

September 2022

City of Grande Prairie

# POLICE SERVICE REVIEW



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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Fair Deal Panel Report in June 2020 recommended the Province ‘establish a provincial police service by ending the Alberta Police Service Agreement with the Government of Canada.’

In response, the Government of Alberta (GOA) engaged PricewaterhouseCoopers (PWC) to complete a review of provincial policing in Alberta. The PWC review<sup>123</sup> suggested to the GOA that creating a new Alberta Provincial Police Service had the opportunity to be both more cost effective and responsive to local needs than the current provincial policing offered through contract with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP). The GOA is now undertaking stakeholder engagement<sup>4</sup> to determine whether it is desirable to proceed with transitioning provincial policing responsibility from the RCMP to an Alberta Provincial Police Service.

The City of Grande Prairie contracts the RCMP as its municipal police service provider through a Municipal Police Services Agreement (MPSA)<sup>5</sup>. MPSA’s are available through the Provincial Police Service Agreement (PPSA)<sup>6</sup> between the GOA and RCMP. If the GOA were to form a new Provincial Police Service, the RCMP will no longer be available to provide municipal contract policing in the City of Grande Prairie or elsewhere in Alberta.

In anticipation of a coming decision point regarding police service delivery in the community, City Council initiated a Police Service Model Review. The review commenced in March 2022 to assess the current and possible future policing service delivery models. This report is the completion of substantive phases of the review which enable the conclusion that there is a very high likelihood that, regardless of whether the Province actually pursues a provincial policing model, the City of Grande Prairie would be well served in terms of both efficacy and efficiency, through creation of its own Municipal Police Service.

## 1.1 Project Objectives

The overall objective of the review is to provide City Council with information to assist with their decision as to whether the City of Grande Prairie should continue to contract the RCMP to provide municipal policing services by way of a Municipal Police Service Agreement; or, should it be created, enter into an agreement with the Province for the new provincial police service to provide municipal policing services; or establish a standalone Grande Prairie Municipal Police Service; or investigate the establishment of a local Regional Police Service.

Specific objectives of the review are to:

1. Complete a comprehensive review of the Grande Prairie RCMP, including associated Municipal Employees, and Grande Prairie Enforcement Services
2. Perform a comparative analysis of police services delivery models to assess viable options for the City of Grande Prairie
3. Undertake a governance review of current and alternate policing options
4. Provide the Municipal Police Advisory Committee (MPAC) and City Council with a written report containing the findings of the review and recommendations for consideration

## 1.2 Current State

The *Alberta Police Act*<sup>7</sup> stipulates that cities, towns and villages with a population over 5,000 must provide their own policing services. These municipalities have the following options for policing: a stand-alone police service, a regional police service, or contracting the services of an existing police service.

The City of Grande Prairie has elected to sign a MPSA with the Government of Canada for the RCMP to provide the required policing services. A total of 47 municipalities in Alberta have entered into an MPSA.

Municipalities with a population under 15,000 are charged 70% of the total policing cost, those with a population over 15,000 such as the City of Grande Prairie are charged 90%, with the Government of Canada subsidizing the remaining 30% and 10% respectively.

The current MPSA came into effect on April 1, 2012 and remains in effect until March 31, 2032. However, the agreement may be terminated on March 31 in any year by either party giving notice not less than 24 months prior to the date of the intended termination.

### 1.2.1 Policing in Grande Prairie

#### RCMP

The RCMP provide the below core policing services to the City of Grande Prairie:

- General Duty Policing (GD)
- General Investigation Section (GIS)
  - Drug Enforcement Unit
  - Specialized Investigative Unit (SIU)
  - Crime Reduction Unit
  - Police and Crisis Team (PACT)
- Police Dog Services
- Traffic Services
- Forensic Identification Section (FIS)
- Community Policing

RCMP contracted policing services also includes several specialized RCMP resources, funded through the Provincial Police Service Agreement, available to the detachment:

- Operational Communication Centres (Dispatch)
- Special Tactical Operations
- Explosives Disposal
- Serious Crimes Branch
- Air Services
- Legal Applications

### **MUNICIPAL SUPPORT SECTION**

The MPSA requires municipalities who contract the RCMP to provide operational and administrative support for the municipal police operation.

The Municipal Support Section perform such functions as Criminal Record/ Vulnerable Sector checks, court liaison, technological support for Criminal Code investigations, budget and finance support, Canadian Police Information Centre (CPIC) operations, data quality, records management, exhibits coordination and general administrative support.

### **ENFORCEMENT SERVICES**

In collaboration with the RCMP, Grande Prairie Enforcement Services (GPES) is responsible for the enforcement of municipal bylaws, provisions of the *Municipal Government Act*, and various Provincial Statutes to ensure public safety.

GPES is comprised of the following areas: Animal Control, Vehicle for Hire Licencing, Bylaw Enforcement, Public Safety, Parking Control, Commercial Vehicle Inspections and Traffic Enforcement. GPES officers assist with several community related activities and public education opportunities with a focus on safety, injury prevention, and bylaw adherence. GPES oversees the Automated Traffic Enforcement program to enforce the Alberta *Traffic Safety Act*.

### **MOBILE OUTREACH**

Mobile Outreach (MO) is focused on mitigating the impacts of street level disorder, addiction, and public intoxication. MO outreach workers are able to proactively take a preventative approach to tackling mental health and addictions, reduce demands on the police, and enhance community engagement.

### **COLLISION REPORTING CENTRE**

Grande Prairie residents may report non-injury motor vehicle accidents at the centre. Accident Support Services International Ltd. (ASSI) staff assist the public file a collision report, take pictures of damage, provide a 'damage reported to police' sticker, and initiate the insurance process.

## 1.2.2 Assessment

### STRENGTHS

The relationship between City Council, Administration and the local RCMP detachment Officer in Command (OIC) is collaborative and generally very positive. The Municipal Police Advisory Committee (MPAC) has been seen to be able to have candid, respectful discussions with the RCMP OIC, highlighting local policing needs and priorities which are subsequently reflected in the Annual Policing Plan.

In a further attempt to reduce policing costs and enhance efficiency, the City has embraced and developed a robust and effective 'Tiered Policing Model' using Community Peace Officers and Bylaw Enforcement Officers within the Grande Prairie Enforcement Services (GPES). The working relationship between GPES frontline members and local RCMP members appears to be generally positive and collaborative.

Several enforcement and social welfare initiatives have been introduced within the City which are very positive:

#### 1. RCMP Specialized Investigative Unit

The Specialized Investigative Unit (SIU) takes the primary role on Aggravated Sexual Assault, Sexual Assault of a Child, and Domestic Violence criminal investigations. The SIU has also replaced the Domestic Violence Unit and provides direction and oversight for the detachment.

#### 2. Police and Crisis Team

Comprised of an RCMP officer and Registered Psychiatric Nurse, the Police and Crisis Team (PACT) can intervene, assess, and support people having a mental health crisis in the community, and if warranted, apprehend the individual under the Alberta *Mental Health Act*.

#### 3. Collision Reporting Centre

The Collision Reporting Centre (CRC) and its operation by a contracted party (ASSI) has vastly reduced the administrative burden on Municipal Support Section members, thus allowing them to focus on their core policing functions.

#### 4. GPES AGENT Program

The GPES AGENT Program assists the local business community with trespassing issues by providing GPES Peace Officers delegated authority to promptly enforce trespass legislation on private property.

#### 5. Mobile Outreach

Mobile Outreach Program (MO) operates to address minor disorder and social complaints such as public intoxication, addiction, and illegal encampments.



## 6. Municipal Traffic Enforcement

GPES Community Peace Officers enforce the Alberta *Traffic Safety Act* as part of the annual GPES Traffic Safety Plan. The primary purpose of traffic enforcement is to reduce traffic collisions and resulting injuries, and to facilitate the safe and expedient flow of vehicular and pedestrian traffic.

### CHALLENGES

#### 1. Local Oversight & Accountability

While performing its policing services the RCMP primarily answers to the federal minister of public safety, and not to the local authority which contracts and pays for its services. Therefore, how a municipal government can exercise true local oversight of the RCMP detachment within their jurisdiction regarding policing services and/or officer conduct is an issue.

The City of Grande Prairie benefits from having a MPAC but it has very limited, if any, true authority. It is not a police governance body, as compared to a police commission or even a Police Committee, and as its name suggests, functions only in an advisory capacity to Council.

There is little organizational performance accountability back to the community by way of a comprehensive policing plan, a strategic policing plan or an annual report similar to that of municipal police services.

The RCMP public complaint process is different and separate from that for standalone municipal and First Nations police services in Alberta. Essentially managed federally by the Civilian Review & Complaints Commission there is a lack of local transparent oversight regarding officer conduct and public complaints. In Alberta, as part of its review of the *Alberta Police Act*, the province is considering the creation of a new, independent, civilian-led police complaints agency however it remains unclear if the RCMP will be subject to its jurisdiction.

#### 2. Financials

Historically, the salaries paid to RCMP members were lower than for those serving in municipal police services which reduced overall policing costs. Following RCMP members obtaining the legal right to unionize and subsequent collective bargaining, members received a significant salary increase. Although not a party to the salary and compensation bargaining process, the City must nevertheless pay 90% of the resulting increase in costs.

The RCMP intend to roll-out aggressive equipment, technology, and fleet acquisition/replacement plans, which amount to approximately \$6.6M in additional contract costs over the next five years with minimal input from the City although the City is required to pay 90% of the costs.

The RCMP costing model includes a Divisional Administration Fee of approximately \$3.5M to cover costs of its support services such as HR, IT, recruiting, legal etc. The local economy does not benefit from this payment as it supports staff based in hubs such as Ottawa, Winnipeg, Regina, and Edmonton. If costs associated with recruiting and cadet training are included this increases to just under \$4.5M which leaves the community.

When the collective programs and personnel servicing what are generally considered policing related issues is accounted for, the City of Grande Prairie invests more on a per capita basis than most of our comparator cities.

### **3. Recruitment, Retention & Training**

The RCMP continue to experience significant recruiting challenges nationally which lead to significant staffing issues across the service. These issues are particularly acute within the Grande Prairie Detachment due to its heavy reliance on new cadets to fill vacancies.

The Grande Prairie Detachment suffers from an extremely high rate of turnover of RCMP members. This extends up to the Officer in Command, of which there have been five in the past six years (three appointed/two acting).

Ultimately the current situation directly results in a lack of policing experience within RCMP members in Grande Prairie. When junior members have gained some level of experience in the detachment they simply move on. The short-term postings in the detachment are an impediment to effective community policing in the City. Time is needed for officers and the community to build trust and the current practice of frequently moving officers from the detachment undermines this relationship building.

There is a heavy reliance on the use of temporary acting supervisors in Grande Prairie. In April 2022, 50% of supervisor positions in the detachment were vacant and being filled by members in acting roles.

When new RCMP Cadets arrive at the detachment they require a significant amount of training before being fully competent in their role. Despite at times a strong instructor cadre within Grande Prairie, it is not uncommon for both trainers and trainees to leave Grande Prairie to provide/receive the required training at a different location. This is an inefficient and highly costly approach. Not only does the community lose these officers for the duration of the course, but the City is also required to pay the full associated travel costs. Given the identified level of attrition of fully trained members from Grande Prairie, these training costs are a constant and ever-increasing drain on the City's policing budget. Just as members have received the additional training and are fully competent police officers, they transfer out of the community, so the City never gets a return on its investment.

### **4. Inefficiency**

The current enforcement model within the City lacks true integration resulting in separate silos between municipal (GPES & MO) and RCMP resources. The RCMP does not provide GPES with information from, or access to, the Canadian Police Information Centre system (CPIC) nor allows GPES to use RCMP systems such as the Police Reporting and Occurrence System (PROS) or Dispatch system (CIIDS), resulting in the need for two separate systems for law enforcement within the City.

GPES could increase support to the RCMP through additional enforcement functions (minor criminal code) but historically the RCMP has restricted the roles GPES may perform within its jurisdiction.

## **5. Public Perception**

The 2020 City of Grande Prairie Citizen Satisfaction Survey shows the public perception of rising crime is negatively impacting citizens' sense of safety in their community and that reducing crime should be a priority for the City. While the public regard policing as a relatively high priority, their satisfaction with local policing in the City has declined by 15% over the past ten years.

The 2021-22 'Canadians' Views of RCMP Policing Services' public survey conducted by Ekos Research Associates and released in April 2022, shows that only 35% of Canadians trust the national leadership of the RCMP Commissioner, while 41% rate RCMP local leaders as effective.

## **6. High Crime Rates**

Despite some improvement from its peak in 2014/2015, Grande Prairie has averaged a Crime Severity Index (CSI) score of 172 between 2017 and 2021. The Alberta average CSI is 111 and the Canada average CSI is 75 during the same period.

## **7. Local Initiatives**

The City has been challenged at times with designing and implementing several initiatives because the specific initiative has not aligned with existing RCMP policy or directives or had yet to be assessed. The process for this review to take place is lengthy and usually required to be adapted so it can apply across the variety of jurisdictions the RCMP police. This is often outside of the local detachment commander or even division commander's control.

## **8. Future Viability**

It is not clear, if the RCMP will continue to provide contract policing past the current contract and if not, at what cost. Only 20% of Canadians are primarily policed by the RCMP and only these citizens are receiving direct federal subsidy toward their policing costs. In 2022, both the Prime Minister and the Minister of Public Safety directed in mandate letters that the status of RCMP Contract Policing be reviewed.

## **1.3 Alternative Service Delivery Options**

Three policing services delivery options are available for consideration:

### **1.3.1 Contract Service Provider**

The City of Grande Prairie may continue to receive policing services provided by the RCMP through a MPSA, or should it be established, enter into a new policing agreement with the Government of Alberta for the provision of policing services by the Alberta Provincial Police Service.

## RCMP MUNICIPAL CONTRACT

The current model of RCMP policing within the City of Grande Prairie is fully described in detail within this report.

## ASSESSMENT

The continuation of the status quo with policing services being provided by the RCMP remains an option for the City. Should the City decide to continue with the RCMP as its policing services provider, the below recommendations are presented for consideration:

### 1. Priority Staffing Agreement

It is recommended the City work with the RCMP to reach an agreement that operational vacant positions within the Grande Prairie Detachment are treated as a priority for staffing.

### 2. Obtain Limited Duration Posting (LDP) status

It is recommended the City continue to support the OIC's efforts to have the Grande Prairie Detachment designated as an LDP for a term of five years. If the new RCMP policy of removing formal LDP's is implemented, the City should work to reach an agreement with RCMP K-Division that front-line members, supervisors and senior officers must remain in the detachment for a minimum of five years before being eligible to transfer elsewhere. City Administration recently learned that K Division staffing is committed to a minimum four-year term.

### 3. Branding and Image Strategy

It is recommended the City collaborate with RCMP K-Division and the detachment OIC to include a police-staffing specific focus within the new Branding and Image Strategy with the intent of making Grande Prairie a more attractive community for RCMP employees.

### 4. Increase PACT Resources

It is recommended the City provide the required funding and work with the RCMP and Alberta Health Services to increase PACT resources from two to four teams.

### 5. Increase Local Training Capacity

It is recommended the City enhance local training facilities through the provision of upgraded classroom and other training space within the detachment, or elsewhere within the city.

It is further recommended the City challenge the current training delivery model in Grande Prairie to ensure the local instructor cadre is fully utilized and where possible, training staff are brought to the detachment to deliver training locally.

## **6. Centralized Dispatch and CPIC Access**

It is recommended the RCMP and GPES operate on the same dispatch, officer monitoring and records management systems.

It is further recommended the local RCMP detachment again provide GPES members with CPIC Access to enhance efficiency and officer safety.

## **7. Further integration of GPES with RCMP**

It is recommended proactive discussions occur between the City and the detachment OIC to further coordinate and integrate the operations of GPES with the local RCMP.

## **8. Tiered Policing Model**

It is recommended the City continue to support and enhance the Tiered Policing Model within Grande Prairie.

## **9. Civilian Support**

It is recommended the City continue to look for appropriate opportunities to maximize the use of municipal employees within the detachment and the transition of administrative duties from police members to civilian employees.

## **10. MPAC**

It is recommended the Municipal Police Advisory Committee continue to look for opportunities to build upon its recent police commission training conducted in 2022 in St. Albert.

It is also recommended the MPAC consider the use of a third-party facilitator to assist in the development of its knowledge and execution of its role within the MPSA, including internal Terms of Reference. A facilitator can also aid with creating a process-driven framework so that interactions remain consistent, regardless of the incumbent detachment OIC.

It is further recommended the City consider the creation of a municipal Policing Committee under the *Police Act* to replace the MPAC.

## 11. Development of Robust Annual Policing Plans

It is recommended the MPAC work with the detachment OIC to develop more robust Annual Policing Plans. The APP, and through it the community, would benefit from the inclusion of more directive local policing initiatives and specific performance measurables.

## 12. Remove PPSA Resources and Integrate GPES into Detachment

It is recommended the City work with the RCMP to remove those resources working within the detachment involved in rural policing duties within the Provincial Police Service Agreement (PPSA).

Should the above recommendation be implemented, it is further recommended the City relocate certain GPES resources into the detachment to facilitate increased coordination and collaboration of its enforcement operations.

## 13. Support a New Provincial Complaint Police Complaint Agency model

It is recommended the City support the creation of the new provincial police complaints agency being proposed by Alberta Justice and Solicitor General as part of the *Police Act* reforms and support the agency's jurisdiction including RCMP members involved in provincial and municipal policing within Alberta.

### ALBERTA PROVINCIAL POLICE CONTRACT

The City of Grande Prairie may continue to receive policing services provided by the RCMP through a MPSA, or should it be established, enter into a new policing agreement with the Government of Alberta for the provision of policing services by the Alberta Provincial Police Service.

Detailed information on the proposed provincial Alberta Police Service (APS) is contained within the PWC 'Transition Study Final Report', 'Future State Report', and 'Community Policing Deployment Model Detachment Prototype Design' documents. The below information is provided as a high-level overview of the PWC concepts and recommendations and the above referenced PWC reports should be reviewed for more detailed analysis.

#### Governance

A provincial police commission with representation from rural, urban and Indigenous communities will act as the strategic oversight and leadership body of the APS. The Province will have authority and sole responsibility to appoint members of the commission. The provincial police commission would have full decision-making authority for strategic planning, decisions about types of services required, and financial decisions regarding how the APS budget is allocated. The commission would be responsible for hiring the Chief of Police and the Chief will report to the commission.

In addition to the provincial police commission, local police commissions will have an active role in determining how policing is provided in their community and working with local detachments.

### Service Delivery

There will be a minimum of 113 APS detachments across the province, the same number as current RCMP detachments, and an increase in the number of police officers working in the smallest detachments resulting in an increase in the number of police officers in rural areas.

The APS intends to 'decentralize' specialist policing resources and services away from urban centers and redistribute them across the province to increase service delivery in rural, remote, and Indigenous communities.

The organizational structure is intended to deliver core policing services, including community policing, mental health responses, and investigations, throughout the province with improved access to specialized policing resources.

The APS will contain four types of detachments:

### Community Detachments

Located in smaller urban and rural communities, there will be approximately 65 - 85 such detachments across the province.

### Service Hubs

Located in medium-sized urban and rural communities, there will be approximately 20-30 such detachments across the province. These hubs will provide similar core policing as Community Detachments but will have more investigative and specialised policing resources.

### Regional (Urban) Hubs

Located in larger communities, there will be three Regional (Urban) Hubs in the province (north, central and south) and these will act as 'regional headquarters.' They will provide similar functions and capabilities as Service Hubs however their primary focus will be specialized services. Regional Hubs will also house regional Call Centre and Dispatch resources.

### Detachments Serving Indigenous Communities

These will service Indigenous communities that use the APS to provide policing services, the number of detachments to be determined in partnership with Indigenous communities.

## Staffing

The recommended staffing model for the APS is a total of 4,949 FTEs composed of 3,536 sworn police officers, 160 Mental Health & Family Crisis professionals, and 1,253 Public Service Employees operating from the 113 detachments.

The proposed APS staffing model includes:

- APS sworn Police Officers trained to respond to high risk, complex, urgent responses
- Specialized health and social work professionals to respond to mental health, drug related, and non-violent family crisis situations
- Specialized investigators including forensic accountants, cyber security professionals, data analysts, and forensic lab technicians

The APS will focus on recruiting local people to their local communities and hiring sworn and non-sworn employees from rural and northern communities who prefer to police in these environments.

## Financial

The total cost of policing under the APS model is estimated to be \$758m; \$25m lower than the current normalized equivalent cost.

The GOA has committed to municipalities continuing to pay the same to receive policing services from the APS as they currently pay for the RCMP to provide these services.

The estimated transition costs to establish the APS and transition away from the RCMP are estimated at \$371m over a 6-year period. The GOA has committed to covering all transition costs.

## **ASSESSMENT**

### Benefits

Many of the documented observations and recommendations made by PWC do highlight, and possibly address, some of the concerns with RCMP policing within the City of Grande Prairie. Specifically:

- input into community policing priorities through a local commission
- a focus on community policing
- a local recruitment strategy
- allowing staff to remain in their community if they so choose



- a new response to mental health calls and social issues; and
- distributing specialized policing resources outside of Edmonton and Calgary.

The proposed Northern Regional (Urban) Hub would be beneficial to Grande Prairie as it would address current concerns with ready access to specialized policing services, particularly if it was to be established within the City.

### Risks

- The provincial police commission would have full decision-making authority for strategic planning, decisions about types of services required, and financial decisions regarding how the APS budget is allocated.
- The level of real authority and ability to address local policing priorities through the two-tiered commission model afforded to the City is unknown. Given the role of the provincial commission and the need for representation of several municipalities by the local commission, it is unlikely the City will have the same level of control over their policing services as they would with a standalone municipal service.
- Although the GOA has committed to municipalities continuing to pay the same for policing services provided by the APS as they currently do for the RCMP, it is reasonable to assume policing costs will continue to climb in the future. The City will not have the same level of control over their policing budget as they would with a municipal service.
- The intended focus of the APS is service delivery in rural, remote, and Indigenous communities, not a large urban community such as Grande Prairie.
- It remains possible that the final model of the APS may change before implementation due to political and/or financial pressures.
- The lengthy timeline for establishing the APS may result in several years before the city is able to address its current policing concerns.

## **1.3.1 Regional Police Service**

The City of Grande Prairie may investigate the establishment of a local Regional Police Service with at least one other municipality.

The option of the City of Grande Prairie leading the establishment of a Regional Police Service was given consideration during the review. However, while it is recognised there can be efficiencies to be gained by pooling collective resources and creating a larger police service to serve more than one municipality, there are several significant challenges to introducing such a policing model in the Grande Prairie area.

Recent discussions with Alberta Justice and Solicitor General confirmed that as a municipal district, the County of Grande Prairie is legislatively precluded from being able to enter into an agreement to form a Regional Police Service

without triggering a requirement to pay 100% of policing expenses. It is also questionable whether the County of Grande Prairie would be willing to contribute the full costs required to achieve the policing levels they desire given that their contribution to policing costs is currently capped at 30% under the Provincial Police Funding Model.

The population of the hamlet of Clairmont has recently been confirmed as greater than 5000. As a result, it will now be required to assume responsibility for the provision of its policing services. Clairmont may consider establishing a Regional Police Service with the City of Grande Prairie. However, as outlined above, limitations under the *Police Act*, would result in Clairmont essentially becoming a 'policing island' within the County of Grande Prairie. Clairmont would be surrounded by the provincial police service delivering policing services to the County, while receiving its policing services from the regional service centred in the City of Grande Prairie. While not insurmountable, such a situation would likely result in policing challenges concerning jurisdiction and intelligence and information sharing.

A significant challenge to establishing any regional policing model is the complexity associated with several communities, with some similarities but as many differences, working together to form and effectively govern a police service. Communities will, rightfully, demand control over the governance, identity, service delivery and budget of their, albeit shared, police service.

## ASSESSMENT

The Province continues to aggressively drive its proposal for a new provincial police service forward. Given the magnitude, complexity and external engagement required to create an effective regional police service, this option would likely prevent the City from having an established path before the introduction of the provincial police service.

It is therefore recommended a 'scale up' approach be adopted, and the establishment of a Regional Police Service be a decision for a future date following the successful establishment of a City of Grande Prairie Municipal Police Service.

### 1.3.3 Municipal Police Service

The City of Grande Prairie may establish a new standalone municipal police service.

#### Overview

Conceptually the 'Grande Prairie Police Service' (GPPS) is designed to provide a wide spectrum of core policing services including general duty, PACT, investigations, traffic safety, community engagement, forensics, police dogs, training section, an in-service tactical response capacity, and an integrated dispatch. These policing resources are complimented and supported by the full integration into the organization of Community Peace Officers, Bylaw Enforcement Officers and Outreach Workers.

PACT and Community Outreach being in one organization supports the coordination of the most appropriate response to situations and PACT resources have been increased from the current two teams to four.

An Integrated Operational Communication Centre (IOCC) ensures a coordinated and timely response by all public safety agencies in the city including police, PACT, municipal enforcement, and outreach workers.

All enforcement members will operate on a single integrated Records Management System.

The GPPS model includes corporate services required by all police services to support front line operations such as Human Resources, Finance, Procurement, and IT.

The service model includes a Community Engagement Team with Community Liaison Officers (CLO's) whose primary focus is community led policing. CLOs liaise with community and welfare groups, attend community events, and conduct high-visibility patrols to build trust with residents and local businesses.

The GPPS will enhance transparency and local accountability through online public reporting of such service delivery measurable as: volume of calls for service; 911 response times; number of arrests/charges laid, use of force incidents; officer conduct complaints and resolutions; service budgets and expenditures etc.

GPPS will, wherever possible, adopt a 'Recruit in Grande Prairie, for Grande Prairie' recruitment strategy. This will focus on hiring sworn and civilian members from the Grande Prairie area who have a connection to, and intend to stay in, the community.

Alberta-specific police recruit and specialized training will be delivered within Alberta through partnerships with the Edmonton Police Service and ALERT, supplemented with in-service community specific training.

## **Operational Activities**

The GPPS is comprised of the below operational areas within four bureaus:

### **1. Community Policing Bureau**

- *General Duty*
- *PACT*

### **2. Investigations and Operational Support Bureau**

- *Professional Standards*
- *Investigations*
- *Priority Crimes*
- *Forensics*
- *Community Engagement Team*
- *Traffic Safety Unit*
- *Police Dog Services*
- *Training Section*

### 3. Community Safety Bureau

- Peace Officers
  - *General Duty*
  - *Traffic Safety*
  - *Bylaw Investigations*
- Community Outreach
  - *Outreach Workers*
  - *Case Workers*
- *Dispatch*

### 4. Corporate Services Bureau

- *Public Information Officer*
- *Human Resources & Wellbeing*
- *Finance & Procurement*
- *IT Services*
- *Facilities*
- *Crime Analysts*
- *Court and Administrative Services*
- *Records Management*
- *Client Services*
- *Collision Reporting Centre*

## ASSESSMENT

### Benefits

#### Local Oversight & Accountability

The Grande Prairie Police Service will be directly accountable to a municipal police commission which will provide true local governance and oversight, represent the local interests of the community, ensure financial accountability on behalf of taxpayers, and set local policing priorities.

The commission is responsible for selecting the Chief of Police and, in consultation with the Chief, develops and approves the services' annual business plans, annual reports and long-term strategic plans. The Chief reports back to the commission regularly on the implementation of the strategic goals, objectives or any other key performance indicators, ensuring transparency and spending accountability at the local level.

Police officers within the GPPS will be governed by the provincial *Police Act* and *Police Service Regulation*, not federal legislation. This aligns them with all other municipal police service members across the province and increases local and provincial accountability concerning code of conduct complaints, particularly if, as anticipated, the Government of Alberta establishes a new provincial police complaints agency as part of the *Police Act* revisions.

