with the community, by fully implementing and monitoring the rollout of the PEC Community Safety and Well-being (CSWB) Plan during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond. The Plan will provide a model for collaboration, planning and action to shape how we identify and respond to current and emerging issues, through ongoing engagement with community stakeholders.

Action	Implementation
<p>1 The PEC PSB assumes the responsibility for monitoring PEC CSWB Plan. The PSB will connect with community partners and provide updates quarterly to the Board, yearly to Council on the CSWB Plan status and the implementation of Action Areas.</p>	<p>By Fall 2022, the Board will provide updates to Council concerning the development of the CSWB Plan, starting with the means of implementation of the new, revised Plan.</p>
<p>2 Communicate to the media, publications, and internet to inform the public of community developments and new programs related to the CSWB Plan</p>	<p>By Fall 2022, announce the implementation of the new Plan to the media, and provide regular updates on its rollout following.</p>
<p>3 Advocate for additional financial support from the Province to implement & monitor rollout of CSWB Plan.</p>	<p>By Fall 2021, submit pending requests to the Province for grant funding for the initial development, implementation, and rollout of the new CSWB Plan.</p>

In order to monitor the development of each priority, the Detachment Commander is tasked with reporting quarterly on the progress of each of these priorities to the Police Services Board. For example, evaluating the number of foot patrols in public areas to satisfy increased visibility goals, or the number of educational lunch & learn sessions to promote heightened understanding for officers of the role of mental health agencies in their work. This reporting will be a supplement to the Commander's monthly report to the Board on the incidence of criminal offences.