The municipal police service will be an integral part of the community, locally accountable, focused on community policing and able to respond effectively to ever-changing community needs.

### Financial

Preliminary high level costing models performed by the project team were consistent with the findings of the APPS Transition Study conducted by PWC in that it is believed feasible to operate an alternative police service at a cost equal to or less than the existing RCMP contract. Further detailed analysis by way of a Transition Report would be necessary to accurately assess these potential costs.

### Efficiency

The integrated design of the new service brings together police, municipal enforcement, health, and social welfare resources to ensure collaboration and increase efficiency and effectiveness. This also facilitates a 'Tiered Community Response,' focused on deploying the right resources, to the right place, at the right time.

The Integrated Operational Communication Centre further improves efficiency, enhances service, reduces costs, and allows these services to respond in line with the City's service level expectations without the reliance on a third party. The GPPS will have the ability to respond to the policing and public safety needs of the community and continue to refine its policies, practices and policing services more quickly. It will be able to research and introduce new technology, training, and other innovative practices quicker than the RCMP due to its smaller size and more nimble processes.

As the first new municipal police service in Alberta (excluding First Nations Police Services) since the 1950's the GPPS will benefit from being able to incorporate lessons learned and best practices in policing from inception.

The "made in Alberta, delivered in Alberta" training model will be a more cost-effective and efficient than the current one employed by the RCMP.

### Recruitment & Retention

The majority of police services spoken to within Alberta and British Columbia during the review process stated that, unlike the RCMP, they were experiencing not experiencing significant recruitment challenges. There was a general acknowledgement that police recruiting needed to further evolve.

The GPPS 'Recruit in Grande Prairie, for Grande Prairie' recruitment strategy will enhance employee retention. Most municipal police officers spend their entire careers with the same police service. These officers develop a deep understanding of the specific needs of, and a strong commitment to, the community they serve and provide long-

term stability, continuity, and local knowledge. This will build the public's confidence and trust in their police service, support community focused policing, and improve overall public safety.

## Risks

The MPSA between the City and the Government of Canada may be terminated on March 31 in any year by either party giving notice not less than 24 months prior to the date termination. The MPSA goes on to state that in the event of termination Parties agree to cooperate and assist each other to affect an orderly transition of service. However, despite this there may be some reluctance by the RCMP to collaborate with the City in transitioning to the new police service of jurisdiction. Although identified, this is considered a low risk due to the existing positive relationship between the parties.

The National Police Federation (NPF), which is essentially the new union for RCMP members below the rank of Inspector, may conduct a public campaign in an attempt to reverse the City's decision to create a municipal service.

One significant advantage of the current contracted policing model is the limited direct liability borne by the City concerning the conduct of the RCMP and its members. It is presumed this limited liability would also apply to any new contracted provincial police service. Therefore, it is important to note that while a municipal police service will increase Council's input into, and oversight of, the municipal service via the police commission, it also comes with increased risk and legal liability to the City, and the *Police Act* is clear that council is liable for any legal liability incurred by the commission.

## 1.4 Conclusion and Recommendation

In general, the operational front-line policing services provided by RCMP members in Grande Prairie are considered acceptable.

However, there remain significant concerns regarding the larger RCMP organization's ability to provide a high level of contract policing services due to its significant recruiting challenges, inability to retain members in the community, bureaucratic policies and procurement systems, and ever-increasing costs. These concerns are further compounded by the unknowns concerning the future long-term ability of the RCMP to perform contract policing across Canada.

The RCMP "one-size-fits-all approach" to municipal policing can fail to meet the specific needs of a community. By design, a police service needs to be governed by a local independent police oversight body e.g. a commission, with the sole mandate of ensuring the police service is providing what is required by the community it serves.

A Grande Prairie municipal police service will be an integral part of the community, locally accountable, focused on community policing and able to respond effectively to ever-changing community needs. The service will be better able to support the long-term growth of the City of Grande Prairie as a vibrant community where residents can live, work, and play without fear of crime.

Simply put, the municipal police service offers:

- Increased local accountability
- Increased organizational efficiency
- Increased community policing
- Increased employee retention
- Decreased costs

### 1.4.1 Recommendation

The recommended next step for Council is to approve the development of a detailed Transition and Community Engagement Plan to further assess the opportunity to establish a modern municipal police service.

The Transition Plan will describe in detail the necessary regulatory, planning, community engagement, staffing, equipment, training, records management, technological and operational steps, funding requirements, and timeline for the new municipal service to become the police service of jurisdiction for the City of Grande Prairie.

## 2 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The Government of Alberta (GOA) recently engaged a consulting firm, PricewaterhouseCoopers (PWC) to complete a review of Provincial Policing in Alberta. The PWC review suggested to the GOA that creating a new Alberta Provincial Police Service (APPS) had the opportunity to be both more cost effective and responsive to local needs than the current state of provincial policing offered through contract with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP). The GOA is now undertaking stakeholder engagement to determine whether it is desirable to proceed with transitioning provincial policing responsibility from the RCMP to an Alberta Provincial Police Service.

The City of Grande Prairie contracts the RCMP as its municipal police service provider through a Municipal Police Services Agreement (MPSA). MPSA's are available through the Provincial Police Service Agreement (PPSA) between the GOA and the RCMP. If the GOA were to form their own Provincial Police Service, the RCMP will no longer be available to provide municipal contract policing in the City of Grande Prairie or elsewhere in Alberta. Pending this decision, the City of Grande Prairie may need to decide whether to contract the newly formed Provincial Police as its municipal policing provider or alternatively seek another solution.

In anticipation of a coming decision point of police service delivery in the community, City Council initiated a Police Service Model Review. This review started in March 2022 and has captured the historical, current, and future states of policing in the City and has assessed various service delivery models. The results of the review will enable the City to make informed decisions on strategic policing related matters.

### 2.1 Terms of Reference

The primary objective of the review is to provide City Council with information to assist with their decision as to whether the City of Grande Prairie should continue to contract the RCMP to provide municipal policing services by way of a Municipal Police Service Agreement; or, should it be created, enter into an agreement with the Province for the new provincial police service to provide municipal policing services; or establish a standalone Grande Prairie Municipal Police Service; or investigate the establishment of a local Regional Police Service.

The objectives of the review are to:

- Complete a comprehensive review of the Grande Prairie RCMP, including associated Municipal Employees, and Grande Prairie Enforcement Services
- Complete a comparative analysis of police services delivery models to assess viable options for the City of Grande Prairie
- Complete a governance review of current and alternate policing options
- Provide the Municipal Police Advisory Committee and City Council with a comprehensive report containing the findings of the review and recommendations for consideration.



## 2.1.1 Project Scope

The Project Scope is identified within the Terms of Reference<sup>8</sup> as incorporating the following:

1. History of Policing in Grande Prairie
2. Current state analysis
3. Comparative analysis of Policing Service Models
4. Estimated financial implications related to transition and operation of alternative Policing Models

## 2.1.2 Guiding Principles

The Guiding Principles within the Terms of Reference include:

***Be Efficient:*** The review will analyze the most efficient police services delivery model for the City of Grande Prairie.

***Be Effective:*** The review will analyze the effectiveness of various policing models to determine viable options for the City of Grande Prairie.

***Be Community-Minded:*** The review will include community perspectives to ensure the best policing models are provided for consideration.

## 2.1.3 Methodology

The project Terms of Reference outline the below approach and methodology:

The Review will include the following actions:

- Meet with various stakeholders to approve methodology, approach, scope of work, objectives and deliverables
- Internal and external stakeholder analysis to determine project team and gather information
- Develop a data collection framework
- Develop interview and consultation process

- Develop data analysis process
- Conduct an Environmental Scan
- Complete a review of current state
- Complete a review of options for future state
- Conduct a risk assessment for each option
- Create a comprehensive report.

## 2.2 Community Profile

Grande Prairie is located in Northwestern Alberta, in the heart of the Peace Region. It is the largest city North of Edmonton, Alberta's capital city. It is a thriving young city full of continuous growth and opportunity.

The population of Grande Prairie is 64,141 according to the 2021 Federal Census<sup>9</sup>, with the greatest population being between the ages of 30 and 34. This population includes representation from more than 80 different cultural and ethnic groups.

Beyond its own population, Grande Prairie acts as a regional hub serving an additional 281,000+ people from across Northern Alberta, Northern British Columbia, and the Northwest Territories. It sits as the largest commercial centre north of Edmonton.

Grande Prairie enjoys a strong local economy based primarily on four key industries: Oil and gas, forestry, agriculture, and retail. Grande Prairie strives to be a leader in innovation and resourcefulness.

The City encompasses a geographical area of approximately 133 Km<sup>2</sup>.

## 3 POLICING IN CANADA

The *Constitution Act (1982)*<sup>10</sup> establishes the various powers of government and divides them between the federal and provincial governments. Under the Constitution, while the federal government is responsible for enacting criminal law, the provinces are responsible for the administration of justice. Therefore, the provinces are responsible for ensuring adequate policing within their jurisdiction.

### Roles and Responsibilities of the Police

The basic functions of the Police in Canada are to keep citizens safe and to enforce authorized laws. This is further broken down into the following areas: Crime prevention, investigations, enforcement, and public safety.

Policing in Canada is performed at a Federal, Provincial, First Nation and Municipal level.

### 3.1 Federal Policing

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police is Canada's national police service and the largest single policing agency in the country. It enforces federal laws, investigates financial and organized crime, protects national security, and ensures the safety of state officials and foreign dignitaries. The RCMP also provides policing services under contract to all territories and provinces, except Ontario and Quebec<sup>11</sup>. In addition, it provides policing services to more than 150 municipalities and 600 Indigenous communities. In total, the RCMP is the primary policing provider for 20% of Canada's population.

The RCMP is also mandated to provide technical or support services to all Canadian public police forces. This includes the Canadian Police College and the Canadian Police Information Centre (CPIC). Other specialized services include Laboratory Services, the Canadian Firearms Program, and the National Child Exploitation Coordination Centre.

### 3.2 Provincial Policing

The provinces are responsible for public policing. Independent provincial police services exist in Ontario, Quebec, and Newfoundland and Labrador. In all other provinces and territories, the RCMP, through contract provide policing services to areas that don't have municipal police forces.

Provincial policing includes but is not limited to:

- Policing rural areas and small municipalities
- Highway Patrol
- Multi-Jurisdictional Investigative Teams
- Specialized Services
  - Emergency Response Teams
  - Police Dog Services
  - Forensics
  - Major Crimes

### 3.3 Municipal Policing

In Canada, most urban municipalities over 50,000 have their own police service. Provincial Police Acts prescribe the requirements that must be met to maintain an independent police service. Most, if not all municipal police services are overseen by a civilian board or commission. Additionally, the Province will have further standards and evaluation requirements for such services.

### 3.4 First Nations Policing

Although most first nation communities are presently policed by the RCMP or Provincial Police Services, there is a growing trend of first nations forming their own Police Services. Funding for these Police Services is often done through a tri-party agreement between the First Nation, Province and Federal Government.

Once formed these Police Services are full-authority policing agencies and meet the same standards as other municipal policing agencies for that province.

### 3.3 Other Policing

Canada does have a few police agencies who carry federal authorities appointing them as a police officer other than through the criminal code. Examples of this include CP Rail Police and CN Rail Police who each employ Police Officers who have been authorized as such through the *Railway Act*. The Military Police is another such agency. While working within the scope of their duties these officers have the same or similar authorities as their municipal, provincial, or federal counterparts.

## 4 POLICING IN ALBERTA

In Alberta, the Government of Alberta through Alberta Justice and Solicitor General administers the criminal justice system and is responsible for ensuring adequate and effective policing throughout the province<sup>12</sup>.

A variety of police services and other agencies perform law enforcement roles across Alberta. The services are governed by different pieces of legislation and agreements with varying responsibilities at a federal, provincial, and municipal level.

The City of Grande Prairie has elected to sign a Municipal Police Service Agreement (MPSA) with the Government of Canada for the RCMP to provide the required policing services. 46 other municipalities in Alberta have also entered into such agreements.

Seven municipalities in Alberta have established independent municipal police services: Edmonton, Calgary, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, Lacombe, Camrose, and Taber.

Three First Nations communities in Alberta have established self-administered police services: Blood Tribe Police Service, Lakeshore Regional Police Service, and Tsuut'ina Nation Police Service.

### 4.1 Legislation

The Alberta *Police Act*, the Alberta *Municipal Government Act*, the Alberta *Police Officers Collective Bargaining Act*, as well as the federal *RCMP Act* provide the legislative framework for policing in the Province of Alberta.

#### 4.1.1 Municipal Government Act

Municipalities are governed by the *Municipal Government Act* (MGA). Under the MGA<sup>13</sup>, municipal councils are required to provide policing for the communities they serve. The options for providing this service are described in the *Police Act*.

The MGA also permits a council to pass bylaws and create offences for municipal purposes, including 'the safety, health and welfare of people and the protection of people and property.'

Municipalities may enforce municipal bylaws through the appointment of Bylaw Enforcement Officers for this purpose. Council must, by bylaw, specify the powers and duties of Bylaw Enforcement Officers.

A person who is appointed as a Bylaw Enforcement Officer is, in the execution of enforcement duties, responsible for the preservation and maintenance of public peace.

## 4.1.2 Alberta Police Act

The *Police Act* defines how policing, and the administration of policing, operates in Alberta. The Act identifies the responsibility of ministers, government, and municipalities for policing. It also sets the population threshold whereby a municipality must take responsibility to provide its own municipal policing, and the various options for that service.

The legislation includes sections relating to the Law Enforcement Review Board (part 2), police services and commissions (part 3), police officers (part 4) and complaints and discipline, including the Alberta Serious Incident Response Team (ASIRT) (part 5). A general section covers lock-up facilities, impersonating a police officer, and other miscellaneous matters.

Police services and police officers act under the direction of the Minister of Justice and Solicitor General in respect of matters concerning the administration of justice and administration of the *Police Act*.

The *Police Act* outlines that cities, towns and villages with a population over 5,000 must provide their own police service. The Province provides policing to all other municipalities at no direct cost to them.

Municipalities with populations over 5,000 have the following options for policing: a stand-alone police service, a regional police service, or contracting for the services of an existing police service.

Policing for municipalities with urban populations of 5,000 or less, as well as all rural municipalities (i.e. municipal districts/counties regardless of population), is provided by the RCMP as Alberta's provincial police service. The RCMP provides this service through the Provincial Police Service Agreement between Alberta and Canada. Although rural areas are not required to be policed by the provincial police service, if they choose other forms of policing, they must then pay for all costs.

The *Police Act* includes several regulations; principal among them is the *Police Service Regulation*.

The *Police Service Regulation*<sup>14</sup> is made pursuant to the *Police Act* and governs the discipline and performance of duty of police officers (Part 5 of the Act). The regulation addresses:

- Competency of police officers
- Probationary periods for working as a police officer
- Misconduct of a police officer
- Relief from duty of a police officer
- Counseling, time limits, statements, and evidence
- Hearings
- Punishment of officers

### 4.1.3 Police Officers Collective Bargaining Act

The *Police Officers Collective Bargaining Act*<sup>15</sup> governs labour relations for all municipal police services in Alberta. It creates two bargaining units for police officers, makes only single-municipality police associations eligible to act as bargaining agents. It excludes from collective bargaining such issues as the statutory responsibilities of a chief of police, and discipline and discharge, which are dealt with by regulations under the *Police Act*. The Police Officers Collective Bargaining Act prohibits strikes and lockouts and substitutes compulsory binding arbitration. The Act is administered by Alberta Employment and Immigration, which also has jurisdiction over strikes and lockouts under this act.

### 4.1.4 Royal Canadian Mounted Police Act

The *RCMP Act*<sup>16</sup> is federal legislation that provides the authority and mandate for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP). The Act provides that Public Safety Canada may enter into agreements with provinces to provide RCMP policing as a provincial police service. It also provides for municipalities to enter into agreements with the RCMP to provide policing services to a municipality. These agreements outline most aspects of such an arrangement, including accommodation, basis of payment, and equipment.

### 4.1.5 Peace Officer Act

The Alberta *Peace Officer Act*<sup>17</sup> and *Peace Officer Regulation*<sup>18</sup> enables the Province to designate agencies authorization to employ Peace Officers, and grant individuals Peace Officer status for specific job functions.

Peace Officers are authorized under the act by way of individual Peace Officer Appointments. These appointments grant legal authority to perform a variety of specified law enforcement roles to supplement the work of police officers in maintaining the peace.

## 4.2 Civilian Oversight and Governance

The delicate balance between the independence and authority of law enforcement on one hand, and their accountability to the public and the civilian authority, on the other, is a vital part of our democratic society. Oversight and governing bodies need to strike this balance between police independence to conduct investigations and maintain order without undue political or other influence, with the need for accountability to the public.

In accordance with the *Police Act*, Alberta Justice and Solicitor General sets the standards for effective policing across Alberta, while a municipality is responsible to oversee policing in their community. The forms in which municipal oversight is provided depends on who delivers policing services to the municipality. If a municipality has an independent police service or regional police service, they are required to have a police commission. Whereas a municipality that has contracted the RCMP may establish a policing committee. Members of a police commission or policing committee are usually citizens from the local community but often include a small number of city employees and/or council members. If no policing committee is established in an RCMP policed municipality, the MPSA identifies the mayor as the de facto oversight body.

According to the Province of Alberta's *Police Act*, municipalities have a choice to enter a variety of policing agreements, including engaging the provincial police as a municipal service (Alberta currently has an agreement with the RCMP to provide provincial policing services for the province), enter into an agreement for the provision of municipal policing services from another police service, establish a regional police service or establish a municipal police service. Governance and oversight for each of these policing options differ.

According to the *Police Act*, under the current policing structure, City Council may establish a policing committee with no fewer than three (3) and no more than 12 members for a term of three years to prescribe the rules governing the operation of the committee and appoint members of the committee to assist with oversight and governance of the chosen police service. The committee shall:<sup>8</sup>

- Oversee the administration of the municipal policing agreement made with the RCMP
- Assist in selecting the officer in charge
- Represent the interests of the council to the officer in charge
- In consultation with the officer in charge, develop a yearly plan of priorities and strategies for municipal policing
- Issue instructions to the officer in charge respecting the implementation and operation of the yearly plan
- Represent the interests and concerns of the public to the officer in charge
- Assist the officer in charge in resolving complaints
- Appoint a Public Complaint Director

## 4.2.1 Police Commissions and Committees

### Municipal Police Commissions

The *Police Act, Part 3* requires that any municipality that has established a municipal police service must establish and maintain a municipal police commission. A Council that has established a commission shall set the rules governing the operations of the commission and appoint the members of the commission.



The act stipulates that a police commission shall consist of not less than three and no more than 12 members. If four or less members are appointed, only one of them may be a member of council or an employee of the municipality; if five or more members are appointed, two of them may be members of council or employees of the municipality.

***Police Commission responsibilities:***

The commission, in consultation with the chief of police, shall cause to be prepared estimates of all money required for the fiscal year, and a yearly plan specifying the level of police service and programs to be provided in respect of the municipality; and submit those estimates and plans to the council.

The commission shall oversee the police service and for that purpose will:

- i. Allocate the funds provided by council
- ii. Establish policies providing for efficient and effective policing
- iii. Issue instructions, as necessary, to the chief of police in respect of the policies
- iv. Ensure that sufficient persons are employed for the police service for the purposes of carrying out the functions of the police service

The Alberta Justice and Solicitor General, Policing Oversight Standards further states that a Police Commission must carry out the below responsibilities:

- i. Elect, from amongst its members, a Chair and one or more Vice Chairs
- ii. In consultation with the Chief of Police produce an estimated budget and yearly plan specifying the level of police service and programs to be provided in respect of the municipality, and shall submit those estimates and plans to the council
- iii. Allocate and monitor the budgeted funds that are provided by council
- iv. Assist the Chief of Police in establishing policies providing for efficient and effective policing
- v. Issue instructions, as necessary, to the Chief of Police in respect of the established policies
- vi. Determine that sufficient persons are employed for the police service to carry out its functions
- vii. Appoint a Chief of Police, subject to the ratification of the municipal council; and
- viii. Appoint a Public Complaint Director to fulfil the duties set out in the *Police Act*.

## Regional Police Commissions

The *Police Act*, states that parties who enter into an agreement to establish a regional police service must also establish a regional police commission.

The role and responsibilities of a regional police commission are the same as those for a municipal police commission.

## Policing Committees

The *Police Act* allows a municipality that has contracted the RCMP as their municipal police service to establish a policing committee to oversee the Municipal Police Service Agreement (MPSA), and to represent the interests of Council to the police officer in charge.

Civilian oversight of RCMP municipal policing services is much more limited than in the case of a stand-alone municipal police service. The RCMP is bound by federal legislation and policies. In the context of those requirements and responsibilities, policing committees face significant constraints on their oversight activities, compared to police commissions.

### ***Police Committee requirements:***

- i. Create a written policy and procedures manual addressing provincial oversight standards
- ii. Set goals and objectives of the commission in a written strategic plan
- iii. Produce an annual report to stakeholders that summarizes the commission's activities over the previous year
- iv. Post a public meeting schedule and make available to the public, records of all meetings including agendas and minutes
- v. Implement a records management system to ensure access to records and proper control, storage, retrieval, and security of records.

### ***Policing Committee member requirements:***

- Complete enhanced security screening before confirming appointment to the committee. This includes at a minimum:
  - Police information checks
  - Character/Reference checks
  - Interview of applicant (including an assessment of overall suitability).
- Take the Oath of Office
- i. Participate in both formal and informal training and professional development

### ***Police Committee responsibilities:***

- i. Oversee the administration of the Municipal Police Service Agreement
- ii. Assist in selecting the officer in charge for the police service
- iii. Communicate Council's interests to the officer in charge
- iv. Develop a yearly plan that outlines policing priorities and strategies (includes input from the officer in charge)
- v. Consult with the officer in charge about how to implement the yearly plan
- vi. Communicate the public's interests and concerns to the officer in charge
- vii. Help the officer in charge resolve public complaints; and
- viii. Appoint a public complaint director to receive complaints against police.

### **Police Advisory Committees**

A Police Advisory Committee (PAC) is an alternative option for RCMP policed municipalities who do not wish to delegate their policing oversight responsibilities away from Council but still wish greater public transparency and participation in local policing matters. A PAC does not hold official status under the *Police Act* and its members are not subject to same requirements as a Policing Committee. Membership and mandate of a PAC is determined by Council in consultation with the RCMP Officer in Charge.

***Police Advisory Committee responsibilities:***

- ii. Advises the Officer in Charge on the policing concerns and problems of the community
- iii. Provides feedback to incorporate into the yearly plan of priorities and strategies for municipal policing
- iv. Serves as communication channel back to the community.

Neither Policing Committees nor Police Advisory committees get involved in the daily operations of police services. This is the responsibility of RCMP detachment commanders.

**PROVINCIAL SCAN**

There are approximately 352 municipalities in the Province of Alberta. Only nine (9) of these municipalities operate independent police services. The remaining municipalities are policed by the RCMP.

Policing Committees currently exist in seven (7) municipalities policed by the RCMP. These include Blackfalds, Canmore, Drumheller, Fort Saskatchewan, High River, Rocky Mountain House and St. Albert.

The *Alberta Peace Officer Act and Peace Officer Regulation, Alta Reg 291/2006*, enables the Province to designate agencies authorization to employ Peace Officers, and grant individuals Peace Officer status for specific job functions.

## 4.2.2 Director of Law Enforcement

The Director of Law Enforcement is usually the Assistant Deputy Minister of the Public Security Division of the department of Justice and Solicitor General. The Director is responsible for specific activities related to the monitoring of police services and commissions. The duties of the Director are outlined in section 8 of the *Police Act*.

## 4.2.3 Law Enforcement Review Board

The Law Enforcement Review Board (LERB) is an independent, quasi-judicial tribunal established under the Alberta *Police Act*. It is a public agency and therefore must comply with the Alberta Public Agency Governance Act.

In Alberta, police officers serving with a municipal or First Nations police service are subject to a public complaints process through the *Police Act*.

The *Police Act* provides that the chief of police is initially responsible for the disposition of such complaints. However, individuals who have filed complaints about the actions of a police officer and are not satisfied with the disposition of their complaint by the chief of police may appeal the decision to the LERB. The Board also hears appeals by police officers resulting from any disciplinary findings, or action taken against them, arising from a complaint.

The LERB cannot award compensation because of an appeal, and it cannot withdraw criminal charges. The board can vary the decision of the chief, vary the punishment of an officer, direct the chief to investigate the matter again, conduct a disciplinary hearing, lay a charge under the Alberta Police Service Regulations, or take any other action it considers appropriate.

LERB appeal hearings typically last one day and are public. The LERB decision is final, unless it appears the board has misinterpreted the law. In that case, the decision may be appealed to the Court of Appeal within 30 days (with the court's permission).

The board is composed of not fewer than three members appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council for a term of not more than three years. The Chair must be an active member of the Law Society of Alberta.

The Chair is accountable to the Minister of Justice and Solicitor General for the effective management and operation of the LERB. The Minister in turn reports to the Legislature with regards to the LERB.

## 4.2.4 RCMP Civilian Review and Complaints Commission

The public complaint process for the RCMP is different and separate from that for standalone municipal and First Nations police services in Alberta.

The *Royal Canadian Mounted Police Act* (RCMP Act) prescribes a Civilian Review and Complaints Commission (CRCC) for the RCMP.

The CRCC is an independent agency, established by the Canadian Parliament, responsible for examining complaints of improper on-duty conduct by members of the RCMP. The commission consists of a Chairperson and not more than four other members, appointed by the Governor General in Council.

Any individual may make a complaint concerning the conduct of any person who, at the time the conduct is alleged to have occurred, was a member or other person appointed or employed under the *RCMP Act* (police officers and civilian employees). Such a complaint may be filed with the Public Complaint Director of the relevant policing committee (if there is one), the local detachment commander, the Provincial Public Complaint Director, or to the CRCC. Complaints must be submitted in writing within one year of the incident.

A complainant who is not satisfied with a complaint investigation can appeal to the CRCC for a review. The CRCC will review the complaint, the RCMP's response and all other relevant material, such as witness statements, transcripts, police reports and RCMP policies and procedures. Once the document review is complete, the complaint can be concluded, or the review may involve further investigation or a public hearing. If a hearing is scheduled, it is normally open to the public and held in the community where the complaint arose. After the hearing, the commission will prepare a report with legally non-binding findings and recommendations. After the review is completed, the commission will inform the complainant of the results.

The CRCC may also independently initiate a complaint if the Chair believes there are reasonable grounds to investigate the conduct of a member of the RCMP. The RCMP investigates unless the commission conducts its own investigation or calls a hearing. The Chair can also initiate a public interest investigation about incidents already in the public domain.

The Commission may, at the request of the Minister of Justice and Attorney General or on its own initiative, conduct a review of specified activities of the RCMP and provide a report to the minister and the RCMP Commissioner.

### **4.3 Provincial Police Service Agreement**

The Province has the constitutional jurisdiction over the administration of justice within the province which includes the responsibility for providing policing services for municipalities with populations of 5,000 or less (towns, villages and summer villages), and to all municipal districts and counties.

The Province fulfills its policing responsibilities by contracting the services of the RCMP through a Provincial Police Service Agreement (PPSA). The PPSA is a contract between the Province and the Government of Canada. The agreement authorizes the RCMP to carry out the powers and duties of the provincial police service in accordance with the PPSA.

As the national police service, the RCMP maintains a federal policing presence in all of Canada's Provinces and Territories. Of these, eight Provinces and three Territories have also entered into Provincial Police Service Agreements (PPSA's) with the RCMP.

The RCMP currently provide policing services to 47 municipalities and 22 First Nations communities in Alberta. Policing for Métis Settlements is also provided under the PPSA by way of an Enhanced Policing Agreement.

The provincial policing responsibilities of the RCMP under the PPSA are to:

- Preserve peace, protect life and property, prevent crime and offences against federal and provincial law
- Apprehend criminals, offenders and others who may lawfully be taken into custody
- Execute federal and provincial warrants

The RCMP K Division Commanding Officer works under the direction of the provincial Minister of Justice and Solicitor General, who sets the objectives, priorities, and goals of the provincial police service. The current five strategic policing priorities for the RCMP outlined in the 2018-2024 Joint Business Plan between the RCMP and Justice and Solicitor General are:

1. Crime Reduction
2. Indigenous Communities
3. Road Safety
4. Community Engagement and Safety
5. Terrorism Awareness and Prevention

The majority of costs associated with provincial policing under the PPSA are charged by the RCMP to the Province in a cost sharing model with Alberta paying 70% and the Government of Canada subsidizing the remaining 30%.

The current PPSA came into effect on April 1, 2012 and is due to expire March 31, 2032. The agreement may be extended or renewed for an additional period and may be terminated on March 31 in any year by either party giving notice not less than 24 months prior to the date of the intended termination.

### 4.3.1 Municipal Police Service Agreements

Section 20 of the *Royal Canadian Mounted Police Act* provides that the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness may enter an arrangement with any municipality in a province for the use or employment of the RCMP, or any portion thereof, in aiding the administration of justice in the municipality.

A total of 47 municipalities in Alberta have entered an MPSA. Municipalities with a population under 15,000 are charged 70% of the total cost. Whereas those with a population over 15,000 such as the City of Grande Prairie are charged 90% with the Government of Canada subsidizing the remaining 30% and 10% respectively.

As previously mentioned, with a population over 5,000, the Alberta *Police Act* requires the City of Grande Prairie to provide policing services for its residents. In response, the City has signed a MPSA with the Government of Canada for the RCMP to provide the required policing services. All Municipal Police Service Agreements with the RCMP are the same and mirror the Provincial Police Service Agreement (PPSA).

The Grande Prairie MPSA forms a contract between the City and the Government of Canada and authorizes the RCMP to carry out the powers and duties of the municipal police service for the purpose of providing the municipal police service in accordance with the Agreement. It sets out the general services, roles, responsibilities, and financial obligations for local policing services provided by the RCMP.

The MPSA provides for local engagement and input in setting objectives, priorities, and goals of the RCMP contract policing in concert with the annual RCMP planning cycle. Further, it outlines those services the RCMP will and will not provide to the municipality, and in turn, what support and resources the municipality has agreed to provide the RCMP to support their local operations, such as support staff and accommodation.

The current MPSA came into effect on April 1st, 2012 and remains in effect until March 31, 2032. The agreement may be terminated on March 31 in any year by either party giving notice not less than 24 months prior to the date of the intended termination.

## 4.4 Supporting Agencies

Aside from the RCMP and municipal police several other organizations provide law enforcements services and support to Albertans.

### 4.4.1 Alberta Law Enforcement Response Teams (ALERT)

Alberta Law Enforcement Response Teams (ALERT)<sup>19</sup> was established by the Province in 2006 to combat organized and serious crime. It is a not-for-profit Part 9 company, funded by and operating at arm's length from, the Province. ALERT is an independent, integrated policing organization that combats organized and serious crime such as drug trafficking, gang violence and child exploitation across Alberta. ALERT operates pursuant to the terms of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the RCMP, the seven municipal police services, the three First Nations police services, and the Alberta Sheriffs. All parties to the MOU second staff to ALERT. The most recent MOU was executed on April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020 and will expire March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2025.

ALERT is governed by a Board of Directors responsible for its high-level strategic direction. The Board is comprised of the Alberta Chiefs of Police, the Commanding Officer of RCMP K-Division and the Assistant Deputy Minister, Justice and Solicitor General. The Board appoints a Chief Executive Officer who is a sworn police officer of the rank of Superintendent.



ALERT also has a Civilian Advisory Committee created in April 2018 to increase opportunity for community engagement and stakeholder relations in support of ALERT's mandate. It is comprised of representatives from the Alberta Association of Police Governance, the Alberta Municipalities and the Rural Municipalities of Alberta.

ALERT's four public safety priorities are to:

1. Promote Intelligence-Led Policing
2. Disrupt and Dismantle Organized Crime
3. Reduce Harm and Help Vulnerable Victims
4. Enhance Law Enforcement Capacity

ALERT is comprised of the below operational areas:

- **Organized Crime and Gang Teams:** Located in Calgary, Edmonton, Fort McMurray, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, Red Deer and Grande Prairie, these teams investigate, disrupt, and dismantle organized and serious crime in both urban and rural areas.
- **Internet Child Exploitation (ICE) Unit:** ICE investigates the sexual exploitation of children via the Internet.
- **Criminal Intelligence Service Alberta (CISA):** CISA acts as a central hub for strategic analysis and intelligence sharing on serious and organized crime in Alberta.
- **Alberta Specialized Law Enforcement Training (ASLET):** ASLET supports police and other stakeholders by providing specialized training to enhance the knowledge and operational ability of law enforcement in Alberta.

The Government of Canada funds 30% of ALERT's costs and a combination of provincial arrangements, grants and commitments fund the remaining 70%. The federal and provincial funding does not include the ALERT corporate administrative costs which are borne by ALERT. Partner agencies also contribute some officers to the model at no cost to ALERT.

Alberta provides ALERT with an annual grant which is paid on a quarterly basis. ALERT provides the Province with quarterly reporting for review and approval as well as an annual business plan.

ALERT has an office in Grande Prairie which includes one Corporal and one Constable from the local RCMP detachment.

## 4.4.2 Alberta Serious Incident Response Teams (ASIRT)

The Alberta Serious Incident Response Team (ASIRT) was established by the Government of Alberta as an investigative agency that is arms-length from the provincial government, and independent of police agencies.

ASIRT is led by a civilian executive director, who is a lawyer, who oversees a 'hybrid' organization that includes a blend of provincial civilian investigators and seconded police officers from multiple police services in Alberta.

The Alberta *Police Act* provides authorization for ASIRT to investigate Alberta police officers whose conduct may have caused death, serious injuries or has led to serious or sensitive allegations of police misconduct. ASIRT has province-wide jurisdiction and can investigate police officers serving in all municipal and Indigenous police services and the RCMP.

Under Section 46.1 of the *Police Act*, the Chief of Police or the Commanding Officer of RCMP K-Division, or designate, shall as soon as practicable notify the Director of Law Enforcement (DLE) of an actual incident or complaint regarding the serious injury or death of a person that may have resulted from the actions of a police officer or matters of a sensitive nature related to the actions of a police officer.

The DLE may assign ASIRT as the lead investigative agency, task ASIRT to oversee an investigation conducted by a police service, review a RCMP investigation, or act as both the investigation overseer and reviewer.

ASIRT does not accept complaints from the public and can only accept cases as assigned by the DLE. Public complaints must be made directly to the involved police service.

## 4.4.3 Peace Officers

Alberta Peace Officers perform a range of duties and are classified as Level 1 or Level 2 Peace Officers under the Act.

Members of the Alberta Sheriffs Branch are Level 1 Peace Officers. The Sheriffs Branch is a province-wide law enforcement agency under the Ministry of Justice and Solicitor General. Sheriffs Branch Peace Officers are trained at the Justice and Solicitor General, Training Academy in Edmonton and have authority to enforce federal and provincial statutes.

Sheriff Peace Officers have the authority to carry firearms under the *Peace Officer Act* and conduct various operational duties which include courthouse security; prisoner transport to federal and provincial correctional facilities; providing radio communications and dispatch services, investigating fish and wildlife crimes; enforcing traffic safety laws and commercial vehicle compliance with provincial and federal statutes; and providing security at the Legislature of Alberta.

Fish and Wildlife Enforcement and Highway Patrol Sheriffs have recently been granted additional authorities to support the RCMP in reducing rural crime across the province through the Rural Alberta Provincial Integrated Defence (RAPID) Response program.

Level 2 Peace Officers are employed by the Province or the Government of Canada. These Peace Officers are not authorized to carry firearms under the *Peace Office Act* and conduct a range of duties which include investigations and regulatory compliance enforcement under provincial statutes.

Community Peace Officers (CPO's) perform a range of duties at the community level. Their duties vary in nature and scope depending on the specific needs and priorities of the communities they serve. There are also two levels of CPO. CPOs Level 1 fulfil a range of roles including the enforcement of provincial statutes, which may include the enforcement of moving traffic violations under the Alberta Traffic Safety Act and/or elements of the Alberta Gaming, Liquor and Cannabis Act. These officers are trained at the Justice and Solicitor General Training Academy.

CPOs Level 2 have limited authorities and often fulfill roles of a more administrative nature such as RCMP detachment clerks, parking enforcement and animal control. They are generally not required to complete training at the Training Academy. However, those with a public-facing enforcement role are currently transitioning to CPO Level 1 with the necessary training.

Peace officers add flexibility to law enforcement in Alberta by providing a continuum of personnel with varied levels of training and authority (see Law Enforcement Framework below). This model recognizes that many enforcement roles, such as regulatory compliance, do not require highly trained, armed police officers. The use of peace officers for these roles enables police officers to remain focused on more complex and serious criminal enforcement activities. Over 500 CPOs are employed by numerous organizations in Alberta including over 120 municipalities and counties, automated traffic enforcement programs, police services, hospitals, animal protection agencies, and post-secondary institutions.

An excellent example of the effective use of CPOs is Grande Prairie Enforcement Services.

## 4.5 Alberta Law Enforcement Framework

The *Law Enforcement Framework*<sup>20</sup> was created in 2010 by the Province, it provides the foundation for a new vision for the future of law enforcement in Alberta.

The Framework recognizes that effective law enforcement requires that communities have the flexibility to address their local policing needs as effectively and efficiently as possible. *'The law enforcement needs, and priorities of each Alberta community is unique. Communities therefore need as much flexibility as possible to pursue local law enforcement approaches that meet their needs...'*

The Framework also recognizes there are increased expectations with respect to public transparency and public accountability for police operations.

The Framework sets out nine strategic directions. Four strategic directions are relevant to the police service review and include:

- *Capable, flexible, and responsive operational policing will be the foundation of modern law enforcement in Alberta. At the local level, communities should have the flexibility to address their local policing needs as effectively and adequately as possible. Community policing forms the foundation of effective law enforcement.*
- *The full continuum of law enforcement delivery will be utilized to provide flexibility in policing approaches throughout the province. Communities can distribute law enforcement functions beyond police officers to other personnel, such as peace officers.*
- *All Alberta municipalities will have adequate, transparent, and meaningful community input into local policing needs and priorities.*
- *Alberta communities will be safer through a balance between traditional enforcement activities and community led prevention initiatives aimed at reducing crime over the long term.*

## 5 Policing in Grande Prairie

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) are the City of Grande Prairie’s municipal police contractor. The Grande Prairie RCMP Detachment is located in Downtown Grande Prairie in a municipally owned building. The Detachment operates as a combined post which means the facility is also occupied by Provincial Policing resources who work under the supervision of the Detachments commissioned officers.

Policing in Grande Prairie is further supported by supplemental resources such as the Municipal Support Section, Enforcement Services and Mobile Outreach.

Additional community partners include organizations such as Grande Prairie & District Victim Services, PACE Centre, Grande Prairie and Area Safe Communities, Grande Prairie Technical Search and Rescue, STARS Air Ambulance and several others.

### 5.1 History of Policing in Grande Prairie

Obtaining the history of policing evolution in Grande Prairie was one of the more challenging aspects of this report. Fortunately, the Grande Prairie Museum and South Peace Regional Archives were able to provide resources with some detail<sup>212223</sup>. There is no doubt that a great deal more history should be uncovered, and effort should be made to create a more accessible record of policing history for Grande Prairie.

1873	Policing of Western Canada started with the creation of the North West Mounted Police (NWMP)
1897	NWMP patrols commenced in the Peace River area in 1897
1904	The NWMP was renamed as the Royal North West Mounted Police (RNWMP)
1905	Alberta joined Confederation and the RNWMP continued to police the province
1908	The first permanent police presence in the Grande Prairie area was established with the creation of a Royal North West Mounted Police (RNWMP) barracks at Flying Shot Lake with one constable (S.G. Clay)
1916	In October the RNWMP created the Grande Prairie Sub-Division with its Headquarters at Saskatoon Lake with Sgt. Harper in-charge.
1917	On March 1, 1917, the RNWMP formally relinquished the policing of Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba due to a lack of personnel caused by World War One. The responsibility for policing Alberta was assumed by the province for the next 15 years with the creation of the Alberta Provincial Police (APP)

- 1918 In December 1918, the Government of Canada decreed the RNWMP would be the sole federal police service in Western Canada (Canada once had a Dominion Police as well). Following an increase in staffing in 1919, the RNWMP reopened a detachment in Grande Prairie as part of 'G-Division.' However, the detachment was staffed with minimal resources and, as a result, would close and re-open several times over the next decade.
- 1920 The APP established a new police station in the town of Grande Prairie where the Provincial Building now stands.
- 1929 The Grande Prairie Town Constabulary was established with Chief Town Constable Robert T. Ross whose roles included: truant officer, child welfare officer, assistant health officer. Ross' duties included: enforcing town bylaws and collecting delinquent taxes, inspecting pool halls, and "keeping an eye out for bootleggers."
- 1932 On April 1 the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), having been renamed again in 1920, once again assumed responsibility for policing the province and the APP was absorbed into the RCMP with the creation of 'K-Division.' RCMP strength in the Grande Prairie area was one Sergeant and three Constables.
- 1933 A new Chief Town Constable was hired who also held a dual role with Public Works providing police services part time. However, he resigned in 1936 unable to conduct both roles effectively.
- 1936 In June, a new Chief Town Constable was hired at a monthly salary of \$100/month.
- 1943 On July 1<sup>st</sup> the RCMP officially took over policing the Town of Grande Prairie from the Chief Town Constable with one Sergeant and two Constables. The Chief Town Constable position was assimilated into the RCMP.
- 1951 The RCMP moved into a new Police Building inclusive of barracks for the officers.
- 1959 The RCMP began using radar to detect speed violations for the first time.
- 1966 The RCMP had again moved into a new building located at 10031 103 Avenue (PACE Building).
- 1967 June 23, 1967 Cpl. Archibald Harvey is killed in the line of duty while responding to reports of a deceased woman. Cpl. Harvey was shot as he approached the location with another officer. Cpl. Harvey passed away immediately. The shooter, Leonard Borg was arrested and later convicted of the murder.
- 1975 Between 1975 and 1979 the RCMP Detachments staffing compliment grew from 19 to 38 and included 1 female officer. Cst. Judy Zevola was the first female police officer in the Peace Region. In addition, the detachment was authorized a compliment of up to 39 Auxiliary Constables.
- 2006 The current Grande Prairie RCMP detachment opened. Initially this facility housed the RCMP, Municipal Support Staff, Enforcement Services and Crime Prevention. However, due to position growth Enforcement Services and Crime Prevention were relocated in 2012.

## 5.2 Current State

The following sections describe the current services, governance structure and financial information for policing services offered in the City of Grande Prairie.

### 5.2.1 Services

A variety of indicators were utilized to describe and review the current service level provided to the City of Grande Prairie by the RCMP and Municipal Enforcement team including:

- 1) Staffing Levels
- 2) Service Offerings
- 3) Service Standards
- 4) Calls for Service

#### 5.2.1.1 Staffing Levels

##### RCMP

The City of Grande Prairie contracts the RCMP as our municipal policing provider through a MPSA. The City has an approved an annual staffing establishment of 110 sworn police officers. However, the number of sworn officer positions approved and funded by the City under the terms of the MPSA is 104, which includes two funded positions within ALERT. The additional six position numbers were created by the RCMP within the organizational chart to facilitate the transitioning of members in and out of the detachment. The two ALERT positions are seconded to an off-site location.

The Grande Prairie Detachment operates as a combined post. The Forensic Identification Section, General Investigation Section, the Crime Reduction Unit, Specialized Investigative Unit, Police Service Dog Section and the Drug Unit operate as combined units providing service to both the City and County.

##### Municipal Support Section

In accordance with the terms of the MPSA, the City of Grande Prairie is responsible for providing, at its own cost, the support staff necessary to support RCMP municipal policing operations. As of May 2022, the Grande Prairie Detachment utilizes the equivalent of 57.4 municipal Full-time Employee positions.

##### Enforcement Services

Enforcement Services work in concert with the RCMP to support policing and law enforcement in Grande Prairie. The department is led by a Peace Officer Superintendent who oversees 23 Peace Officers and 5 Civilian support staff.

The number of Peace Officers is expected to grow by 5 in 2023 as a dedicated Traffic Safety Unit comes online.

## Mobile Outreach

As part of the City’s approach to community well-being and safety, the Mobile Outreach Department has been established as an alternative response for social disorder, mental health, and addictions related issues.

Mobile Outreach consists of (1) Manager, (3) Case Workers, (8) Outreach Workers, (1) Needle Mitigation Specialist and a (0.5) Administrative Resource.

The table below, provides detailed information regarding the number of Fulltime Equivalent Employees (FTE’s) for the RCMP, Municipal Support Section, Enforcement Services and Mobile Outreach.

Table 1 – 2022 FTE Count<sup>24</sup>

Rank / Position Title	Sworn or Civilian	# of Staffed FTEs
<b>RCMP – Municipal</b>		
Superintendent	Sworn	1
Inspector	Sworn	1
Staff Sergeant	Sworn	3
Sergeant	Sworn	9
Corporal	Sworn	19
Constable	Sworn	71
<b>Total RCMP Municipal</b>		<b>104</b>
<b>Municipal Support Section</b>		
Manager	Civilian	1
Assistant Manager	Civilian	10
Supervisors	Civilian	1
Coordinators	Civilian	3.5
Customer Service Representatives	Civilian	1
Administrative Staff	Civilian	3
Operational Support	Civilian	24
Jail Guards	Civilian	8
Custodial	Civilian	4
<b>Total Municipal Support Section</b>		<b>57.4</b>
<b>Enforcement Services</b>		
Superintendent	Peace Officer	1
Sergeant	Peace Officer	2
Community Peace Officer	Peace Officer	21
Operational Support Supervisor	Civilian	1
Operations Support	Civilian	1
Administrative Services	Civilian	2
Court Liaison	Civilian	1
<b>Total Enforcement Services</b>		<b>29</b>



Rank / Position Title	Sworn or Civilian	# of Staffed FTEs
<b>Mobile Outreach</b>		
Manager	Civilian	1
Case Workers	Civilian	3
Outreach Workers	Civilian	8
Needle Mitigation Specialist	Civilian	1
Administrative Services	Civilian	0.5
<b>Total Mobile Outreach</b>		<b>11.5</b>
<b>TOTAL FTE</b>		<b>201.9</b>

### 5.2.1.2 Service Offerings

The services provided by the RCMP and the Municipal Enforcement team differ and are designed to strategically complement each other. The city also provides the RCMP with civilian staff that support the RCMP in a variety of operations and administrative capacities. Further detail regarding the service provision of each group is provided in the following sections.

#### RCMP

The RCMP provide the below core policing services to the City of Grande Prairie:

- **General Duty Policing**  
Conducts proactive patrol duties and provides the primary response to all policing public safety matters such as calls for service and investigate violations.
- **General Investigation Section (GIS)**  
Investigates more serious and complicated offences and conducts investigations that are prolonged and labour-intensive. The unit also coordinates and assists in intelligence gathering related to serious crime investigations. The below four units are housed within GIS:
  - **Drug Enforcement Unit**  
Primary responsibilities include enforcement and intelligence gathering related to drug activity and trafficking, and target-focused investigations.
  - **Specialised Investigative Unit (SIU)**  
Initially created as a pilot in September 2020, SIU members investigate all sexual assaults and high-risk domestic violence offences.

- **Crime Reduction Unit**  
The goal of the Crime Reduction Unit is the deterrence and overall reduction of criminal activity through targeted enforcement operations. The unit is responsible for developing strategies to address community crime problems such as motor vehicle thefts, break and enter and all other property-related crime. The CRU also monitors local prolific offenders.
- **Police and Crisis Team (PACT)**  
PACT provides a crisis response team comprised of an RCMP officer and Registered Psychiatric Nurse, which can intervene, assess, and support people having a mental health crisis in the community. If required, they can apprehend and convey an individual to hospital under the *Alberta Mental Health Act*
- **Police Dog Section**  
Two police dogs provide ‘K9’ services to the City. They are used to search for and/or apprehend suspects, search for lost persons, and search for narcotics, explosives, and lost property.
- **Traffic Services**  
The Municipal Traffic Services operate within the city limits and enforce the Alberta *Traffic Safety Act* and impaired driving legislation, respond to collisions, investigate serious injury or fatal motor vehicle collisions. Enforcement is intelligence-led, focusing on the driving behaviours which cause serious injury and fatal collisions as well as the locations where those collisions occur. Traffic members also take part in criminal interdiction, which includes the detection and seizure of all types of contraband during regular traffic stops.
- **Forensic Identification Section (FIS)**  
Forensic identification members assist at crime scenes by searching for, recording, collecting, comparing, analyzing, and identifying physical evidence which may include crime scene photography; fingerprints, footwear, and tire-track examinations; bloodstain pattern analysis; and the collection of DNA samples.
- **Community Policing**  
Conducts Drug Awareness Resistance Education (DARE) training and school liaison activities within schools. They also respond to requests for RCMP participation at public events, crime prevention presentations, Neighbourhood Watch, and other community activities.

## MUNICIPAL SUPPORT SECTION

As indicated on the organizational chart, support staff are divided into operational and administrative support staff. Operational support staff include: Watch Clerks, GIS Support Clerk, CRU Support Clerks, Court Liaison, Exhibit Custodian, File Reader and Crime Analyst. Administrative support staff include: PROS Database Coordinator, M/E & Management Support, Traffic Clerk, CPIC Database Coordinator, Rotational Municipal Enforcement, Front Desk-Volunteer and Commissionaire.

## ENFORCEMENT SERVICES

Municipal Enforcement Officers are appointed by the Alberta Solicitor General and the Minister of Public Security and are legislated under the *Peace Officer Act* to enhance public safety within the City of Grande Prairie. Municipal Enforcement Officers can provide the following general services to the City of Grande Prairie as mandated by the Province of Alberta's *Peace Officer Act*:

- **Emergency Response**

Several GPES Peace Officers have enhanced authorities allowing them to respond to emergency calls. An 'emergency response' is restricted to:

- Injury Collisions
- Providing backup to Police or Peace Officers where there is a reasonable belief that the officer is in danger and the Peace Officer may be the closest assistance available
- Attending a fire or medical situation at the request of Fire or EMS, except for routine medical co-response
- Any emergent situation if requested by a police service to attend in an emergency response capacity

- **Bylaw Enforcement**

Enforcing City of Grande Prairie Bylaws created under the Municipal Government Act allows the City to create and enforce bylaws to maintain the health, safety and wellness of the community.

Common bylaw enforcement includes:

- Traffic Bylaw
- Animals and Responsible Pet Ownership Bylaw
- Noise, Nuisance and Public Disturbances Bylaw
- Minimum Property Standards Bylaw
- Vehicle for Hire Bylaw

- **Provincial Act Enforcement**

Enforcing the below provincial legislation:

- Animal Protection Act
- Dangerous Dog Act
- Environmental protection and enhancement Act
- Gaming, Liquor and Cannabis Act
- Highways Development and Protection Act
- Insurance Act
- Provincial Administrative Penalties Act
- Provincial Offences Procedure Act
- Petty Trespass Act
- Tobacco, Smoking and Vaping Reduction Act
- Tobacco Tax Act
- Traffic Safety Act
- Trespass to Premise Act

- **Traffic Enforcement**

These officers enforce the Alberta Traffic Safety Act, RSA 2000, c T-6 as part of the annual GPES Traffic Safety Plan. The primary purpose of traffic enforcement is to reduce traffic collisions and resulting injuries, and to facilitate the safe and expedient flow of vehicular and pedestrian traffic.

- **Automated Traffic Enforcement (Photo Enforcement)**

GPES oversees the Automated Traffic Enforcement (ATE) program to enforce the Alberta Traffic Safety Act. Used in high-risk locations such as school/playground zones, construction zones, areas of community concern, high volume collision locations, and areas where conventional means of enforcement are unavailable or ineffective, these technologies include conventional manned operations, intersection safety devices (Red Light Cameras), photo speed enforcement as well as portable enforcement technologies for stop signs, red lights, and distracted driving violations.

- **Commercial Vehicle Inspections**

Commercial Vehicle Inspection officers ensure commercial vehicles comply with provincial and federal statutes and conduct checks in accordance with the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance (CVSA) for such things as steering, brakes, suspensions, load securing, dangerous goods transportation and road bans.

- **Parking Control**

Parking Control is a core service within Bylaw Enforcement which enforces prohibited parking, responds to abandoned vehicles, provides residential parking permits, and conducts school zone parking enforcement.

- **Vehicle for Hire Licensing**

GPES enforces the Vehicle for Hire Bylaw as it relates to taxis, limousines, shuttle services, designated driving services and transportation network companies.

- **Animal Control**

GPES Peace Officers ensure pets are a positive addition to the community through education programs, mediating neighbour disputes, licensing, providing advice and enforcement of provincial statutes and the Animals and Responsible Pet Ownership Bylaw.

- **Regional Animal Care Facility (Animal Pound)**

The Regional Animal Pound is a municipal responsibility and is operated in partnership with the County of Grande Prairie on a cost share basis. The facility provides services for animals who may not have an identified owner, require health or behavioural assistance, or are found astray. Investigate municipal bylaws and select provincial legislation complaints

- **GPES AGENT Program**

Introduced in October 2021, the GPES AGENT Program assist community stakeholders with trespassing issues. The program provides GPES Peace Officers specific delegated authority to promptly enforce trespass legislation on private property. Permission to enact this authority on the property is granted by the property owner(s) and is identifiable by the GPES AGENT decal displayed by the participating establishment.

## MOBILE OUTREACH

The Mobile Outreach Department (MO) is a diversion program, built off the success of the Police and Crisis Team (PACT), focused on mitigating the impacts of street level disorder, addiction, and public intoxication.

Regular MO duties include:

- Mobile diversion response to street level intoxication
- Responding to trespassing and loitering complaints from businesses and residents as a first intervention
- Facilitating individual's access and entry to local shelters, health care, addiction treatment and housing
- Liaising with police and emergency medical services to reduce unnecessary and inappropriate uses of these core services
- Supporting encampment suppression activities and clean up of needle debris
- Transporting street engaged individuals when required.

Historically, RCMP members have been dispatched to these types of complaints taking officers away from other, often more serious, calls for service.

However, PACT, comprised of RCMP members and mental health nurses, continue to be deployed to mental health incidents presenting a significant safety risk.

## GRANDE PRAIRIE COLLISION REPORTING CENTRE

Accident Support Services International Ltd. (ASSI) staff assist the public file a collision report, take pictures of damage, provide a 'damage reported to police' sticker, and initiate the insurance process. The Collision Reporting Centre and use of contracted ASSI resources, removes operational financial responsibility from the City and reduces the administrative burden on RCMP police officers freeing them to respond to other policing matters.

### 5.2.1.3 Service Standards

#### RCMP and MUNICIPAL SUPPORT STAFF

The RCMP are available for calls for service 24/7. The Grande Prairie Detachment offers front counter service 9:00 am to 4:30 pm, Monday to Friday.

The RCMP Operational Communications Centre (OCC) located in Edmonton is the primary point of contact for the public when requesting police assistance in both emergency and non-urgent matters within the City of Grande Prairie. The OCC receives the call for service and then dispatches the most appropriate available local RCMP resource to the incident.

Recently, due to a reduction in OCC service, the Municipal Support Section has assumed responsibility for receiving Priority 3 and Priority 4 calls for service and resource dispatch during the hours of 9:00 am to 5:00 pm, Monday to Friday.

## Travel and Total Response Time

To determine total response times, 4.75 minutes were added to every Priority 1 trip to account for OCC queue time, length of the call and file maintenance, and the dispatching of the file to the Member. For Priority 2 trips, 6.25 minutes were added to account for OCC queue time, length of the call and file maintenance, dispatching the file to the Member, and the time for the Member to read the file and do initial checks and queries. These additions to calculate total response times are based on a 2018 study.

The overall average response time for Priority 1 & 2 calls in 2021 for Municipal Detachments in K Division was 12.9 minutes. The graph below shows a breakdown of all these calls.

Figure 1. Response Times Priority 1 and 2 Calls

Minutes	Grande Prairie RCMP	Alberta RCMP
5 - 10	34.2%	36.8%
10 - 15	45.3%	40.0%
15 - 20	12.5%	12.9%
20 - 25	3.6%	4.5%
25+	4.4%	5.8%

Source: Calls for Service, Strategic Performance Planning 2021, RCMP

## **ENFORCEMENT SERVICES**

Members of the public can contact GPES for multiple service requests, such as animal licencing, parking ticket payments and criminal record checks, via the mainline digital switchboard by calling 780-830-5790.

The public may also make a bylaw complaint using this mainline. The actual routing of the public complaint call to Enforcement Services personnel varies dependent on the time of day, as shown below:

### **Monday - Friday**

7am – 8am Transfers to the GPES ‘on call phone’ (780-830-5895)

8am – 9am Transfers to the Citizen Contact Centre

9am - 5pm Transfers to RCMP Call Centre

5pm – 6pm Transfers to Citizen Contact Centre

6pm – 11pm Transfers to Enforcement Services ‘on call phone’ once more

### **Weekends & Statutory Holidays**

7am – 11pm Transfers to Enforcement Services ‘on call phone’

An incident response by GPES officers is then coordinated by whichever centre receives the complaint using an off-the-shelf dispatch software system known as Report Exec. Dispatch.

The City on 99 Building is open to the public 8:30 am to 4:30 pm, Monday to Friday.

## **MOBILE OUTREACH**

Mobile Outreach is available for service 7:00 am to 11:00 pm, seven days per week.

## **GRANDE PRAIRIE COLLISION REPORTING CENTRE**

The Collision Reporting Centre is open 8:00 am to 4:00 pm, Monday to Friday. Grande Prairie residents may report non-injury motor vehicle accidents at the centre.

## 5.2.1.4 Community Engagement

In 2021 the Grande Prairie Detachment took steps to improve the level of community engagement within the City. The Community Policing Unit was rebranded as the Community Engagement and Diversity unit (CEAD) and within CEAD, School Resource Officers were renamed as Community Engagement Officers and refocused on the community needs, although they remain actively engaged with school boards, teachers, and students. CEAD is also responsible for monthly engagement with various religious & ethnic groups and attendance at a variety of community events.

CEAD manages the detachment media releases, monthly newsletter and social media account. CEAD completes monthly presentations at the Grande Prairie Local Immigration Partnership and bi-annually at Grande Prairie Cultural Integration Academy.

The detachment also implemented Community Engagement Patrols (CEP), a two-tiered response to meet community concerns, comprised of:

- Downtown foot patrols - to increase officer presence within the downtown core, proactively address vagrant crime and increase the confidence within the RCMP from downtown businesses and patrons; and
- UTV Community Patrols – integrated patrols, with the Mobile Outreach Program & GPES, utilizing a side-by-side vehicle (UTV) on walking trails and green spaces to increase officer presence on walking trails, proactively engage encampments on city property and increase the overall safety of trails and park users.

In addition to CEP, the detachment conducts daily patrols/engagement at Wapiti House and Stonebridge to proactively address employee and community concerns and continues to liaise with the Grande Prairie Regional Emergency Partnership (GPREP), Downtown Association, Grande Prairie Opioid Task Force, and Grande Prairie Leadership Committee.

## 5.2.1.5 Planning Documents

Law enforcement activities within the City of Grande Prairie are guided by strategic enforcement plans.

### RCMP Annual Policing Plan

The City of Grande Prairie Annual Policing Plans are developed using the standard RCMP template and through consultation between the detachment Officer in Charge and the MPAC. MPAC members are afforded the opportunity to highlight concerns with current policing services and identify policing priorities for the upcoming fiscal year for inclusion in the policing plan.



### ***2021-2022 Annual Policing Plan***

The 2021-2022 Annual Policing Plan included three priorities:

1. **Intelligence Led Policing** - Crime Reduction
2. **Police & Community Relations** - Communication
3. **Visibility** - Community Engagement Patrols

The results of steps taken by the detachment in addressing these three policing priorities were provided by the RCMP to the MPAC in March 2022 and are shown below:

1. Crime Reduction
  - 12% Reduction of Property Crime
  - 27% Reduction of Theft Under \$5000
  - 10% Reduction of Motor Vehicle thefts
2. Increase Communication
  - In 2021, completed 215 media releases
  - In 2021, Grande Prairie RCMP created their own Facebook account
3. Increase Visibility
  - Community Engagement Patrols:
    - Downtown Foot Patrols: 115
    - UTV Park Patrols (with Mobile Outreach Program): 20

### ***2022-2023 Annual Policing Plan***

The 2022-2023 Annual Policing Plan development consultation was held in March 2022, during which the MPAC identified several concerns, including:

- The low number of years service experience of local front-line RCMP members
- The high level of attrition of RCMP members out of the community
- The need for continual training and professional development of new members and the resulting cost to the City
- The relationship between the RCMP and minority groups
- The need for more visible minorities within the ranks of the RCMP

As a result of the planning discussion, the below four priorities are included in the 2022-2023 APP:

1. **Engagement & Communication with Community**
  - Community Engagement Patrols & Communication
2. **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion**
  - Engagement with Ethnic & Religious Groups
3. **Crime Reduction & Community Safety**
  - Management of Prolific Offenders & Road Safety
4. **Enhancing Service Delivery**
  - Retention Strategy & investigational Integrity

### GPES Traffic Safety Plan

GPES is committed to road safety through the development and delivery of an annual Traffic Safety Plan. The plan has a focus on education, commercial vehicle inspections, vehicle defects, and general traffic enforcement. Focus areas have been identified as key to the success of Grande Prairie’s Traffic Safety Plan.

## 5.2.1.6 Statistics

Figure 2. Annual Crime Severity Index – Grande Prairie 2017 to 2021<sup>25</sup>

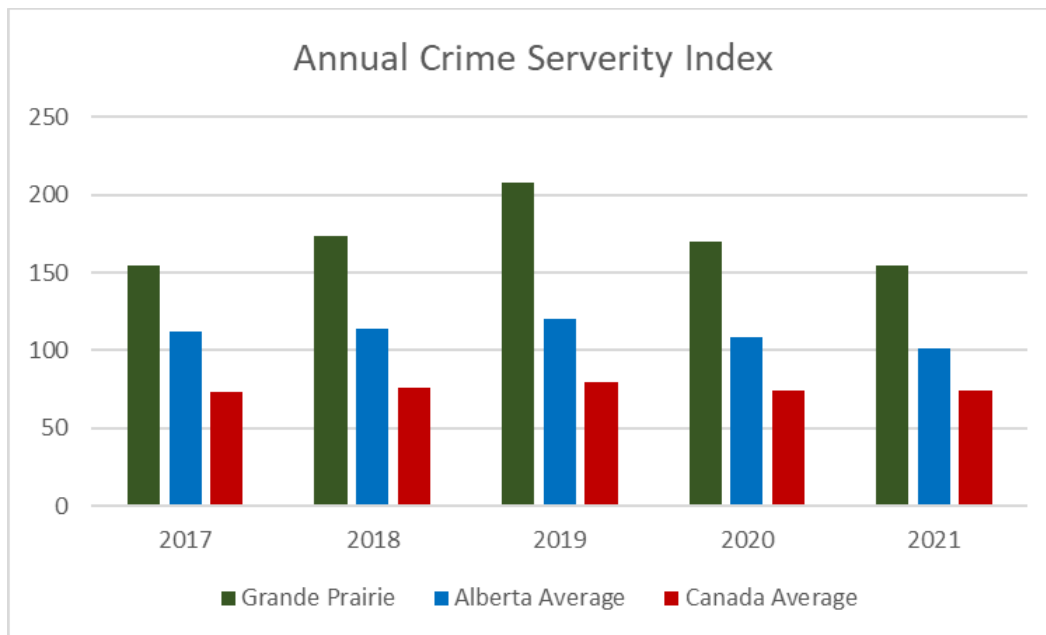


Figure 3. Violent Crime Severity Index – Grande Prairie 2017 to 2021<sup>26</sup>

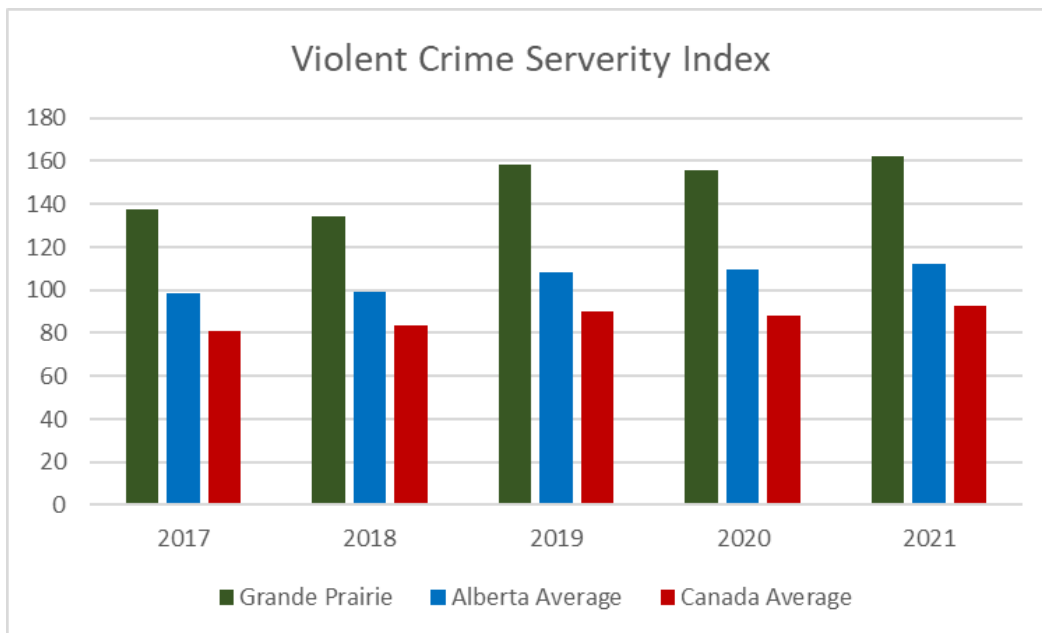


Figure 4. Non-Violent Crime Severity Index – Grande Prairie 2017 to 2021<sup>27</sup>

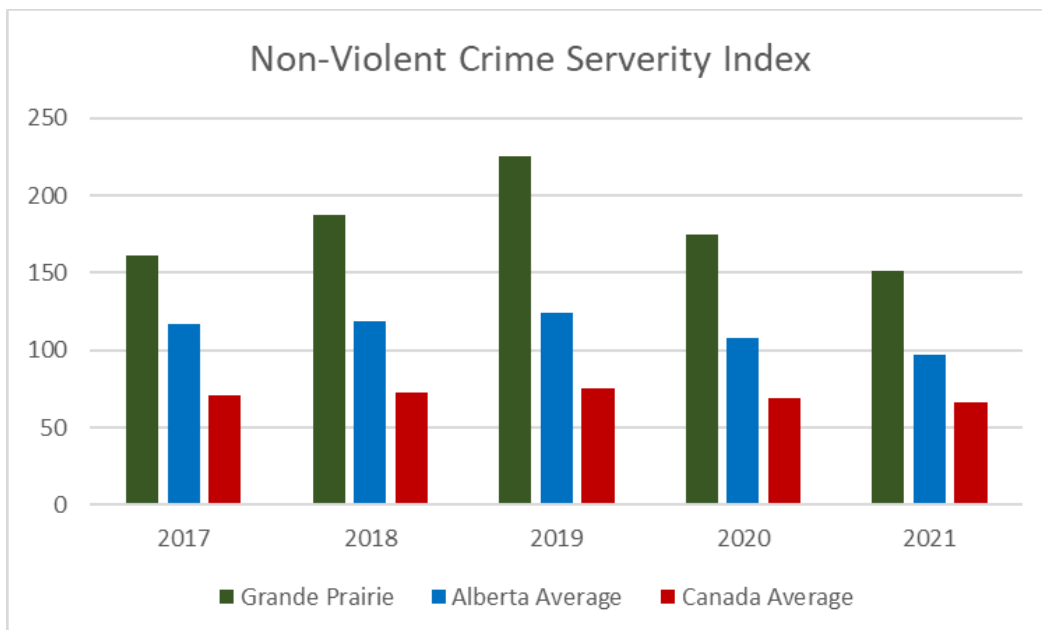


Figure 5. Crime Incident per 100,000 population – Grande Prairie 2017 to 2021<sup>28</sup>

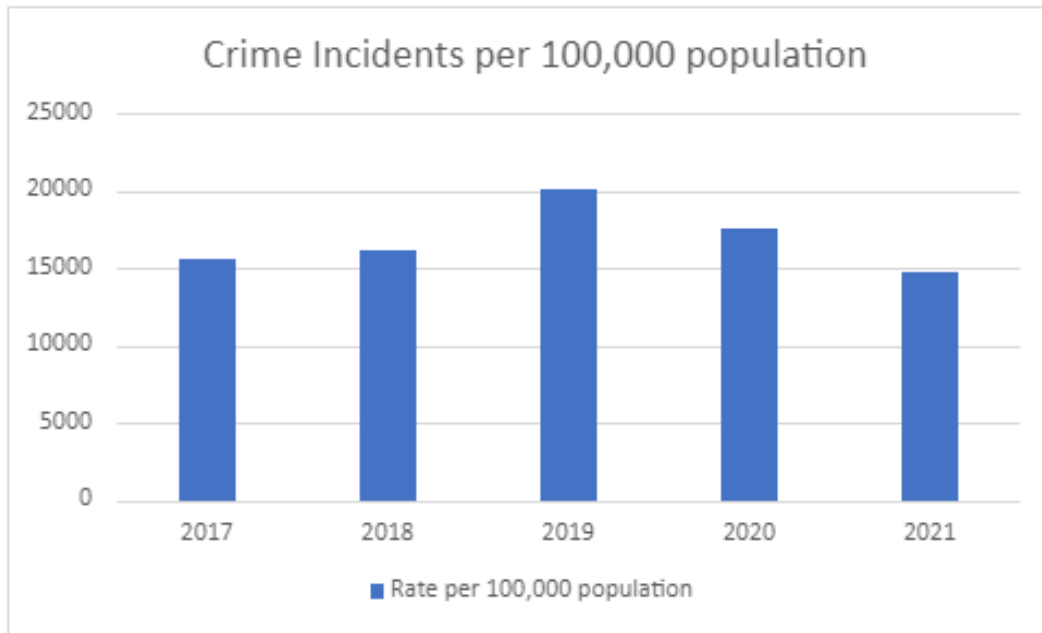


Figure 6. Weighted Clearance Rate% - Grande Prairie 2017 to 2021<sup>29</sup>

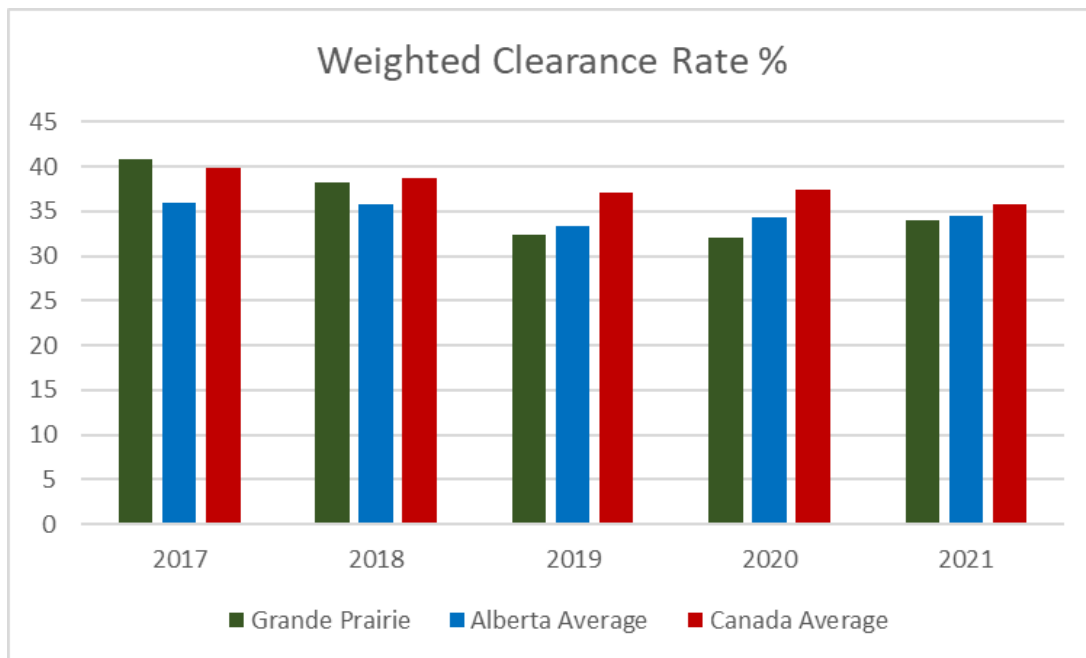


Figure 7. RCMP Calls for Service - Grande Prairie 2017 to 2021<sup>30</sup>

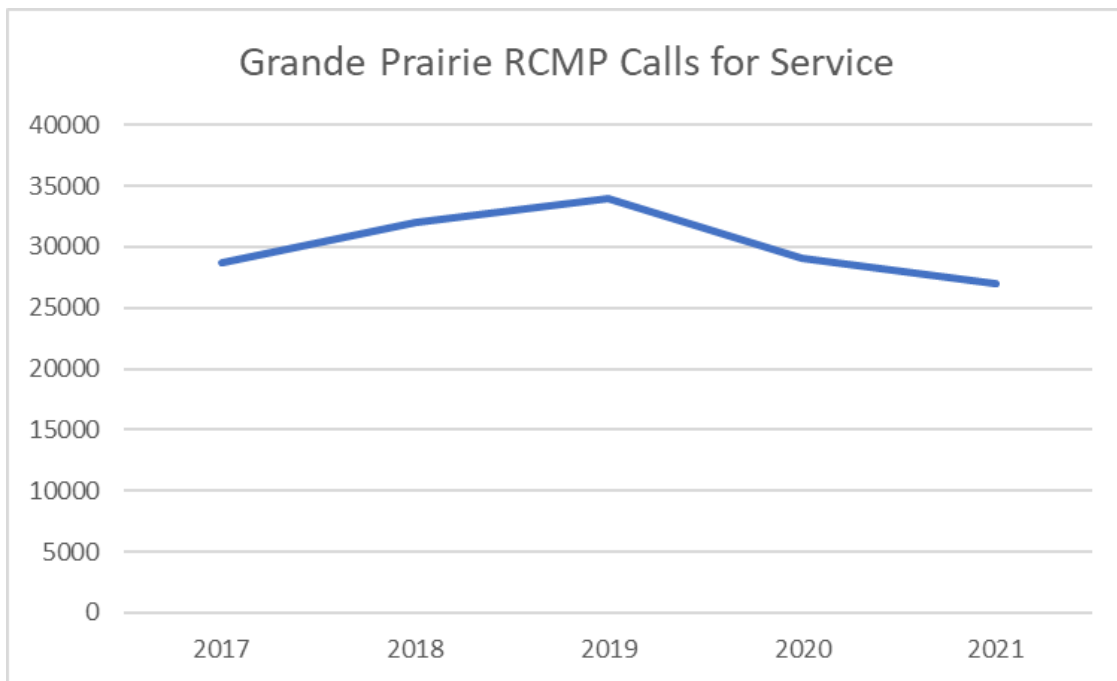


Figure 8. RCMP Response Times – Grande Prairie 2019 to 2021

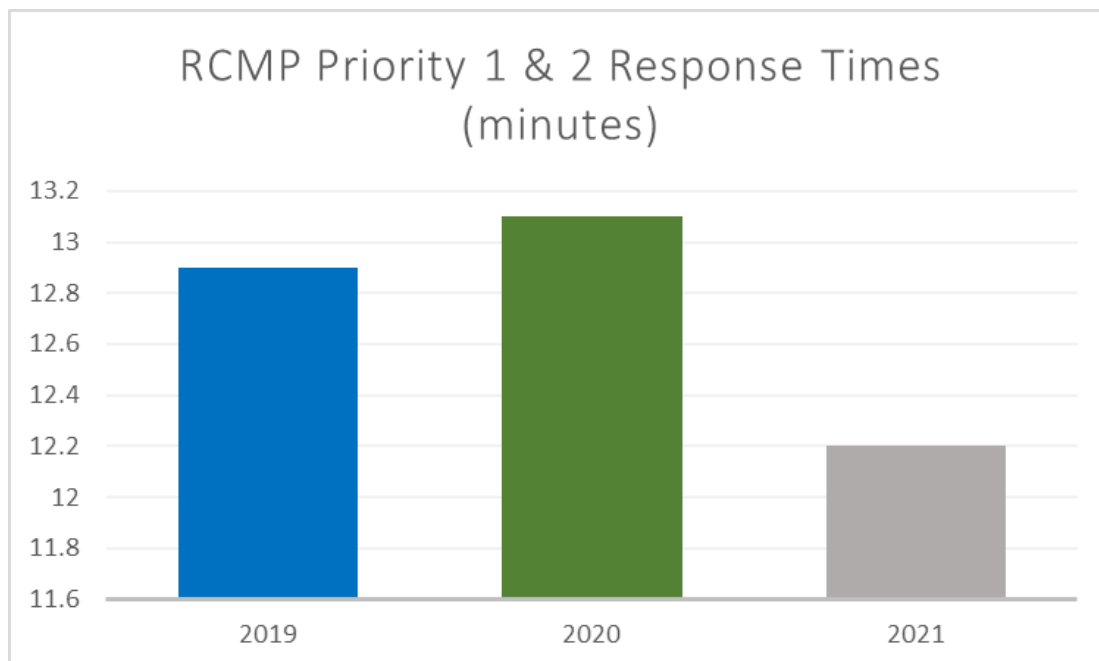


Table 2. Top Ten File Types by Workload<sup>31</sup>

Grande Prairie RCMP Top Ten File types by Workload (2021)	
Mental Health	7.50%
Mischief	7.24%
Disturbing the Peace	6.90%
Assault	3.96%
Sexual Assault	3.93%
Other Non-Moving Traffic	3.66%
Uttering Threats Against a Person	2.84%
Fraud Less Than \$5000	2.70%
Motor Vehicle Collision - Property Damage	2.56%
Assault with Weapon	2.35%

Table 3. Top Ten File Types by Coun<sup>32t</sup>

Grande Prairie RCMP Ten File types by Count (2021)	Top
Mischief	2,630
Other Non-Moving Traffic	1,829
Suspicious Person/Vehicle/Property	1,479
Disturbing the Peace	1,379
Mental Health Act - Other Activities	1,071
MVC - Property Damage - Reportable	929
Other Moving Traffic Violations	909
911 Act - Other Activities	854
Other Theft Under \$5000	667
Assault	659

Figure 9. Enforcement Services Statistics <sup>33</sup>

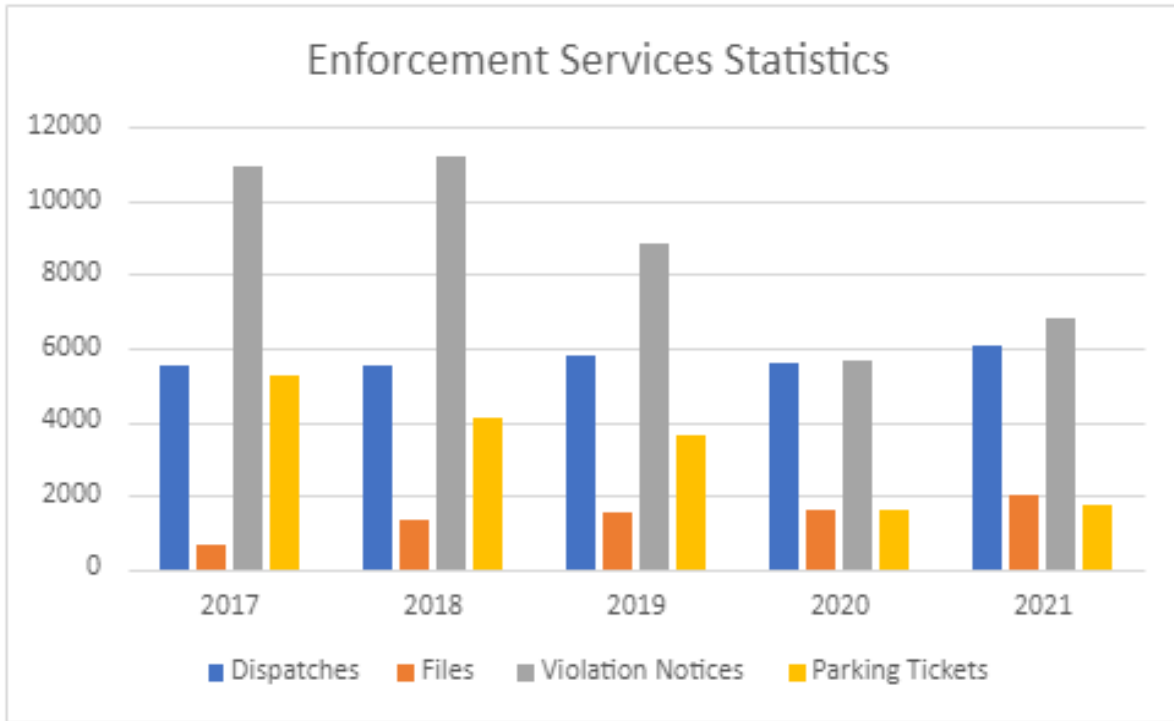
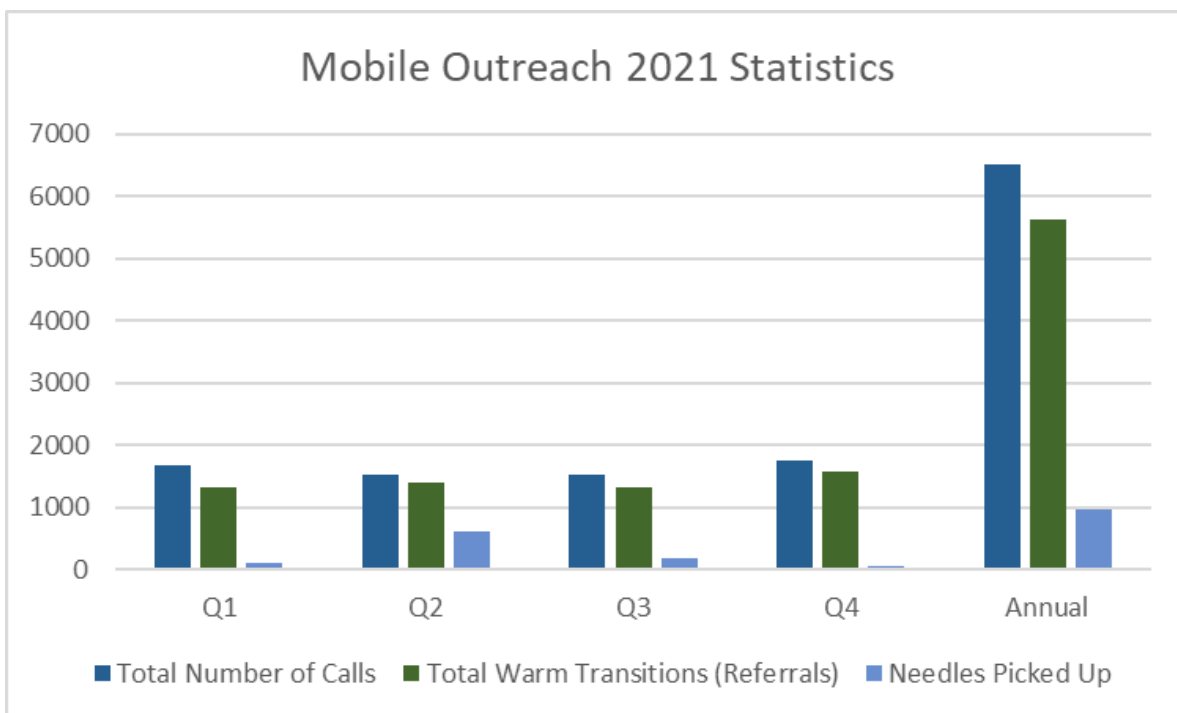


Figure 10. Mobile Outreach Statistics <sup>34</sup>



## 5.2.2 Governance

Civilian oversight is critical to maintaining public confidence in its police service. Appropriate oversight ensures accountability to citizens and helps guide operations to focus policing efforts on community priorities.

The Alberta *Police Act* and Provincial Police Service Agreement (PPSA) limit the input communities have on local RCMP policing services. However, municipalities that have contracted policing arrangements with the RCMP under a MPSA **may** establish a municipal Policing Committee to allow some oversight of policing services within their jurisdiction. The Act provides the specific mandate of the committee:

*A policing committee shall, with respect to the Municipality for which it is established:*

- (a) oversee the administration of the agreement made under section 22,*
- (b) assist in selecting the officer in charge,*
- (c) represent the interests of the council to the officer in charge,*
- (d) in consultation with the officer in charge, develop a yearly plan of priorities and strategies for municipal policing*
- (e) issue instructions to the officer in charge respecting the implementation and operation of the yearly plan,*
- (f) represent the interests and concerns of the public to the officer in charge,*
- (g) assist the officer in charge in resolving complaints, and*
- (h) appoint a Public Complaint Director.*

Further, the MPSA empowers the 'Chief Executive Officer (CEO)' (mayor, reeve, warden or other elected head of the Municipality) to:

*'...set the objectives, priorities and goals of the Municipal Police Service which are not inconsistent with those of the Provincial Minister and document those objectives, priorities and goals no more frequently than annually, and in concert with the annual RCMP planning cycle.'*

*'The CEO will determine, in consultation with the Commissioner, the level of policing service to be provided by the Municipal Police Service.'* The MPSA also places obligations under the agreement on the Member in Charge of the local detachment providing contracted policing services:

*'...the Member in Charge will act under the direction of the CEO, or such other person as the CEO may designate in writing, in aiding the administration of justice in the Municipality and in carrying into effect the laws in force in the Province and Municipality.'*



*'The Member in Charge will:*

- (a) implement the objectives, priorities and goals as determined by the CEO...*
- (b) report as reasonably required to either the CEO or his or her designate on the matter of law enforcement in the Municipality and on the implementation of the objectives, priorities and goals set by the CEO.'*

*Finally, the MPSA also places obligations on the Commanding Officer of the Division:*

*'Before appointing the Member in Charge, the Commanding Officer will consult with the CEO, and the CEO may request that the community be consulted, in which case, such consultation is to be undertaken in accordance with the RCMP's policies on community participation.'*

### **5.2.2.1 Municipal Police Advisory Committee**

The City of Grande Prairie has chosen not to establish a formal Policing Committee under Part 3 of the Alberta *Police Act* and has instead created a more informal Municipal Police Advisory Committee (MPAC).

A Police Advisory Committee (PAC) is different from a Policing Committee, with less delegated authority. It is an alternative option for RCMP policed municipalities who do not wish to delegate their policing oversight responsibilities away from Council, but still desire enhanced public transparency and participation in local policing matters. A PAC does not hold official status under the *Police Act* and its membership and mandate is determined by Council in consultation with the RCMP Officer in Charge.

The City of Grande Prairie MPAC was created through a City Bylaw to act a Committee of Council, guided by the Boards and Committees Bylaw. It is composed of seven voting members, including five members of the public, and two Councillors. The committee meets a minimum of four times annually and provides input and advice to senior members of the RCMP and Grande Prairie Enforcement Services (GPES).

The MPAC has been assigned the below mandate:

- Make recommendations to Council and Administration, through the appropriate Standing Committee, on policy matters relating to the maintenance of law and order within the City regarding the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and Grande Prairie Enforcement Services (GPES)
- Provide community feedback to the RCMP, GPES, and Administration on policing, strategies, and activities
- In consultation with the RCMP, GPES and Administration provide input with the development of respective yearly plans of priorities and strategies for municipal policing
- Carry out any further duties and powers as Council may from time to time assign by resolution.

Policing Committees currently exist in only seven municipalities policed by the RCMP: Blackfalds, Canmore, Drumheller, Fort Saskatchewan, High River, Rocky Mountain House, and St. Albert.

## 5.2.3 Financial Information

Policing expenditures and revenues in Grande Prairie are considered inclusive of the RCMP Contract, Municipal Support Section, Enforcement Services and Mobile Outreach Department. Each of these programs contribute to policing service delivery in Grande Prairie where the demand and expense of providing that service would shift to one of the others if the provider were to cease operations. In 2022, the City has budgeted \$27,466,373 net of revenue (Excluding Automated Traffic Enforcement) for Policing Services.

Table 4. Summary of Combined Expenditures and Revenue (Excluding Automated Traffic Enforcement)<sup>35</sup>

	Budget 2022
<b>Expenditures</b>	
RCMP Costs at Contract Partner Share	\$19,325,125
Municipal Support Section	\$6,522,528
Enforcement Services	\$4,508,061
Mobile Outreach	\$1,105,473
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$31,461,187</b>
<b>Revenue</b>	
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$3,605,861</b>

### 5.2.3.1 RCMP Expenditures

In accordance with the MPSA, the Government of Canada pays 10% of the costs for RCMP policing services provided to the City of Grande Prairie, the City paying the remaining 90%. These services costs include operating and maintenance costs such as salaries, benefits and indirect costs, transportation and equipment, professional services, repairs, utilities, supplies, and miscellaneous operational expenses.

The City is also responsible for providing and maintaining accommodation for the RCMP municipal policing resources at 100% cost. This accommodation includes furnished office space, cellblock facilities, and garage space. The City owns the detachment building and leases space to the RCMP provincial policing resources. Staffing in the detachment building includes 104 municipal policing members, 20 provincial policing members and a three-person Dog Services Unit.

In 2022 the City of Grande Prairie budgeted \$19,325,125 for the RCMP MPSA contract. This is an increase of approximately 22% since 2020.

Following RCMP members obtaining the legal right to unionize and the subsequent collective bargaining between the new National Police Federation (NPF) and federal government, RCMP members below the rank of Inspector received a significant salary increase of 22%, retroactive to January 1, 2017. In addition to paying 90% of the agreed pay increase the City of Grande Prairie is also expected to incur a significant portion of the retroactive pay. The anticipated increase in RCMP salaries created a \$1.67M increase in the 2021 operating budget and another \$1.77M increase in

the 2022 operating budget. The City's 2022 operating budget for the RCMP policing contract is expected to increase \$745K above the 2021 budget.

In anticipation of a pay increase, the City's annual RCMP operational budget was increased by \$2.8M and another \$3.1M was assigned for retroactive pay. However, this was based on an anticipated 15% salary increase, not the 22% that was ultimately approved. Estimates indicate that the City could be required to pay \$3.8M in retro-pay to RCMP members. Currently, \$3.8M has been restricted in the Future Expenditures reserve.

In the Grande Prairie Multi-Year Financial Plan 2023-2028, the RCMP outline five-year operational equipment, technology, and fleet financial plans.

The equipment plan involves the purchase of replacement pistols and ancillary equipment; body worn cameras; Conductive Energy Weapons (Taser); ballistic shields; extended range impact weapons; hard body armour; breaching tools; and in-car digital video systems. This will amount to considerable cost over the next five years, as shown below, which the City will be required to pay at 100%.

Table 5. Operation Equipment Capital Plan<sup>36</sup>

<b>Grande Prairie RCMP - Operation Equipment Capital Plan</b>				
	<b>2022/2023</b>	<b>2023/2024</b>	<b>2024/2025</b>	<b>2025/2026</b>
Ammunition	19,860	20,853	21,895	22,990
Taser 7 (includes holsters)	-	121,362	101,984	103,532
Body Worn Cameras	-	-	348,000	534,000
Pistol Modernization	-	272,782	7,242	4,828
WatchGuard System	49,455	-	1,713	1,713
Breaching Tools	-	19,264	688	688
Portable Ballistic Shields	-	20,000	-	-
Extended Range Impact Weapons 40mm	-	137,872	4,924	4,924
Carbines	30,000	-	-	-
Hard Body Armour	-	113,000	3,000	2,000
<b>Total Operational Equipment Costs</b>	<b>\$99,315</b>	<b>\$705,133</b>	<b>\$489,446</b>	<b>\$494,675</b>

The technology plan includes the purchase of replacement workstations; AFRRCS radios; fingerprint scanning equipment; technology contracts & software licensing; and telecommunications costs. These forecasted costs are shown below, which the City will be required to pay at 90%.

Table 6. Technology Capital Plan<sup>37</sup>

<b>Grande Prairie RCMP - Technology Capital Plan</b>						
	<b>2022/2023</b>	<b>2023/2024</b>	<b>2024/2025</b>	<b>2025/2026</b>	<b>2026-2027</b>	<b>2027/2028</b>
Workstation Life Cycling	90,863	39,052	74,352	50,024	2,486	2,486
Workstation Contingency	-	26,787	-	15,816	63,354	63,354
Radios	-	25,280	239,653	112,601	13,800	326,600
Livescan	23,383	-	-	-	-	-
Tech Rentals/Software	19,204	19,110	17,830	17,830	17,830	17,830
Telecommunications	1,989	1,989	1,989	1,989	1,989	1,989
<b>Total Technology Forecast</b>	<b>\$135,439</b>	<b>\$112,219</b>	<b>\$333,824</b>	<b>\$198,260</b>	<b>\$99,459</b>	<b>\$412,259</b>
Telecommunications (non-billable)	\$13,677	\$12,846	\$19,601	\$2,708	\$2,708	\$2,708

Finally, the fleet plan reflects the need for replacement vehicles and fit-up costs. Again, the City will be required to pay these projected costs at 100%.

Table 7. Police Vehicles Plan<sup>38</sup>

<b>Grande Prairie RCMP - Police Vehicles Plan</b>						
	<b>2022/2023</b>	<b>2023/2024</b>	<b>2024/2025</b>	<b>2025/2026</b>	<b>2026-2027</b>	<b>2027/2028</b>
Vehicles	459,500	607,500	345,000	382,000	404,000	404,000
Seasonal	35,000	-	-	-	-	15,600
Fit-Up	114,350	163,500	62,150	72,350	77,850	77,850
Contingency	57,500	117,000	-	-	-	-
Expansion	-	-	59,700	61,200	-	63,750
<b>Total Police Vehicle Forecast</b>	<b>\$666,350</b>	<b>\$888,000</b>	<b>\$466,850</b>	<b>\$515,550</b>	<b>\$481,850</b>	<b>\$561,200</b>

### 5.2.3.2 Municipal Support Section Financials

Table 8. Municipal Support Section Financials 2019 - 2022<sup>39</sup>

	2019	2020	2021	2022
<b>Revenue</b>				(Budget)
GOODS & SERVICES	-945,205	-794,115	-881,024	-881,000
SEARCHES & CERTIFICATES	-223,451	-200,782	-253,380	-208,400
COURT FINES	-805,314	-348,107	-341,643	-480,000
BUILDINGS	-148,979	-148,979	-268,979	-248,979
OTHER REVENUE	-3,750	-40,665	0	0
FROM PROV GOV'T & AGENCIES	-300,000	-300,000	-300,000	-300,000
TRANSFERS FROM OPERATING	-57,143	-57,690	-58,418	0
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>-2,483,842</b>	<b>-1,890,337</b>	<b>-2,103,449</b>	<b>-2,118,379</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>				
SALARIES, WAGES, AND BENEFITS	5,779,665	5,560,415	5,311,377	5,773,901
CONTRACTED AND GENERAL SERVICES	36,788	39,306	218,061	131,475
MATERIALS, GOODS, AND UTILITIES	301,835	275,856	278,719	352,956
OTHER EXPENSE	120,135	79,297	107,188	96,097
TECHNOLOGY	175,904	144,024	128,942	165,725
VEHICLE EXPENSES	1,851	2,121	2,409	2,374
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>6,416,178</b>	<b>6,101,019</b>	<b>6,046,696</b>	<b>6,522,528</b>

### 5.2.3.3 Enforcement Services Financials

Table 9. Enforcement Services Financials 2019 - 2022<sup>40</sup>

	2019	2020	2021	2022
<b>Revenue</b>				
OTH GEN GOODS & SERVICES	-251,968	-190,379	-251,470	-229,608
BUSINESS LICENSES & PERMITS	-412,901	-92,965	-33,809	-30,000
ANIMAL LICENSES	-129,500	-116,303	-112,391	-135,000
PARKING & TRAFFIC CONTROL	-90,828	-49,761	-62,532	-50,000
PARKING METERS	-114,629	-20,161	-7,200	-7,200
ANIMAL FINES	-36,352	-21,436	-18,754	-50,000
COURT FINES	-5,595,976	-3,766,215	-4,102,426	-5,436,678
PUBLIC PARKING FEES	-9600	-7069	-6962	-6000
UTILITY SERVICES RECOVERY	-19762	-16104	-25882	-25000
OTHER REVENUE	-3836	-2295	-3520	0
TRANSFERS FROM RESERVES	0	0	-13598	0
FROM PROV GOVT & AGENCIES	0	-724620	0	0
TRANSFERS FROM OPERATING PROJECTS	-13986	-14648	0	0
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>-6,679,338</b>	<b>-5,021,956</b>	<b>-4,638,543</b>	<b>-5,969,486</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>				
SALARIES, WAGES, AND BENEFITS	3,074,008	3,211,248	3,243,508	3,368,017
CONTRACTED AND GENERAL SERVICES	2,185,135	1,736,594	2,360,527	2,910,602
MATERIALS, GOODS, AND UTILITIES	119,678	174,145	240,513	182,615
OTHER EXPENSE	95,391	790,761	72,757	279,333
TECHNOLOGY	82,898	88,206	102,519	123,851
VEHICLE EXPENSES	131,259	112,030	154,051	108,745
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>5,688,369</b>	<b>6,112,984</b>	<b>6,173,875</b>	<b>6,973,163</b>

### 5.2.3.4 Mobile Outreach Expenditures<sup>41</sup>

Table 10. Mobile Financials 2019 - 2022

	2019	2020	2021	2022
<b>Revenue</b>				(Budget)
TRANSFERS FROM OPERATING PROJ			-2,038	
<b>Total Revenue</b>			<b>-2,038</b>	
<b>Expenditures</b>				
SALARIES, WAGES, AND BENEFITS			626,354	1,003,065
CONTRACTED AND GENERAL SERVICES			1,947	12,240
MATERIALS, GOODS, AND UTILITIES			34,245	7,500
OTHER EXPENSE			21,356	1,000
TECHNOLOGY			14,272	13,668
VEHICLE EXPENSES			50,181	68,000
<b>Total Expenditures</b>			<b>748,355</b>	<b>1,105,473</b>

## 5.24 Benchmarking

Figure 11. Crime Severity Index Benchmark<sup>42</sup>

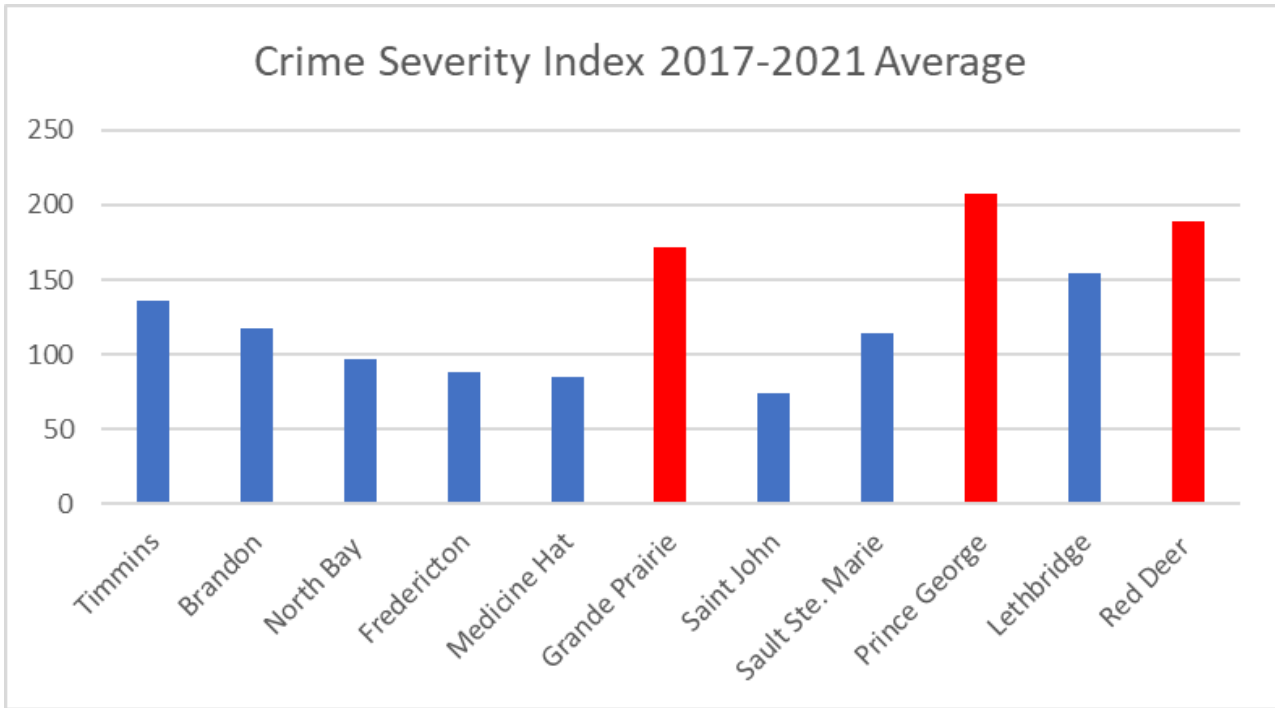


Figure 12. Arrests and Charges Benchmark<sup>43</sup>

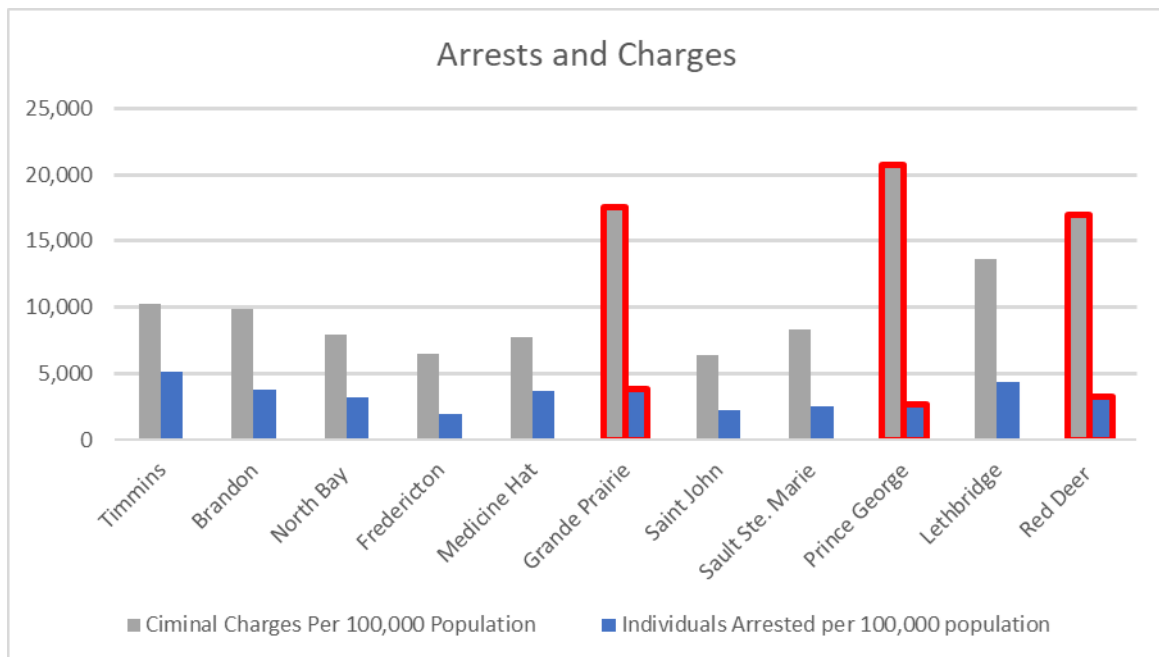




Figure 13. Events Unfounded Benchmark

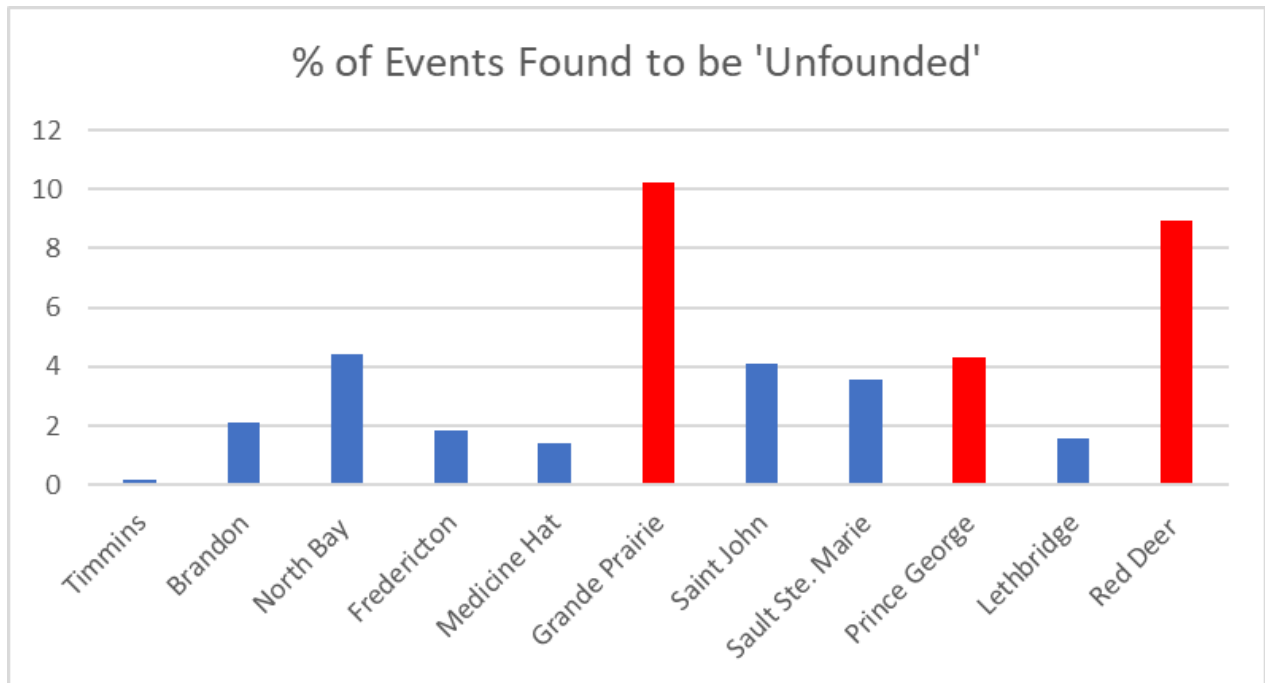


Figure 14. Weighted Clearance Rates Benchmark<sup>44</sup>

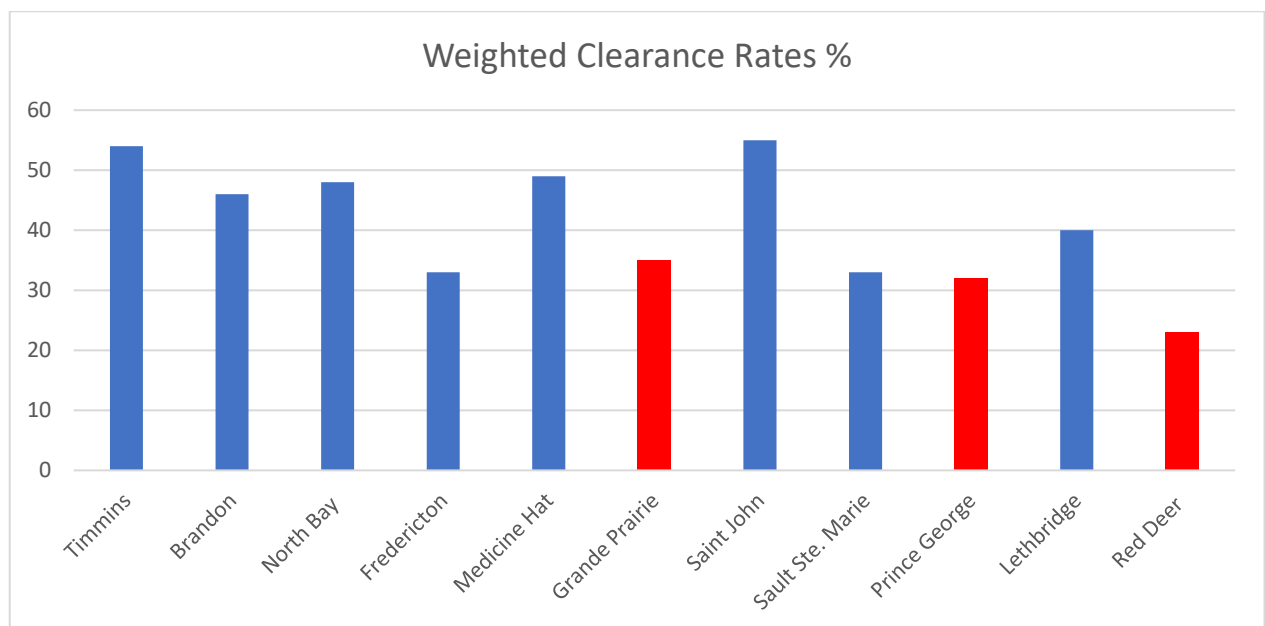


Figure 15. Annual Calls for Service Benchmark<sup>4546</sup>

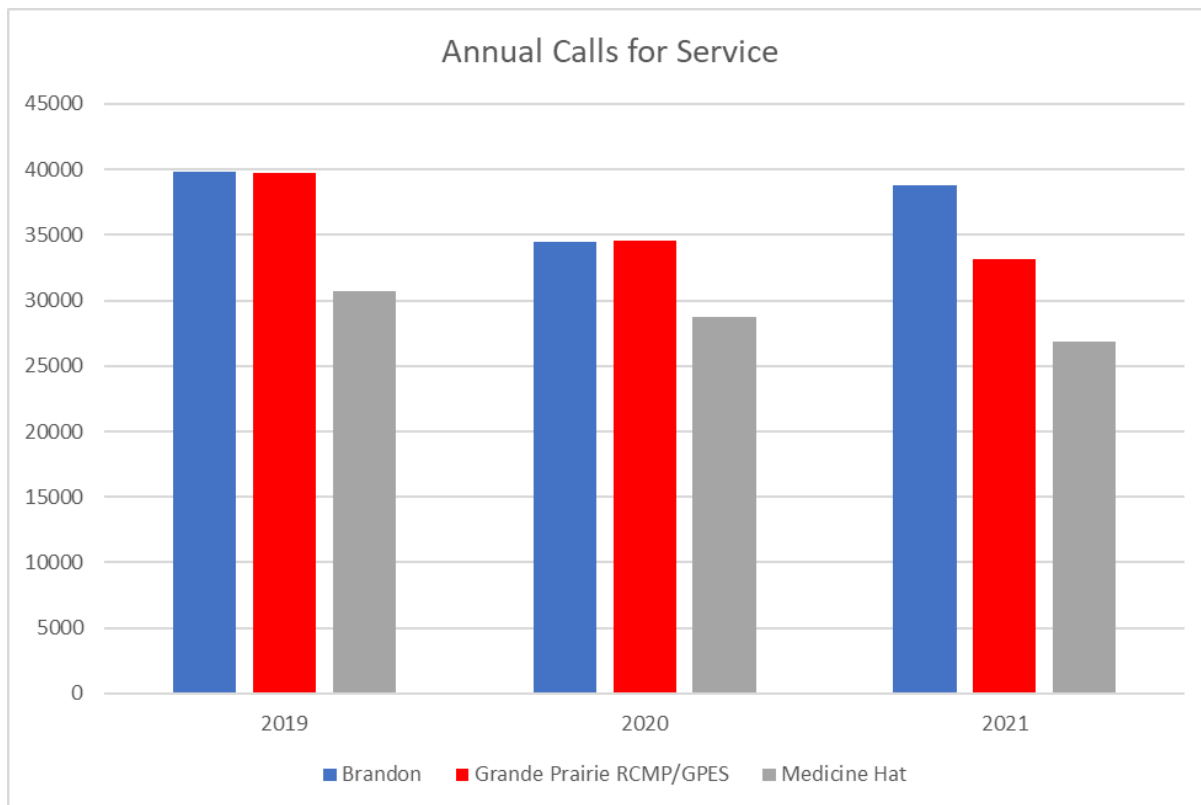


Figure 16. Policing Resources Benchmark<sup>47</sup>

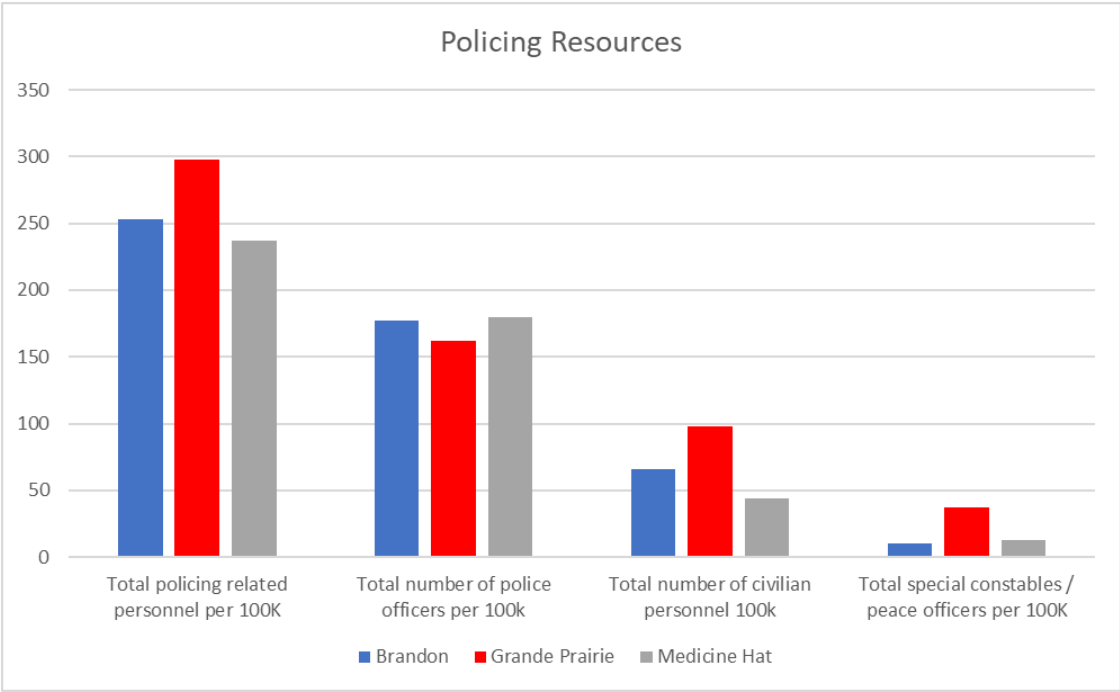


Table 11. Policing Costs Per Capita Benchmark (Excludes Mobile Outreach but Includes ATE)<sup>4849</sup>

2021	Brandon	Grande Prairie	Medicine Hat
Expenditures	\$18,834,358	\$30,820,938	\$25,634,000
Revenue	-\$3,703,533	-\$6,741,992	-\$4,459,000
Net	\$15,130,825	\$24,078,946	\$21,175,000
<b>Net</b>	<b>\$295</b>	<b>\$375</b>	<b>\$335</b>

## 5.3 Current State Assessment

### 5.3.1 Strengths

The relationship between City Council, Administration and the local RCMP detachment Officer in Command (OIC) is collaborative and generally very positive. The Municipal Police Advisory Committee has been seen to be able to have candid, respectful discussions with the RCMP OIC, highlighting local policing needs and priorities which are subsequently reflected in the APP.

The high ratio of municipal operational support employees per RCMP member (52.7%) is seen as a positive. This model reduces overall staffing costs and frees up police officers to focus on core policing duties and/or increase the effectiveness of officers by supporting them with data, analytics, and general administrative support.

In a further attempt to reduce policing costs and enhance efficiency, the City has embraced and developed a robust and effective 'Tiered Policing Model' using Community Peace Officers and Bylaw Enforcement Officers within the Grande Prairie Enforcement Services (GPES). GPES now plays a pivotal role in the delivery of enforcement services within city limits with specific roles which do not require a sworn police officer in collaboration with, and in support of, the RCMP. The working relationship between GPES frontline members and local RCMP members appears to be generally positive and collaborative.

Several enforcement and social welfare initiatives, as previously described, have been introduced within the City which are very positive:

#### 1. RCMP Specialized Investigative Unit

The Specialized Investigative Unit (SIU) was created as a pilot at the Grande Prairie Detachment in September 2020 for the purpose of investigating high risk sexual assault and domestic violence offences. Now fully established, the SIU takes the primary role on Aggravated Sexual Assault, Sexual Assault of a Child, and Domestic Violence criminal investigations. The SIU has also replaced the Domestic Violence Unit and provides direction and oversight for the detachment.

In its first 12-months SIU took the lead role on 227 occurrences. These included 148 sexually based crimes and 42 high risk intimate partner violence. SIU also completed investigational reviews of approximately 2196 occurrences classified as Domestic Violence and approximately 214 occurrences classified as Sexual Offences.

SIU has resulted in an increase in the quality of investigations and has received positive feedback internally and from multiple external partner agencies.

## 2. Police and Crisis Team

The Police and Crisis Teams (PACT) provides a crisis response dispatched by the RCMP from 9am – 9pm daily. Comprised of an RCMP officer and Registered Psychiatric Nurse, a crisis response team is able to intervene, assess, and support people having a mental health crisis in the community, and if warranted, apprehend the individual under the Alberta *Mental Health Act* and convey them to hospital. Grande Prairie currently has two PACT teams but would greatly benefit from additional resources. The use of PACT is seen as best practice within policing and is utilized by several municipal police services in Alberta.

In 2021 PACT was the primary responding unit to over 400 calls for service in the City.

## 3. Collision Reporting Centre

The introduction of the Collision Reporting Centre (CRC) in 2018 and its operation by a contracted party (ASSI) has vastly reduced the administrative burden on RCMP members, thus allowing them to focus on their core policing functions. The quality of collision data available from the CRC has increased significantly thus allowing it to feed directly into enforcement priorities within the Grande Prairie Traffic Safety Plan.

## 4. GPES AGENT Program

Introduced in October 2021, the GPES AGENT Program assists the local business community with trespassing issues by providing GPES Peace Officers delegated authority to promptly enforce trespass legislation on private property. The program has received very positive feedback from local businesses and provides opportunities for GPES to connect the vulnerable population with support agencies.

## 5. Mobile Outreach

The Mobile Outreach (MO) was created within Protective and Social Services in late 2020 with the mandate to operate in partnership with GPES to address minor disorder and social complaints such as public intoxication, addiction, and illegal encampments.

Prior to the creation of MO, RCMP members were dispatched to these complaints; a much more expensive resource. The RCMP also often did not have the time to respond and when they did it took them away from their core policing duties. The strategic use of MO rather than the RCMP is leading to better outcomes for clients, costs less, and allows local police to focus on their core policing functions.

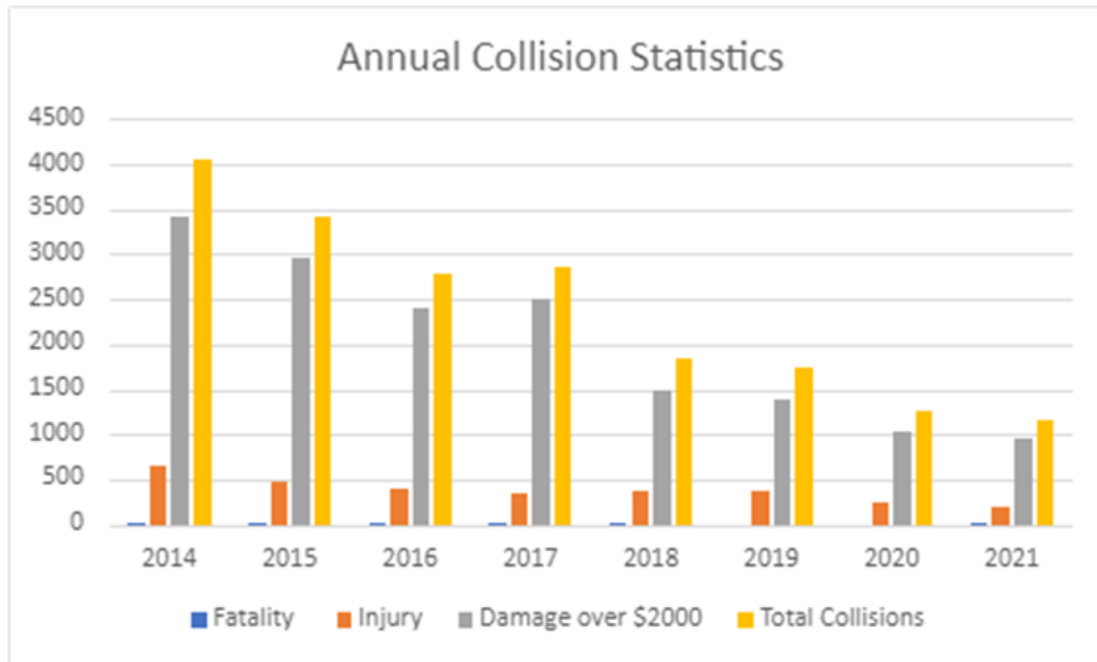
MO is recognised as a highly successful program with ever increasing demands for service. During the period from January 2021 to November 2021, the MO team responded to over 5,700 calls for service.

## 6. Municipal Traffic Enforcement

GPES Community Peace Officers enforce the Alberta *Traffic Safety Act* as part of the annual GPES Traffic Safety Plan. The primary purpose of traffic enforcement is to reduce traffic collisions and resulting injuries, and to facilitate the safe and expedient flow of vehicular and pedestrian traffic. In 2021 GPES Peace officers issued approximately 6,174 traffic violation tickets, primarily for offences for injury and fatality collision root causes, as identified in the Traffic Safety Plan.

The below graph clearly shows the very significant positive impact of traffic enforcement within the City.

Figure 17. Annual Collisions 2014 – 2021<sup>50</sup>



### 5.3.2 Weaknesses

#### 1. RCMP Staffing

##### Recruitment

The RCMP continue to experience significant recruiting challenges nationally. In response to these challenges, the RCMP have continually reduced their minimum recruiting standards and have removed all pre-employment fitness requirements.

Despite these measures, several recent cadet classes at the RCMP Training Depot in Regina have been cancelled due to a lack of qualified cadets, and the most recent class contains only 15 cadets.

These recruitment challenges, compounded by an average recruit class attrition rate of 25%, lead to significant staffing issues across the RCMP. These issues are particularly acute within the Grande Prairie Detachment due to its heavy reliance on new cadets to fill vacancies.

## Retention

The Grande Prairie Detachment suffers from an extremely high rate of turnover of RCMP members. This extends up to the detachment Officer in Command (OIC), of which there have been five in the past six years.

Grande Prairie is not a sought-after location for most RCMP members, as compared to detachments such as St. Alberta, Airdrie, and Red Deer, and as a result struggles to attract experienced members. This results in an unusually heavy reliance on new cadets (two-year probationary constables) being posted to the Detachment upon joining the service. While this provides a cost-saving in salary, these members have little to no experience in policing.

Grande Prairie is not designated as a Limited Duration Posting (LDP) by the RCMP. An LDP prescribes that members must serve a minimum time in the detachment before being eligible to transfer elsewhere. For example, Fort MacMurray is a five-year LDP. Anecdotal comments have been made that this is further compounded as RCMP Staffing appear to proactively move members soon after they have served three years in Grande Prairie, possibly as an employee engagement strategy. The detachment leadership team has been actively working to have Grande Prairie formally designated as a five-year LDP.

More recently, the RCMP have indicated their intent to move away from formal LDP's nationally and leave staff management in this regard to divisions. K-Division is now considering a protocol of not moving personnel from a detachment until they have served a minimum of four years in that community. However, they will engage the member before the four-year period is up to initiate the logistics of any subsequent move. Essentially, this potential change in policy will provide little tangible benefit to Grande Prairie, at the most an additional one year of service in the detachment. The RCMP will retain an overriding ability to move personnel within the four-year term if 'operationally required', as is the case currently.

Ultimately the current situation directly results in a lack of policing experience within RCMP members in Grande Prairie. When members have gained some level of experience in the detachment they simply move on. To illustrate this: the 44 constables within the detachment have an average length of service of 2.87 years. Of these, 27 (67.5%) are new to the detachment within the past year. 50% of the front-line patrol members have less than one year's service in the RCMP. The 23 plain clothed officers have slightly more average service at 7.6 years.

The short-term postings in the detachment are seen as an impediment to effective community policing in the City of Grande Prairie. Time is needed for officers and the community to build trust and the current practice of frequently moving officers from the detachment undermines this relationship building.

When experienced members are posted to Grande Prairie, the timeline for their arrival is often long as they are afforded time to sell their previous property with no set time limit for doing so. The transfer may be canceled after a year if still delayed, but this leaves the recruiting process at the beginning again with no guarantee the next transferee will be able to relocate any quicker.

As a result of recruiting and retention issues, compounded by a lengthy promotion process, there is a heavy reliance on the use of temporary acting supervisors in Grande Prairie. In April 2022, 50% of supervisor positions in the detachment were vacant and being filled by members acting in the role.

The identified staffing challenges are further compounded by injuries, illness and other leaves which impacts the ability of the detachment to consistently provide policing services with a full complement of staff.

The number of RCMP K-Division FTEs involved in both provincial and municipal policing who are on Special Leave has steadily increased since 2018.

There are currently 11 hard vacancies within the Grande Prairie Detachment, reducing the number of filled positions down to 93. This figure does not include soft vacancies such as short-term illness etc.

### Training

The RCMP has designated Grande Prairie as a 'Training Detachment' as it offers the ability to afford the 24/7 supervision of new members. Upon their arrival at the detachment, these new members still require a significant amount of training and despite a strong instructor cadre within Grande Prairie, this training is predominantly held elsewhere. It is common for both trainers and trainees to travel from Grande Prairie to provide/receive the required training at a different location, usually Edmonton or Regina.

This is clearly an inefficient and costly approach. Not only does the community lose these officers for the duration of the course and any travel time, but the City is also required to pay the full associated travel costs. Given the identified level of attrition of experienced, fully trained, members from Grande Prairie, these training costs are a constant drain on the City's policing budget. As an example, in 2021 the City paid approximately \$300,000 in training costs for RCMP members, an incredibly high amount relative to the size of the detachment.

## **2. Service Delivery**

### Dispatch

Historically, the RCMP Operational Communications Centre (OCC) located in Edmonton was the point of contact for the public when requesting police assistance in both emergency and non-urgent matters within the City of Grande Prairie. The OCC would receive the call for service and then dispatch the most appropriate available local RCMP resource to the incident.

However, over recent years the RCMP have continually reduced the level of OCC centralized service. This has resulted in the Grande Prairie Detachment assuming responsibility for receiving Priority 3 and Priority 4 calls for service and resource dispatch during the hours of 9am – 5pm, Monday – Friday. The original intent of the OCC had been to place responsibility for these calls on the detachment on a full time (24/7) basis, but it appears they have settled on the 9am – 5pm, Monday – Friday model.



The RCMP does not provide GPES with information from, or access to, the Canadian Police Information Centre system (CPIC) and so GPES utilizes the Alberta Sheriffs Operational Communications Centre (SOCC) in Edmonton for conducting inquiries on CPIC. They also use the Service Alberta, Provincial Radio Contact Centre (PRCC), also in Edmonton, for other services such as access to the Alberta Motor Vehicles System (MOVES) and officer status and welfare monitoring. The SOCC and the PRCC currently provide these services at no cost and on a 24/7 basis. The RCMP no longer allow GPES to use RCMP systems such as the Police Reporting and Occurrence System (PROS) or Dispatch system, resulting in the need for two separate systems for law enforcement within the City.

Overall, the current handling of calls for service and officer dispatch system is complex and appears inefficient. This is particularly the case for GPES during out of business hours during the week and on weekends when calls are simply forwarded to the 'on call' cellphone.

### RCMP Specialised Services

One of the advertised benefits of contracting the RCMP to provide core policing services is access to several specialised services, as previously listed.

What is often overlooked however is that specialised services such as Special Tactical Operations / Emergency Response Teams, Explosive Disposal, Serious Crimes Branch, and Air Services are available to **all** municipal police services in Alberta through the PPSA. These services are not solely available to Grande Prairie due to it having an MPSA for RCMP to provide policing services.

While the Edmonton Police Service and Calgary Police Service rarely, if ever, leverage these RCMP resources due to their own internal capacity, smaller municipal police services, such as Camrose, Lacombe and Taber do so through the PPSA not infrequently.

Furthermore, although specialised services are in theory available to Grande Prairie Detachment, in reality due to its location, the City has limited access to several of these services, an example being the Special Tactical Operations / Emergency Response Teams, located in Edmonton. If dispatched to an emergency incident in Grande Prairie, the teams are approximately four hours away. This delay in response is compounded by the fact the local detachment does not have a trained containment team and must rely on its General Duty patrol officers to perform this role until STO arrives on scene. This arguably increases liability for both the RCMP and the City.

### Traffic Enforcement

Similarly, the Grande Prairie RCMP/Sheriffs Integrated Traffic Unit (ITU) has very little impact on traffic safety within the City itself. The ITU is rarely, if ever, at full staffing capacity and its traffic enforcement is predominantly conducted outside of city limits. As a result, GPES CPO's have developed expertise in traffic enforcement and on an annual basis issue far more traffic violations penalty notices than the local ITU members. It is understood the RCMP have recently requested GPES assume all traffic enforcement duties within the City.

## GPES

The scope of duties assigned to GPES has changed significantly over the past 6 years. Many tasks traditionally performed by the local RCMP are now assigned to GPES officers, examples being the escalated response to social issues due to homelessness and the opioid abuse crisis. It is assessed GPES now dedicates approximately 30% of its time to dealing with illegal encampments, trespassing and social disorder related incidents. This enhanced role has mostly been embraced by GPES personnel, the predominate ethos being ‘what more can we do to assist the police?’ This approach reduces pressure on the limited RCMP resources thus allowing them to remain available for core policing issues and presents a cost saving opportunity for the City.

However, the ability to assist the RCMP is held in check by the RCMP themselves. Although Alberta Justice and Solicitor General issue Peace Officer Appointments for GPES CPOs, as the authorized peace officer employer the City must enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the RCMP to agree the terms of their operations within the RCMP’s jurisdiction, and historically, the RCMP Criminal Operations Officer has restricted the roles GPES may perform within RCMP jurisdiction.

Discussions are ongoing between GPES and the local RCMP as to how to further improve the relationship between the two organizations. GPES supervisors are of the opinion there was better collaboration when GPES were located within the detachment, and they worked together with the RCMP on the same shifts/watches.

### **3. Oversight and Governance**

Public scrutiny, accountability and expectations of police services nationally and internationally has continued to increase over recent years, particularly since the killing of George Floyd by Minneapolis Police Officers in May 2020.

There also remains a distrust of the RCMP specifically within many Indigenous Communities due to the service’s role in child apprehensions during the ‘Sixties Scoop’ when enforcing the residential schools’ program and forcing the relocation of Indigenous peoples, and more recently for its failure to adequately respond to missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls.

While performing its policing services and functions under the *RCMP Act*, the RCMP answers to the federal minister of public safety, and not to the provincial government or the local authority which has contracted, and pays for, its services. Therefore, how a provincial or municipal government can exercise true local oversight of RCMP detachments within their jurisdiction regarding policing services and/or officer conduct is an issue. Effective civilian police governance and oversight mechanisms ensure the public and police remain partners in the preservation of public safety and ensures police legitimacy in the eyes of the local community. They contribute to their local community’s safety by working to ensure it receives the level and nature of policing it needs.

The City of Grande Prairie benefits from having a MPAC that is engaged in executing its responsibilities, and which took the positive step of receiving police commission training in 2022. However, the MPAC has very limited, if any, true authority. It is not a police governance body, as compared to a police commission or even a Police Committee, and as its name suggests, functions only in an advisory capacity to Council.

Article 6 the MPSA empowers the CEO to set the objectives, priorities and goals for the service received from the RCMP and states the detachment OIC acts under the direction of the CEO. The MPAC has been seen to provide input into local policing priorities through development of the Annual Policing Plan. However, despite its limited authority, the MPAC should work to create more specific, robust enforcement strategies and performance metrics for the local RCMP.

An appropriate example of a performance measurement would be the RCMP response times to 911 calls for service, specifically Priority 1 and Priority 2 calls. This a standard measurement used in policing and has been included in the Edmonton Police Service annual policing plans and reports to the police commission. It is a useful tool in assessing police workload and staffing levels, and ensure the public receive the police response they deserve.

While municipalities have the right to ask for the services they require and have those services executed appropriately, the internal governance structure of the RCMP also exists and it must operate its larger organization efficiently and effectively. This can result in the perception, sometimes reality, that RCMP priorities come from Ottawa and that there is little true accountability to the citizens of Grande Prairie. However, it should be noted the contractual nature of the relationship does also provide the City with somewhat a buffer from the liability that may be incurred by the actions of the RCMP or an RCMP officer.

In 1829 Sir Robert Peel created the Metropolitan Police in London, England, and proposed the principles under which they would become efficient in maintaining safety and security within the community under the law. These policing principles encapsulate crime prevention, community trust and engagement, reasonable force as a last resort and concept that the police are the public and the public are the police. The basic mission for which the police exist is to prevent crime and disorder and the ability of the police to perform their duties is dependent upon public approval. To this day, appropriate police civilian oversight and accountability for its officers' actions remain crucial in achieving and maintaining public confidence and support. The police complaints process serves as a crucial mechanism by which members of the public can hold police officers, police services and the overall policing system to account.

The RCMP public complaint process is different and separate from that for standalone municipal and First Nations police services in Alberta. As described earlier in this report, the *RCMP Act* prescribes that a Civilian Review and Complaints Commission (CRCC), established by the Canadian Parliament, is responsible for examining complaints of improper on-duty conduct by members of the RCMP. Individuals may file a complaint to the public complaint director of the relevant policing committee, to the local detachment commander, or to the CRCC (which receives approximately 80% of all complaints). If the complaint is made to the local detachment an RCMP officer investigates the complaint and the district officer reviews the investigation, decides if the allegations are supported and what action (if any) will be taken.

The CRCC serves as an appeal point if a complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of the RCMP's investigation of a public complaint.

Although the RCMP is contracted by the City to provide policing services and this affords some level of separation in terms of officer accountability, the community likely have expectations of the City concerning how 'their' police officers act. However, the reality is that oversight of RCMP officer conduct is outside the City's control. Unlike for a standalone, municipal service, there is no true local oversight entity for complaints regarding officer conduct.

This lack of local transparent oversight regarding officer conduct and public complaints, enhanced by a perception that the CRC has limited power, is of concern to several provincial governments across Canada. In Alberta, as part of its review of the *Alberta Police Act*, the province is considering the creation of a new, independent, civilian-led police complaints agency. If created, this new agency will assume responsibility for receiving and investigating most public complaints regarding the conduct of police officers serving with all municipal and First Nations police services in Alberta. However, as the national police service and part of the federal government, it is unclear at this time whether jurisdiction of the agency will extend to the RCMP. Should it not, then the disparity between the level of local accountability of municipal and First Nations police officers and those serving in the RCMP will remain.

The Grande Prairie detachment houses RCMP resources assigned to police the City of Grande Prairie under the MPSA as well as resources assigned to police rural communities under the PPSA, the integrated nature of the detachment, raises some concerns that officers dedicated to the municipal policing contract are assisting on rural calls for service and therefore the City is effectively supplementing rural policing. The front counter staff for example are City employees but assist any persons entering the detachment, including facilitating criminal records and vulnerable sector checks, some of whom reside in rural areas surrounding the City.

#### 4. RCMP Costs

It is recognized that one of the benefits of the current policing model is that the City pays 90% of the costs for policing services it receives from the RCMP, while the federal government covers the remaining 10%.

Historically, the salaries paid to RCMP members were lower than for those serving in municipal police services. RCMP members had not received a pay increase since 2016 and had fallen behind other policing services in terms of compensation.

Following RCMP members obtaining the legal right to unionize, the National Police Federation (NPF) was certified in July 2019 to represent all members and reservists in the RCMP below the rank of Inspector. As a result of subsequent collective bargaining, RCMP members received a significant salary increase of 22%, retroactive to January 1, 2017.

The City of Grande Prairie is required to pay 90% of the agreed pay increase, including a significant portion of the retroactive pay. This pay increase will have an ongoing impact on the City's operational budget and may also require the City to make a one-time back-pay contribution.

On April 1, 2022 RCMP senior officers were also awarded a salary increase of 1.75% for each year from 2017-2022, retroactive to 2017. Inspectors and Superintendents are also entitled to a cumulative restructure adjustment of 6.81% and 5.36%, while those holding the rank of Chief Superintendent and above will receive one restructure adjustment of up to 10% depending on rank and maximum salary range.

As the collective agreement is intended to bring RCMP member salaries to market level by 2022, (i.e. comparable to other enforcement agencies), annual raises after 2022 are expected in line with inflationary adjustments. In fact, in the Multi-Year Financial Plan 2023-2028 the RCMP recommend municipalities plan for an ongoing 3% annual pay increase while also highlighting that negotiated salaries increases, or those imposed through third party arbitration, could result in increases above this rate.

Although not a party in salary and compensation discussions, bargaining, arbitrations or resulting agreements for the RCMP, the City must nevertheless continue to pay 90% of the resulting increase in costs.

The estimated basic average cost per RCMP member for 2022/23 has increased to \$193,873 in 90% terms and is projected to increase to \$202,805 in 2023/24. Indirect costs have also been impacted by the RCMP pay raise, including the Division Administration rate which includes the cost of core administration, members on special leave (such as medical leave), and health care costs.

With increases in health care costs and more members on special leave, the Division Administration rate has also increased, and is forecast at a rate of \$33,000 per working member for 2022/23.

The annual estimated costs for the City of Grande Prairie for RCMP policing services in 2022/23, based on a member FTE utilization of 104, is estimated at \$20,070,000.

One of the ways in which the RCMP has historically been able to reduce its policing costs is through operational staffing levels, which has resulted in members in more rural locations often operating alone, sometimes several hours away from 'back up.'

While the NPF has so far focused its advocacy efforts on addressing pay and compensation for RCMP members, it is reasonable to assume an area of future attention will be members' working conditions through an Occupational Health & Safety lens. This may result in the RCMP being forced to increase staffing levels, and the appropriate percentage of any increase in costs being passed on to the municipality.

As detailed previously, the RCMP intend to roll-out aggressive equipment, technology, and fleet acquisition/replacement plans, which amount to approximately \$6.6M in additional contract costs over the next five years. These are being driven by the RCMP's perception of operational needs with little, if any input, from the City. However, the City is required to pay 90% of the resulting costs.

It is also important to note that there is also increasing speculation within provinces that should Provincial Police Service Agreements be renewed in 2032, which in turn will drive the terms of Municipal Police Service Agreements, the federal government will do so based on a 100% cost recovery basis. This will of course exponentially increase the City's policing costs should it continue to retain the RCMP to provide policing services.

## 6 STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS

### 6.1 Recent Reports on Policing

The Hon. Michel Bastarache: *Broken Dreams Broken Lives: The Devastating Effects of Sexual Harassment on Women in the RCMP*

In November 2020, the Honourable Michel Bastarache C.C., Q.C. delivered his report titled ‘*Broken Dreams Broken Lives: The Devastating Effects of Sexual Harassment on Women in the RCMP*’.

The report is highly critical of the RCMP and describes appalling acts and patterns of sexism, homophobia, and racism within the organization. Bastarache concluded “*the culture of the RCMP is toxic and tolerates misogyny and homophobia at all ranks and in all provinces and territories. This culture does not reflect the stated values of the RCMP, and it is found throughout the organization.... comprehensive cultural change is required...as such, I conclude that the time has come for an in depth, external and independent review of the organization and future of the RCMP as a federal policing organization.*”

<https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/final-report-implementation-merlo-davidson-settlement-agreement>

House of Commons Standing Committee: *Systemic Racism in Policing in Canada*

In June 2020 the House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security undertook a study of systemic racism in policing in Canada. Several consistent concerns were identified during the review, some of which are summarized were:

- There remains a “strong distrust of police” within Indigenous Communities due to the trauma police caused through their participation in enforcing child apprehensions during the Sixties Scoop, enforcing the residential school program, and the failures to adequately respond to missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls.
- The importance of ensuring accountability, effective oversight and transparency of Canadian police services when seeking to remedy systemic racism.
- Concerns were raised about the resources, powers, structure of the Civilian Review and Complaints Commission for the RCMP and that it appears to have insufficient power to effect change.
- Some witnesses felt the RCMP does not appropriately respond to the needs of the communities they serve through contract policing. Communities have their own unique issues and concerns that must be dealt with and the RCMP may not have the capacity to police areas where they are not familiar with community concerns.

- Addressing mental health crises and responding to ‘wellness checks’ was identified as a growing challenge facing police services.

In June 2021 the committee presented its report titled ‘*Systemic Racism in Policing in Canada*’ containing 42 recommendations to fundamentally reform Canadian policing. These include that:

- The Government of Canada strengthen the mandate, independence and efficacy of the Civilian Review and Complaints Commission.
- The Government of Canada explore the possibility of ending contract policing within the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and that the Government work with the provinces, territories and municipalities to help those interested establish their own provincial and territorial police services.
- The Government of Canada work with the RCMP, and provincial and municipal police services to encourage the use of persons specialized in victim services and mental health who would be available with first responders in situations requiring de-escalation.

<https://www.ourcommons.ca/DocumentViewer/en/43-2/SECU/report-6/page-5>

### **Legislative Assembly of British Columbia: *Transforming Policing and Community Safety in British Columbia***

In February 2022, the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia appointed a ‘Special Committee on Reforming the *Police Act*’ to consider reforms to modernize law enforcement in the province.

Several consistent concerns were identified during the process, including:

- A lack of consistency with respect to delivery of policing services, governance models, oversight and accountability, the complaints process, and training.
- A desire to have police officers remain in the community longer, rather than having short postings. Short or rotating postings were identified as an impediment to relationship building as time is needed for both officers and members of the community to build trust.
- All policing must be responsive to, and informed by, the community. The Committee was interested in tiered policing models which enable peace officers or community safety officers to perform certain functions that do not require the full training and capabilities of a police officer.
- Police have been tasked with responding to issues for which they are not the appropriate service provider. This is due, in part, to a lack of alternatives and there is a need for coordination and collaboration across police, health and mental health professionals, and community organizations to ensure the most appropriate first response.

In April 2022, the committee released its report *'Transforming Policing and Community Safety in British Columbia.'* The report contains 11 recommendations which include:

1. Transition to a new BC provincial police service to take over services contracted to the RCMP. Municipalities would retain the option to establish a municipal police service, contract with the provincial police service, or enter into an agreement with another local police service to meet their policing needs.
2. Creation of a continuum of response to mental health, addictions and other complex social issues with a focus on prevention and community-led responses and ensuring appropriate first response. The committee emphasized police should not be the primary or only first responders to such calls.
3. Adoption of a flexible approach to policing that provides for different categories of policing and public safety personnel, such as peace officers, community safety officers, or bylaw enforcement officers, who have clearly defined roles and responsibilities such as responding to non-violent incidents and other situations that may not require uniformed police. Such a tiered approach reduces demands on police officers and allow them to focus on matters more in keeping with their training and capabilities.

[https://www.leg.bc.ca/content/CommitteeDocuments/42nd-parliament/3rd-session/rpa/SC-RPA-Report\\_42-3\\_2022-04-28.pdf](https://www.leg.bc.ca/content/CommitteeDocuments/42nd-parliament/3rd-session/rpa/SC-RPA-Report_42-3_2022-04-28.pdf)

### **Kent Roach: *Canadian Policing: Why and How it Must Change***

Kent Roach is a professor of law at the University of Toronto Faculty of Law, known for his writings on criminal law and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. In his book *Canadian Policing: Why and How it Must Change*, Roach argues there is a role for the police, but it needs to be “integrated into a broader approach to community safety and well-being...through integration with social, health, housing, and community services.” He suggests armed police officers do need to be the first response to all mental health calls and that others could do the job more cheaply and with more expertise.

In his concluding comments Roach states, “We may be in a rare time in history where positive change in policing is possible. Canadians need to take democratic control of their police and define what they want the police to do and what they do not want them to do. A democratic approach to policing will vary between communities. There is no “one-size-fits-all” solution for policing, especially in a country as vast and diverse as Canada. We must also recognize that the police cannot solve social problems and inequalities. Moreover, it is unfair to expect them to do so.”  
(Roach, Kent, *Canadian Policing: Why and How it Must Change* (June 25, 2022), Toronto: Delve Publishing, Irwin Law, 2022)



## 6.2 Public Perception

The City of Grande Prairie Citizen Satisfaction Survey conducted in early 2020 by 'Forum Research' included a random telephone survey of 401 residents as well as a public online survey. The surveys are conducted to measure satisfaction with municipal services, including policing, and identify priorities among residents.

Highlighted below are key insights drawn directly from the 2020 Citizen Satisfaction Survey specific to crime, policing and public safety.

- *'...an increasing number of respondents feel that quality of life is worsening. The main reasons respondents give for this feeling is rising crime and a slow economy. Crime and the economy also feature prominently when respondents are asked for their top-of-mind issues.'*
- *'When asked which issue should receive the greatest attention from local leaders, respondents most often answer that reducing the crime rate should be the government's top priority...1 in 7 (15%) of respondents cite crime as their first issue. An additional 1 in 10 (9%) mention it as their second top-of mind issue.'*
- *'Reflecting the feeling of rising crime highlighted in the previous section, fewer residents agree with the statement "Grande Prairie is a place where residents feel safe and secure." Half of residents (51%) agree the City is a place where people feel safe and secure.'*
- Of ten listed City services, local policing was shown as the 4<sup>th</sup> most important service after the Fire Department, Roads/Infrastructure and Snow & Ice Removal.
- With regards to public satisfaction with the same ten listed services, local policing was listed in 7<sup>th</sup> place. Policing was awarded a 27% satisfaction percentage, equal to the last survey in 2017 but down from 30% in 2015 and 42% in 2011.

While it is recognised a wide number of factors impact a community's sense of safety, it is reasonable to assume crime rates and quality of police services play a key role.

The above findings from the 2020 survey show the public perception of rising crime is negatively impacting citizens' sense of safety in their community and that reducing crime should be a priority for the City of Grande Prairie. Further, the public regard policing as a relatively high priority, but their satisfaction with local policing in the City, while equal to 2017, has diminished by 15% over the past ten years.

## 6.3 National Police Federation

In January 2015 the Supreme Court of Canada struck down a law that prevented RCMP members from unionizing, saying it violated their charter rights to freedom of association. The RCMP had been the only police service in Canada with such a restriction.

The National Police Federation (NPF) was certified in July 2019 as the sole certified bargaining agent for regular Members and reservists of the RCMP below the rank of Inspector. The NPF is the largest police labour relations organization in Canada and the second largest in North America.

The NPF represented RCMP members during collective bargaining with the Government of Canada which resulted in members received a significant salary increase of 22% in April 2022, retroactive to January 1, 2017.

## 6.4 Alberta Provincial Police

The Fair Deal Panel Report in June 2020 recommended the Province ‘establish a provincial police service by ending the Alberta Police Service Agreement with the Government of Canada.’

The Ministry of Justice and Solicitor General contracted PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP (PWC) to develop a Transition Study in response to this recommendation. The purpose of the study was to assess the current services, capabilities, and costs of RCMP services in Alberta; support the development of a new provincial policing model that may be considered by the Province; and assess the potential costs and steps required to transition from the RCMP.

The Province has stated publicly that the primary driving factor for the creation of a provincial police service is not financial. Rather, is to increase provincial influence over policing in Alberta and reduce that of the Government of Canada.

The information provided below is sourced directly from the following PWC Alberta Provincial Police Service (APPS) reports: ‘Transition Study Final Report’, ‘Future State Report’, and ‘Community Policing Deployment Model Detachment Prototype Design’; and supplementary Justice and Solicitor General documentation.

To prevent unnecessary duplication of existing material, the below information is a high-level overview of the PWC concepts and recommendations for the operational, governance and financial model of the APS. It is recommended the above referenced PWC reports are viewed for more detailed analysis.

### GOVERNANCE

#### Provincial Police Commission

The Transition Study Final Report recommends that a Provincial Police Commission be established, with representation from rural, urban and Indigenous communities, to act as the strategic oversight and leadership body of the APS. The Provincial Police Commission would have full decision-making authority for strategic planning, decisions about types of services required, and financial decisions regarding how the APS budget is allocated.

The overall budget allocation for the APS will be determined by the Province, Alberta Treasury Board and Finance through the provincial budgeting process. The APS commission would be responsible for hiring the APS Chief of Police and the Chief will report to the commission.

The Minister of Justice and Solicitor General would collaborate with the Provincial Police Commission to determine provincial public safety priorities and agree on performance measures for the APS. The Province will have authority and sole responsibility to appoint members of the Commission.

### **Local Police Commissions**

The report further recommends that governance of the APS include Local Commissions. Local Commissions will have an active role in determining how policing is provided in their community and working with local detachments.

These Local Police Commissions would participate in:

- *Setting priorities for community policing services and community safety initiatives jointly with the detachment commander*
- *Advising the detachment commander on police services and supports required in the area*
- *Collaborating with detachment commanders in establishing local policies for police services, remaining cognizant of the Chief's operational independence*
- *Participating in the selection of the detachment commander, remaining cognizant of the Chief's operational independence*
- *Receiving regular reports from the detachment commander and monitoring performance in achieving community priorities and providing evidence-based recommendations for improvement*
- *Providing regular feedback to the Provincial Commission on performance and priorities that need to be considered*

The above roles and responsibilities will need to be formalized and further developed, through amendments to the Alberta *Police Act*.

### **Service Delivery**

The RCMP currently provide policing services to approximately 42% of Alberta residents. These policing responsibilities will transition from the RCMP to the APS. The remaining 58% of Alberta residents are policed by a municipal or First Nations Police Service and will continue to be so under the new provincial policing model.

The vision is for the APS senior leadership team to be comprised of six Deputy Chiefs, reporting to the Chief of Police:

- Deputy, Indigenous Policing
- Deputy, Community Wellbeing & Health
- Deputy, Corporate Services
- Deputy, Operations North

- Deputy, Operations Central
- Deputy, Operations South

The intention is for there to be a minimum of 113 APS detachments across the province, the same number as current RCMP detachments, and an increase in the number of police officers working in the smallest detachments, resulting in an increase in the number of police officers in rural areas.

The APS intends to ‘decentralize’ specialist policing resources and services away from urban centers, such as Edmonton and Calgary, and redistribute them across the province to increase service delivery in rural, remote, and Indigenous communities. The organizational structure is intended to deliver consistent core policing services, including community policing, mental health responses, and investigations, throughout the province with improved access to specialized policing resources.

Dedicated roles and resources are embedded in detachments to improve consistency of services throughout the province, regardless of size or location of a community.

Detachment structure will include:

- Community policing & field operations
- Specialist teams or units
- Investigations
- Mental health & addictions response
- Engagement with Indigenous communities
- Community partnerships, crime reduction & victim supports
- Traffic operations

The APS will contain four types of detachments:

- **Community Detachments**  
Located in smaller urban and rural communities, there will be approximately 65 - 85 such detachments across the province. These smallest detachments (42 out of the 113) will house a minimum of 12 police officers. Community Detachments are intended to prioritize front-line community policing.
- **Service Hubs**  
Located in medium-sized urban and rural communities, there will be approximately 20-30 such detachments across the province. These hubs will house a minimum of 50 police officers and provide similar core policing as Community Detachments but will have more investigative and specialised policing resources to serve local needs as well as adjacent Community Detachments.

- **Regional (Urban) Hubs**

Located in larger communities, there will be three Regional (Urban) Hubs in the province (north, central and south) and these will act as ‘regional headquarters.’ They will provide similar functions and capabilities as Service Hubs; however, the mix of patrol versus investigative and specialist services would be different as their primary focus will be highly specialized services. The bulk of resources in the Regional (Urban) Hubs would be dedicated to investigative and specialized services as well as strategic positions to guide Community Detachments and Service Hubs, and to liaise with Headquarters, ALERT, and other specialized portfolios. Regional Hubs will also house regional Call Centre and Dispatch resources.

- **Detachments Serving Indigenous Communities**

These will service Indigenous communities that use the APS to provide policing services, the number of detachments to be determined in partnership with Indigenous communities. Detachment Commanders will work collaboratively with local community leadership to tailor services, capabilities, and align on outcomes that are important to the Indigenous communities being served.

Some of the factors that will be considered in determining the detachment profile are:

- Community population (size and service needs)
- Geography of community served
- Location and geographic characteristics
- Relative location of the detachment to other detachments
- Physical size/infrastructure of detachment
- Number of police officers and frontline resources required in the detachment to serve the community
- Access to other service providers within, or near, the community
- Demand for services and historical crime data

The proposed APS staffing model includes:

- APS sworn Police Officers trained to respond to high risk, complex, urgent responses
- Specialized health and social work professionals to respond to mental health, drug related, and non-violent family crisis situations
- Specialized investigators including forensic accountants, cyber security professionals, data analysts, and forensic lab technicians

It is recommended the APS have a recruiting strategy focused on recruiting local people to their local communities and hiring sworn and non-sworn employees from rural and northern communities who prefer to police in these environments.

The recommended staffing model for the APS is a total of 4,949 FTEs made up of 3,536 sworn police officers, 160 Mental Health & Family Crisis teams, and 1,253 Public Service Employees operating from the 113 detachments. An assumption made in the Transition Study Final Report is that approximately 15% of current RCMP members will elect to transition over to the APS.

RCMP members in Alberta involved in its federal policing responsibilities will remain in those roles independent of the APS. RCMP federal policing responsibilities include enforcing federal laws; securing Canada's borders between ports of entry; collecting criminal intelligence; ensuring the safety of critical infrastructure, internationally protected persons and other designated persons; investigating serious and organized crime, financial crime and criminal activity related to national security; and supporting Canadian international peace operations.

### **Transition Timeline**

The PWC Transition Study Final Report recommended a 4-year planning and preparation period, followed by a 1–2-year transition period.

The Province has not yet made a final decision regarding the creation of the Alberta Police Service and so it is still unknown if or when the transition timelines will commence.

### **Financial**

The below estimated costs information is drawn from both the PWC Transition Study and Province documentation and is the most recent data available:

The 2019-2020 fiscal year cost of provincial policing by the RCMP was \$783m. This includes \$671m for the RCMP, \$70m for the increase in salary costs resulting from the new RCMP Collective Agreement, and \$42m for transferring the Sheriff Highway Patrol operational costs.

The total cost of policing under the APS \$758m. \$25m lower than the current normalized equivalent cost. These projected figures assume cost efficiencies of 10% in training, relocation, professional services, shared corporate services and by leveraging local facilities and the Province's shared services. They are also based on the assumption that the 47 municipalities currently paying policing costs through MPSA's continue to do so to the amount of \$196m. The Province has committed to municipalities continuing to pay the same to receive policing services from the APS as they currently pay for the RCMP to provide these services.

The estimated transition costs to establish the APS and transition away from the RCMP are estimated at \$371m over a 6-year period. The Province has committed to covering all transition costs.

### **Assessment**

The information currently available from PWC and Government of Alberta concerning the proposed APS essentially outlines concepts and recommendations as to the operational, governance and financial aspects of the new provincial police service. Therefore, at the time of writing, there remain few confirmed details as to what the final service model will ultimately look like. This presents challenges in conducting a robust assessment of the merits of entering into an agreement with the Province for the provision of policing services by the APS within the City of Grande Prairie.

That said, taken at face value, many of the documented observations and recommendations made by PWC do highlight, and possibly address, some of the concerns with the current MPSA and RCMP policing within the City.

Specifically:

- input into community policing priorities through a local commission
- a focus on community policing
- a local recruitment strategy
- allowing staff to remain in their community if they so choose
- a new response to mental health calls and social issues; and
- distributing specialized policing resources outside of Edmonton and Calgary.

However, it remains to be seen if the final APS model introduced aligns with the PWC recommendations and the below reservations remain:

- The level of real authority and therefore the ability to address local policing priorities through the two-tiered commission model afforded to the City of Grande Prairie is unknown. Given the need for representation of several municipalities, it is unlikely the City will have same level of control over their policing services as they would with their own standalone municipal service.
- Although the Province has committed to municipalities continuing to pay the same for policing services provided by the APS as they currently do for the RCMP, it is reasonable to assume policing costs will continue to climb in the future. The City will not have the same level of control over their policing budget as they would with their own standalone municipal police service.
- The intended focus of the APS is service delivery in rural, remote, and Indigenous communities, not a large urban community such as Grande Prairie.
- Grande Prairie will benefit should the proposed Northern Regional (Urban) Hub be established in the City as it would address current concerns with ready access to specialized policing services. However, it remains unknown where this hub will be located, and it is reasonable to assume other municipalities would lobby for it be located within their jurisdiction.
- It remains possible that the final model of the APS may change before implementation due to political and/or financial pressures.

# 7 POLICE SERVICE DELIVERY OPTIONS

## 7.1 Contract Policing

The City of Grande Prairie may continue to receive contracted policing services provided by the RCMP through the Municipal Police Services Agreement, or should it be established, by the Alberta Police Service through an agreement with the Government of Alberta

## 7.2 Regional Police Service

The City of Grande Prairie may investigate the establishment of a local Regional Police Service with at least one other municipality. This option would also require the establishment of a Regional Police Commission responsible for governance and oversight of the police service.

## 7.3 Municipal Police Service

The City of Grande Prairie may establish a new standalone Municipal Police Service. If they do so, the City of Grande Prairie will be required to establish a Municipal Police Commission responsible for governance and oversight of the police service.




## 7.4 Comparative Analysis

In the below matrix, the three policing model options considered viable for consideration are comparatively assessed against the evaluation criteria of:

- Oversight and governance
- Budget Control
- Organizational Efficiency
- Staffing and Training

The purpose of this analysis is to provide a snapshot of the benefits and limitations of the three models through the lens of what is considered best for the City and Council.

For each criterion, the below colour coding is used to assist with quick interpretation:

- Considered the most beneficial to the City of Grande Prairie 
- Some benefits to the City of Grande Prairie 
- Considered the least beneficial to the City of Grande Prairie 



Note: Some components of the Alberta Police Service remain unknown and therefore are not assessed.

	Contract Policing RCMP	Contract Policing Alberta Police Service (APS)	(Municipal) Grande Prairie Police Service (GPPS)
<b>Oversight &amp; Governance</b>			
Municipal control and decision making	Council has limited input into local policing priorities through MPAC.	Council has limited/shared input into local policing priorities through local commission	Council has significant control over policing priorities through the municipal police commission.
Organizational accountability	Detachment primarily reports to K-Division. Limited accountability to Council as a contracted service provider. Provides Council basic annual policing plans, no annual reports or strategic plan.	Primarily accountable to provincial commission and GOA.  Some accountability to local commission.	GPPS fully accountable to the police commission. Council, through the police commission, able to establish clear accountabilities, levels of service, policing plans, annual reports, strategic plans, and full accountability for costs.
Responsibility & Workload	MPAC has limited responsibility and workload.	Council has some responsibilities and workload in support of Local Commission.	Police commission has a high level of responsibility and significant workload.
Officer conduct accountability	No accountability to Council.	No accountability to Council.	Members fully accountable to both the municipal police commission & provincial agency (if established).

Operational liability & risk	Limited liability and risk borne by Council.	Limited liability and risk borne by Council.	Full liability and risk borne by Council.
<b>Budget Control</b>			
Funding	Ottawa provides 10% of operational policing costs.	GOA continues to provide 10% of operational policing costs.	Council must fund 100% of operational policing costs.
Operational costs	Council has limited control other than approved FTE funding.	Unknown.	Council has full control over budget allocation to GPPS. Police commission prioritizes and allocates assigned funding.
Major Event costs	RCMP able to spread costs across wider organization and limit local cost impacts.	APS able to spread costs across wider organization and limit local cost impacts.	Council fully responsible for unseen major event costs and may have to allocate additional funding to GPPS.
Capital costs	Council has very limited control over capital expenditure plans.	Unknown.	Council has full control over budget allocation to GPPS.
<b>Organizational Efficiency</b>			
Core Policing Services	Detachment provides all core policing functions.	APS provides all core policing functions.	GPPS provides all core policing functions.

Specialized Policing Services	Detachment able to access specialized services provincially and nationally.	APS will access specialized services provincially.	GPPS has some internal capacity such as ERT. Other specialized services e.g., air support accessed from RCMP/APS or larger municipal police services.
Major Events Policing	RCMP can access to resources to support large, planned events large-scale, critical events.	APS can access to resources to support large, planned events large-scale, critical events.	GPPS may need to request additional resources from RCMP/APS or other police services to support large planned/critical events.
Integrated Service Delivery model & Dispatch	RCMP policies or systems prevent full adoption of an integrated tiered policing model and integrated dispatch with municipal enforcement resources.	APS comprised of a fully integrated tiered policing model and dispatch.	GPPS comprised of a fully integrated tiered policing model inclusive of municipal resources utilizing a fully integrated dispatch.
Records Management	RCMP operate Records Management System (RMS) not accessible to non-RCMP personnel.	Unknown.	All GPPS resources (police, municipal enforcement, outreach) utilize single RMS (with necessary firewalls to protect sensitive/classified information).
Procurement	RCMP processes slow and centralized nationally.		GPPS utilizes more nimble City processes and able to leverage EPS Standing Offers/supplies. that may promote operational efficiencies

Model Longevity	Govt. of Canada has control over future of policing model. Significant risk that that RCMP contract policing may end in 2032.	GOA has control over future of service model. No known end date for service.	Council has significant control over future of policing model.
<b>Staffing &amp; Training</b>			
Officer in Charge	Council has limited input into selection of detachment OIC.	Unknown.	Police commission appoints the Chief of Police, subject to ratification by Council.
Recruitment	RCMP experiencing significant recruiting challenges nationally.	APS likely to experience some recruitment challenges in more rural areas due to large numbers required.	GPPS likely to experience some recruiting challenges due to geographical location. Council will have full control over employee benefit packages which may offset this risk.
Staffing levels	Council has limited input into staffing levels in detachment.	Unknown.	Police Commission able to set appropriate staffing levels.
Employee Retention	RCMP unable to retain experienced members in Grande Prairie.	APS likely to have some success in retaining staff in Grande Prairie due to strategy to recruit locally.	GPPS highly likely to retain members in the service based on experience of other municipal police services.
Collective Bargaining	Council has no input into national Collective Bargaining Agreements between NPF and Government of Canada.	Council has no input into provincial Collective Bargaining Agreements between AUPE and GOA.	Council has full input into Collective Bargaining Agreements with CUPE.

Training Curriculum	National training curriculum delivered in Regina, Ottawa, or Edmonton.	Provincial curriculum delivered within Alberta.	Provincial curriculum delivered within Grande Prairie and/or elsewhere within Alberta.
Training Costs	Training practices incur excessive costs on City's policing budget.	Costs unknown, but likely to be less than those incurred from current RCMP policing model.	Localized training delivery will significantly reduce associated costs.

## 8 MODERN MUNICIPAL POLICING MODEL

For the purposes of this report, the name 'Grande Prairie Police Service' is used for the municipal police service model.

### 8.1 Service Delivery

The Grande Prairie Police Service has been designed using four guiding principles: *Operational Efficiency, Community Safety and Wellbeing, Community Engagement, and Organizational Resilience.*

#### Operational Efficiency

The Grande Prairie Police Service (GPPS) is designed to provide a wide spectrum of core policing services including general duty, PACT, investigations, traffic safety, community engagement, forensics, police dogs, training section, an in-service tactical response capacity, and an integrated dispatch. These policing resources are complimented and supported by the full integration into the organization of Community Peace Officers, Bylaw Enforcement Officers and Outreach Workers.

This progressive service model allows for a 'Tiered Community Response,' focused on deploying the right resources, to the right place, at the right time, to meet the specific needs of the incident and achieve the best outcome possible for all involved. In response to the specific levels of risk, complexity, and urgency, the GPPS is able to deploy the most appropriate resource(s) based on required expertise, authorities and equipment to best deal with that situation. A sworn police officer may be the best response, but equally, it may not.

The service will have an in-house tactical emergency response capacity through the provision of training to appropriate frontline and supervisory members to limit reliance on outside agencies. Those specialized policing functions outside the capacity of the GPPS such as air support, search & rescue, an enhanced or prolonged tactical response, hostage rescue, and witness protection will be sought from the RCMP under Section 2.4 of the Provincial Police Service Agreement which states: *'The Provincial Minister, in consultation with the Commanding Officer, may require the Provincial Police Service from time to time to temporarily provide assistance or special expertise to other police agencies in the province.'* This is a currently standard practice for other police services in Alberta, with the exception of the Edmonton Police Service and the Calgary Police Service due to their specific internal capacity. In the event the provincial Alberta Police Service is established, the GPPS will engage with the new provincial service to enter into a similar agreement for the provision of some specialized policing services. In light of the proposed Northern Regional Hub, these services may be more readily accessible than at present through the RCMP.

An Integrated Operational Communication Centre (IOCC) ensures a coordinated and timely response by all public safety agencies in the city including police, PACT, municipal enforcement, and outreach workers. This improves efficiency, enhances service, reduces costs, and allows these services to respond in line with the City's service level expectations without the reliance on a third party. Tactical Analysts embedded within the IOCC conduct multiple database checks in real time in support of responding officers to enhance officer safety and ensure the best outcome possible for all.

All enforcement members will operate on a single integrated Records Management System, with the necessary 'firewalls' in place to ensure the integrity of classified or sensitive records.

The GPPS model includes corporate services required by all police services to support front line operations such as Human Resources, Finance, Procurement, and IT. These in-service employees will work in collaboration with City departments as required. This is expected to be more efficient and cost effective than current RCMP processes.

Legal services to the Chief and/or service will be provided by external legal counsel, as is the current City of Grande Prairie practice, and the adopted model for most police services in Alberta.

The service will establish an on-line complaint reporting platform for the public to report such incidents as: Minor property damage, lost property, theft from vehicle, attempted theft of vehicle, and thefts under \$5k. The convenience of this platform will improve overall public reporting and improve intelligence-led policing of crime hot-spots, whilst removing the need for frontline members to attend the scene to receive initial complaint information. The future-state service model will include an 'Alternate Reporting and Investigations Team' staffed by employees on "light duties" due to injury or ill health. The team will conduct investigations into incidents reported on-line to identify suspects/crime trends in support of enforcement. This also provides the employee with meaningful work while being supported during their recovery.

## Community Wellbeing

Mental health and addiction challenges in the community can sometimes jeopardize the safety of residents and negatively impact the sense of safety of others. As one of few services able to respond quickly to any crisis on a 24/7/365 basis, police often attend mental health calls not because they are the best response, but because they are often the only one available.

PACT and Community Outreach being in one organization supports the coordination of the most appropriate response to such situations as persons experiencing a mental health crisis, well-being checks and social issues such as addictions and homelessness. PACT resources have also been increased from the current two teams to four teams. Leveraging different expertise ensures limited resources can bring the most value and the community receives the highest possible level of service. It also lessens the workload on police members allowing them to remain available to respond to urgent criminal matters.

The GPPS will work to facilitate a coordinated, collaborative multi-agency approach to address the community's priority social issues. The GPPS will lead the development of a 'Community Safety HUB' comprised of representatives from multiple agencies and departments such as health, housing, addiction services, social services and community supports. The HUB will share information and work collaboratively to develop immediate, coordinated, and integrated responses to complex social issues involving the most vulnerable to reduce risk of harm in a timely manner.

The GPPS will partner with other City departments, outside agencies and community groups on the development of a strategic *Community Safety & Wellbeing Plan*, in line with the Community Wellness Spectrum. For the community to be truly safe and vibrant, it must recognise the complex combination of social and health issues that can become the root causes of crime and the need for the right balance between support and enforcement to increase overall community safety. The Community Wellness Spectrum includes social development, prevention, and risk intervention approaches in addition to the incident response approach traditionally encompassing the police role.

Figure 18. Community Wellness Spectrum



### Community Engagement

Public engagement and community policing are a primary focus of the new police service, and its model includes a Community Engagement Team with Community Liaison Officers (CLO’s) assigned to each policing district. CLOs liaise with community and welfare groups, attend community events and conduct high-visibility patrols to build trust with residents and local businesses. The Community Enforcement Team will be valued and recognized by the organization. CLO’s will be specifically selected for the role to ensure the most appropriate members perform this crucial function; and the team will remain a staffing priority for the service.

Public engagement responsibilities extend beyond CLO’s and all uniform front-line police members and peace officers will be proactively assigned specific community focused tasks and functions. This may be facilitated using the ‘Directed Activity Response System’ (DARS) used by the Delta Police Service in British Columbia. Officers operate freely to respond to calls for service, but DARS, a web-based program, can be used to assign and track time spent on proactive community engagement activities.

Mindful of the many sensitivities and complexities of policing indigenous persons within the city, the service will work in close partnership with the City’s Indigenous Advisor, and consideration will be given to creating an additional in-service resource to ensure this unique policing need is fully met long-term.

The GPPS will consider developing a new citizen volunteer program to enhance relationships with the local community. Overseen by the Community Engagement Team, these volunteers will conduct high visibility patrols on foot primarily within the downtown core, providing directions, first aid, tourist information and whatever assistance they can, as well as acting as additional “eyes and ears” for the police service. Such initiatives help the police develop strong partnerships with the community, are a means for the community to take ownership of problems and help reduce the workload on patrol officers. An example of an existing program is the Lethbridge Police Service, ‘The Watch.’



The service's Public Information Officer will lead the development of a strong social media presence on such platforms as Facebook to engage with the community and produce worthwhile informative content for the public.

The GPPS will enhance transparency and local accountability through online public reporting of such service delivery measurable as: volume of calls for service; volume of 911 calls, category & response times; number of arrests/changes laid, use of force incidents; mental health related calls and referrals; type and volume of illegal drugs seized; officer conduct complaints and resolutions; number of vehicle collisions and location of high collision areas; and service budgets and expenditures.

## **Organizational Resilience**

Community policing is reliant on a strong connection between the police service and the community it serves. The preferred method to establish such a connection is to have members of the community join its police service and serve in the community. To ensure a workforce that reflects the community they serve and encourage retention, the GPPS will, wherever possible, adopt a 'Recruit in Grande Prairie, for Grande Prairie' recruitment strategy. This will focus on hiring sworn and civilian members from the Grande Prairie area, who have a connection to, and intend to stay in, the community. The service will work in partnership with the City on a marketing and recruitment strategy to highlight its competitive compensation packages, the increased opportunities for advancement and/or role specialization, and family lifestyle benefits, to attract and retain the necessary high caliber employees.

As a new police service, the presence of experienced police officers will be invaluable, particularly in supervisory positions. It is likely joining an emerging new service will appeal to many serving officers who are looking for new challenges and opportunities, and it is reasonable to expect a significant amount of interest among Grande Prairie RCMP members. The GPPS will recruit for organizational resilience and aim to select candidates who will stay with the organization for their remaining policing career.

The full integration of Community Peace Officers (CPOs) into the police service provides an opportunity for a 'Farm team' approach whereby those CPOs with the necessary skillset can potentially become sworn police officers within the same organization. Such a model offers a self-development and career path for the individual without their loss from the community.

Alberta-specific police recruit and specialized training will be delivered within Alberta through partnerships with the Edmonton Police Service and ALERT, supplemented with in-service community specific training. This will be a more cost-effective and efficient training model than the current one employed by the RCMP. An organizational culture of ongoing training and professional development for both police and civilian employees will be strongly supported. It is known that the responsibilities placed on police members and others within the policing and enforcement community can on occasion result in a significant negative impact on their mental health. GPPS Human Resources and Wellbeing, will lead the establishment of an Employee Wellness Committee and development an organizational Wellness Plan to support the mental and physical health needs of all employees.

The Wellness Plan will address Resilience, Prevention, Intervention, and Return to Work supports through education, training, confidential access to counseling and psychological supports, and Critical Incident Stress Management & Peer Support resources.

## 8.1.1 Services

The GPPS is comprised of four bureaus: *Community Policing, Investigations and Operational Support, Community Safety, and Corporate Services.*

### Community Policing Bureau

- *General Duty*: conduct uniform patrol duties and day to day frontline operations such as urgent and non-urgent response, initial and minor crime investigations.
- *PACT*: Four teams, each composed of a police member and Registered Psychiatric Nurse, provide a crisis response to intervene, assess, and support people having a mental health crisis in the community.
- *Alternate Reporting and Investigations* (future-state): will review and investigate criminal incidents reported on-line and identify suspects/crime trends in support of intelligence-led enforcement.

### Investigations and Operational Support Bureau

- *Professional Standards*: reporting direct to the Superintendent, Professional Standards provide internal oversight and coordination of code of conduct complaints and investigations and liaise with the Public Complaint Director as necessary.

### Investigations Branch

- *General Investigations*: conduct general, complex and sensitive criminal investigations such as drug and gang related crime, economic crime, violent crime and homicide, partnering with ALERT as required.
- *Special Investigations*: investigate sexual assaults and domestic violence offences.
- *Priority Crimes*: tackle the ongoing crime trend causing most concern in the community through targeted enforcement operations.
- *Forensics*: conduct crime scene and other forensic examinations including the collection of DNA samples.
- *ALERT*: Personnel seconded to ALERT report back into the service via Investigations Branch.

### Operational Support Branch

- *Community Engagement Team*: work with community groups, attend community events, provide Drug Awareness Resistance Education (DARE) training and school liaison activities, deliver crime prevention presentations, and conduct high-visibility community patrols.
- *Traffic Safety Unit*: enforce the *Traffic Safety Act* and impaired driving legislation, respond to collisions, investigate serious injury or fatal motor vehicle collisions, and conduct criminal interdiction measures.

- *Police Dog Services*: support patrol officers with investigations, public order situations, apprehension of suspects and searches for vulnerable or missing persons.
- *Training Section*: research new policing best practice and deliver, or coordinate the delivery of, training requirements for sworn and non-sworn employees.
- *Cellblock Operations*: supervises cell block guards and all activities within the cellblock area.

## Community Safety Bureau

- Peace Officers
  - *General Duty*: provide emergency response in support of police members, conduct general enforcement activities, liaise with the downtown business association, enforce the GPES AGENT Program and conduct pro-active high-visibility patrols in the community.
  - *Traffic Safety*: enforce the *Traffic Safety Act* in support of the annual Traffic Safety Plan, respond to collisions, deliver road safety education, conduct commercial vehicle inspections and general traffic enforcement, and oversee the Automated Traffic Enforcement program.
  - *Bylaw Investigations*: focus on municipal bylaw enforcement, animal control, and non-moving traffic violations
- Community Outreach
  - *Outreach Workers*: lead community safety initiatives, engage with vulnerable people to provide proactive support and intervention for a variety of common community concerns such as trespassing, loitering, public intoxication, and illegal encampments.
  - *Case Workers*: support Outreach Workers through case management and facilitating an individual's access to local shelters, health care, addiction treatment and housing.
- *Dispatch*: operate the Integrated Operational Communication Centre (IOCC), taking calls for service from the public and coordinating Dispatch for all GPPS resources including police, peace officers, bylaw, outreach, and PACT, and actively monitor the status of deployed personnel to ensure officer/employee safety.
- *Cell Block Guards*: conduct guarding duties and fulfil duty of care responsibilities within the cellblock area.

## Corporate Services Bureau

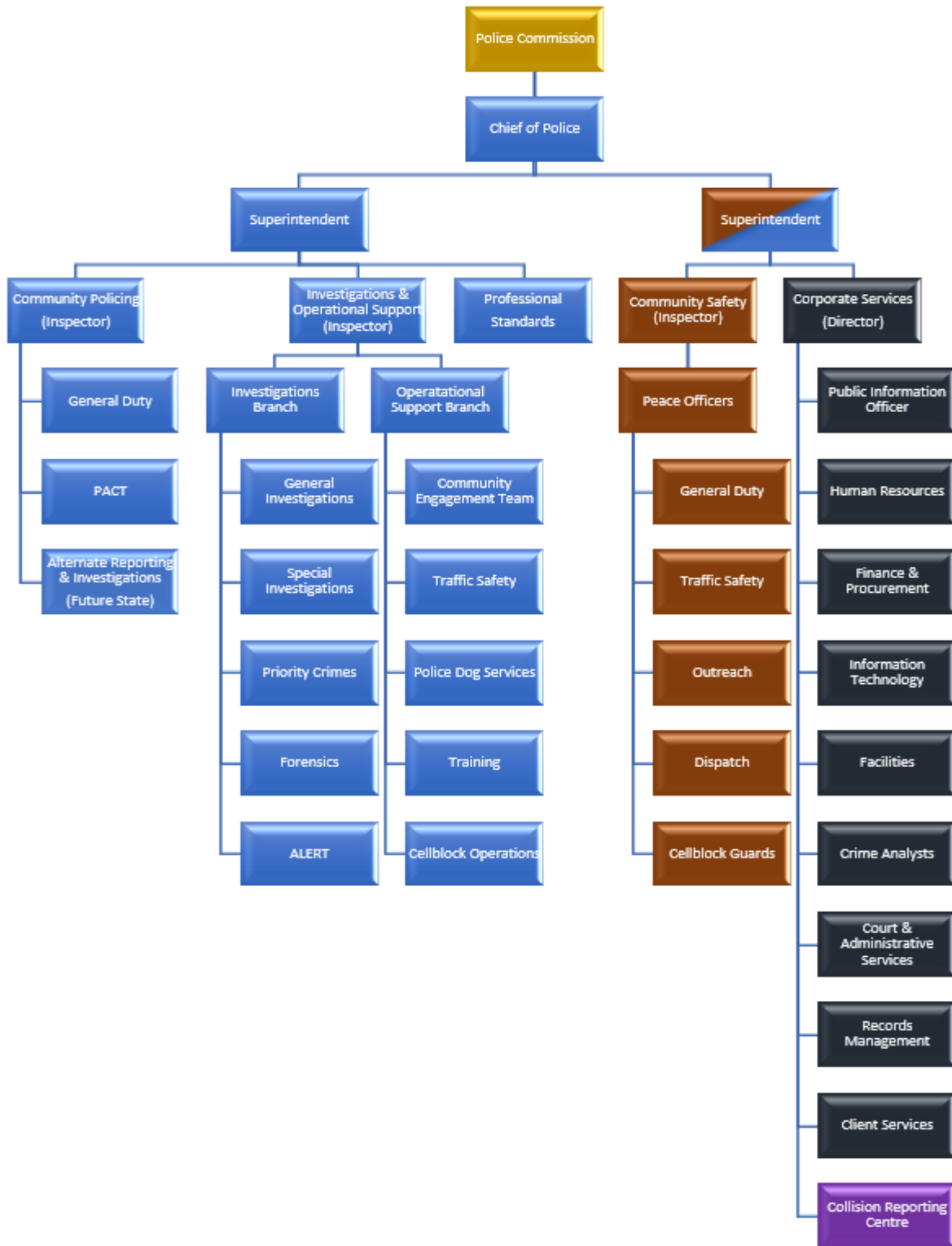
### Corporate Services

- *Public Information Officer:* develops internal and external communications on behalf of the Chief of Police, coordinates information sharing with the police commission and on-line public reporting of service performance measures, strategic plans, annual reports and financial accounts.
- *Human Resources & Wellbeing:* in addition to traditional HR responsibilities, leads the development of internal policy to ensure a safe, respectful working environment and support the highest levels of employee physical and mental health and wellbeing.
- *Finance & Procurement:* provide financial and procurement support to the service and the oversight and coordination of the vehicle fleet and other equipment.
- *Information Technology:* ensure the integrity of all IT, radio, video and digital evidence storage systems and identify new technology to improve officer safety and service delivery.
- *Facilities:* provide facility custodial services.
- *Crime Analysts:* gather intelligence and provide analytical information in direct support of policing operations, including in real-time within the IOCC, to improve response and ensure public and officer safety.
- *Court and Administrative Services:* provide budgeting, finance and technological support, perform typing and general administrative support functions and court liaison duties.
- *Records Management:* provide direct support to front line members, conduct CPIC checks, complete PROS files reviews, exhibit coordination and manage the central document filing system.
- *Client Services:* assist the public at the front counter with general information, receive initial complaints and collision reports, and coordinate requests for Criminal Records checks.
- *Collision Reporting Centre:* Accident Support Services International Ltd staff assist members of the public file a collision report, take pictures of any damage, provide a 'damage reported to police' sticker, and initiate the insurance process.

### 8.1.2 Staffing and Human Resources

It is assumed that existing Municipal Support Section, Enforcement Services and Mobile Outreach staff could form the civilian side of the GPPS. New civilian positions in the areas of finance, human resources, communications, and information technology will need to be implemented. Police officer recruitment will need to be addressed in detail through a Police Service Transition Plan.

Figure 19. Grande Prairie Police Service High-Level Organizational Chart



### **8.1.3 Facilities**

The GPPS would be headquartered at the location of the existing Grande Prairie RCMP Detachment. This facility is wholly owned by the City of Grande Prairie and meets the necessary security requirements to accommodate a police service. Secondary officer and training space could also be utilized at the City's Coordinated Care Campus.

### **8.1.4 Vehicles**

The Grande Prairie RCMP currently utilize 25 unmarked vehicles, 20 marked vehicles, 2 quads, 1 side x side, and 2 motorcycles. The intent would be to transfer these vehicles GPPS or have them replaced 1 for 1.

Enforcement Service and Mobile Outreach would bring their fleet with them to the Police Service.

### **8.1.5 Equipment**

The GPPS would need to procure the necessary equipment to outfit its members. The City has existing relationships with both vendors and other municipalities who sell this equipment.

### **8.1.6 IT Systems**

The GPPS would look to leverage existing City infrastructure and IT Services where feasible.

Specific technology for Computer Aided Dispatch is available through Grande Prairie 911's newly upgraded Hexagon software system. This technology will allow seamless situational awareness between fire and police personnel.

The GPPS would look to partner with a larger Police Service for hosting on their Records Management System platform. This approach would reduce development time, costs, and better facilitate intelligence sharing.

### **8.1.8 Training**

Both recruit and experienced officer training requirements would be significant during start-up and through transition. A mix of local and outsourced training approaches will be necessary to meet the need of the police service. This would be addressed more specifically in a transition plan.

## 8.2 Governance

### POLICE COMMISSION

In accordance with the Alberta *Police Act*, should the City of Grande Prairie choose to establish a municipal police service, council must also establish a municipal police commission. Council is responsible for prescribing the rules governing the commission and appointing its members.

The police commission must consist of not less than three, and no more than 12 members. If four or less members are appointed, only one of them may be a member of council or an employee of the municipality; if five or more members are appointed, two of them may be members of council or employees of the municipality.

The *Police Act* places several specific responsibilities on a police commission, as do the Alberta Justice and Solicitor General, Policing Oversight Standards.

The commission must appoint the Chief of Police, subject to ratification by council; and appoint a Public Complaint Director to fulfil specific duties set out in the *Police Act*.

The commission is responsible for meeting current local policing needs, and planning for the future with input from the community. The commission can align with the direction and initiatives the City wishes to pursue and hold the Chief of Police accountable to a strategic business plan. It has the responsibility to establish policies providing for efficient and effective policing, issue instructions as necessary to the Chief in respect to these policies, allocate funds provided by council, and assist in resolving public complaints.

The commission must be structured appropriately, be well-trained, and diverse in experience, ethnicity, gender, expertise, and perspectives, and committed to its responsibilities. Globally, there is increasing emphasis on the accountability and transparency of policing and the commission will play a core role in achieving this.

Despite its heightened level of local oversight and accountability, establishing a municipal police service does not allow council to directly influence the service in every regard. Police governance structures are purposefully in place to provide a buffer between the political, public and bureaucratic elements of the City and ensure impartial policing. The *Police Act* states that where a Police Commission exists, '*City Council must not perform any function or exercise any power in respect of the police service that the commission is empowered to perform or exercise or issue any instructions to a police officer.*' However, despite the governance buffer between the City and the municipal police service, the *Police Act* states that council remains '*liable for any legal liability that is incurred by the commission.*'

The Grande Prairie Municipal Police Advisory Committee is a potential starting point for selecting some members of the new police commission. However, due to the extremely important role of a police commission, required diversity, and greatly increased expectations, it is unlikely all members of MPAC will be able to transition into the role. It is

imperative all appointments are made after careful consideration and on a case-by-case basis to ensure a capable commission is created.

The commission's initial workload will be very high, and its members will require training, and advice and support from an existing commission.

### **8.3 Financials**

The transition from the RCMP to a Grande Prairie Police Service would require significant effort and resources including but not limited to the investment in organizational infrastructure, recruitment, training, information technology investment for both hardware and software, potential leasehold improvement costs to update the space as well as legal and professional fees to move the project to completion.

Preliminary high level costing models performed by the project team were consistent with the findings of the APPS Transition Study in that it is believed feasible to operate an alternative police service at a cost equal to or less than the existing RCMP contract. Further detailed analysis by way of a Transition Report would be necessary to accurately assess these potential costs.



## 9 CONCLUSION

The Government of Alberta has drawn a great deal of attention to the future of policing in Alberta following its decision in 2021 to initiate feasibility studies concerning the creation of a new provincial 'Alberta Police Service' to replace the RCMP as the contracted police service in the province.

In February 2022, the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia 'Special Committee on Reforming the Police Act' made several recommendations, one of which was to "Transition to a new BC provincial police service."

There has also been much discussion within the Government of Canada concerning whether the RCMP should continue providing contract policing. In 2020, the House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security published a report containing several recommendations. One of these was that "the Government of Canada explore the possibility of ending contract policing within the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and that the Government work with the provinces, territories and municipalities to help those interested establish their own provincial and territorial police services." Furthermore, the Prime Minister's Mandate Letter to the Minister of Public Safety, dated December 2021, specifically includes to "Conduct an assessment of contract policing in consultation with provinces, territories, municipalities, Indigenous partners and stakeholders."

The current Provincial Police Service Agreement (PPSA) between the Government of Canada and provinces and territories expires on March 31, 2032. Should the Government of Canada decide not to renew the PPSA, it is required to provide notice not less than 24 months prior to the date of the intended termination. March 2030 may sound a long way off, but in this context, it is not. Furthermore, there is some concern within the provinces and territories that even if the PPSA is renewed it will be based on a 100% cost recovery by the federal government.

In light of the above, it is fair to say the future of policing in Alberta, and in fact Canada, is at a potential crossroads and significant change is possible. There is a risk the Government of Canada may choose to terminate RCMP policing services provided to the City of Grande Prairie through revoking or not renewing the PPSA. Additionally, there is also the perhaps greater risk the Government of Alberta will proactively terminate the PPSA and establish a new provincial police service. Should either of these scenarios arise, there will no longer be a "status quo" option for the City and it will need to be prepared to decide whether to enter into a service agreement with the newly formed provincial service as its municipal policing provider or seek to establish its own standalone municipal police service.

According to the 2021 census, six cities in Alberta have a population greater than the City of Grande Prairie: Calgary, Edmonton, Red Deer, Lethbridge, Airdrie, and St. Albert. Of these, Calgary, Edmonton, and Lethbridge operate their own standalone municipal police service. Red Deer, Airdrie and St. Albert receive their policing services from the RCMP. Three cities with a population less than the City of Grande Prairie operate their own standalone municipal police service: Medicine Hat, Camrose, and Lacombe, as does the town of Taber.

The decision whether the City of Grande Prairie should also establish its own standalone municipal police service is not one to be taken lightly. Building a new, modern police service from the ground up is a large undertaking, requiring time, money, careful planning, consultation with multiple parties, and a great deal of hard work. However, while it does come with some risk, these are outweighed by significant benefits to the community.

## **Risks**

In accordance with the Alberta *Police Act*, the City of Grande Prairie has the ability to establish its own municipal police service. The current Municipal Police Service Agreement (MPSA) between the City and the Government of Canada may be terminated on March 31 in any year by either party giving notice not less than 24 months prior to the date termination. The MPSA goes on to state that *'In the event of termination of this Agreement, the Parties agree, during the period following that notice and the date of the intended termination, to cooperate and assist each other to effect an orderly transition of service from the RCMP as the Municipal Police Service to such other police service that is authorized by the Province to carry out those powers and duties.'*

One significant advantage of the current contracted policing model is the limited direct liability borne by the City concerning the conduct of the RCMP and its members. It is presumed this limited liability would also apply to any new contracted provincial police service. Therefore, it is important to note that while a municipal police service will increase Council's input into, and oversight of, the municipal service via the police commission, it also comes with increased risk and legal liability to the City, and the *Police Act* is clear that council is liable for any legal liability incurred by the commission.

It is possible that municipalities who have previously conducted policing reviews, such as St. Albert (2014), Red Deer (2019) and Airdrie (2020), may repeat the exercise in light of the new RCMP Collective Agreement and increased costs, and as a result of the push by the Government of Alberta to introduce a provincial police service. Several other municipalities may also now conduct their own policing review for the same reasons. Some of these municipalities may decide to proactively establish their own municipal police service now, decide to do so should the provincial police service be established, or in the event the Government of Canada terminates RCMP contract policing.

Grande Prairie has some unique geographical challenges in attracting its workforce as compared to other more central communities in Alberta. As a result, the City may be at a disadvantage if it were to compete directly with communities such as St. Albert, Red Deer, and Airdrie for hiring employees for a new municipal police service and would likely benefit from commencing its hiring processes before these other municipalities. Additionally, for the same reasons, the City would benefit from being ahead of the creation of the provincial police service to ensure it can select 'cream of the crop' candidates.

## **Benefits**

Despite the above risks, this is a unique and truly historic opportunity to develop a municipal police service from the ground up with several long-term tangible benefits for the City of Grande Prairie. The creation of a Grande Prairie Police Service provides an opportunity to build a strong foundation of trust and legitimacy between the police service and the community it serves. The creation of a municipal service is an investment in the future of the city, a city that needs and deserves the best in policing.

The Grande Prairie Police Service will be overseen by, and directly accountable to, a municipal police commission which will provide true local governance and oversight, represent the local interests of the community, ensure financial accountability on behalf of taxpayers, and set local policing priorities.

The commission is responsible for selecting the Chief of Police and, in consultation with the Chief, develops and approves the services' annual business plans, annual reports and long-term strategic plans. The Chief reports back to the commission regularly on the implementation of the strategic goals, objectives, or any other key performance indicators, ensuring transparency and spending accountability at the local level. The Commission will be able to set appropriate staffing levels, policing priorities and allocate assigned budgets based on the specific needs and expectations of the citizens and business community in the City of Grande Prairie.

The integrated design of the new service brings together police, municipal enforcement, health and social welfare resources to ensure collaboration and increase efficiency and effectiveness. This model is recognized as new best practice in policing, and several Chiefs of Police in Alberta have expressed a desire to achieve the same design for their service.

Police officers within the GPPS will be governed by the provincial *Police Act* and *Police Service Regulation*, not federal legislation as is the case with the RCMP. This aligns them with all other municipal police service members across the province and increases local and provincial accountability concerning code of conduct complaints, particularly if, as anticipated, the Government of Alberta establishes a new provincial police complaints agency as part of the *Police Act* revisions.

The RCMP, rightfully, enjoys a very proud history. However, it is an extremely large institution constructed around a very centralized model. Although some progress has been made, the organization remains overly bureaucratic and slow to adapt in response to changing community needs and priorities. The GPPS will have the ability to respond to the policing and public safety needs of the community and continue to refine its policies, practices, and policing services more quickly. It will be able to research and introduce new technology, training, and other innovative practices quicker than the RCMP due to its smaller size and more nimble processes. As the first new municipal police service in Alberta (excluding First Nations Police Services) since the 1950's it will benefit from being able to incorporate lessons learned and best practices in policing from inception.

Successful community partnerships require long-term relationships and commitment between the police and local community agencies, organizations, and residents. The continual staff turnover and frequent transfers experienced by the Grande Prairie RCMP are simply not conducive to establishing and sustaining community-focused policing. While it must be recognized recruitment and retention are not challenges unique to the RCMP, the majority of municipal police officers spend their entire careers with the same police service. These officers develop a deep understanding of the specific needs of, and a strong commitment to, the community they serve and provide long-term stability, continuity, and local knowledge.

The 44 constables in the Grande Prairie Detachment have an average length of service of 2.87 years. Of these, 67.5% are new to the detachment within the past year and 50% of the front-line patrol members have less than one year's service in the RCMP. As a comparison, in the Medicine Hat Police Service only 8% of members have less than two years service, while 64% have between 10 -19 years service, and 19% have more than 20 years service.

The GPPS will be able to recruit officers who reflect Grande Prairie's diversity and who will spend their entire careers in the community developing long-term relationships with residents, businesses, and community groups. This will build the public's confidence and trust in their police service, support community focused policing, and improve overall public safety. GPPS members will receive "made in Alberta, delivered in Alberta" training in partnership with the Edmonton Police Service and ALERT.

The RCMP “one-size-fits-all approach” to municipal policing can fail to meet the specific needs of a community. By design, a police service needs to be governed by a local independent police oversight body e.g. a commission, with the sole mandate of ensuring the police service is providing what is required by the community it serves. In general, the operational front-line policing services provided by the RCMP members in Grande Prairie are considered acceptable.

However, there remain significant concerns regarding the larger RCMP organization’s ability to provide a high level of service to their contract policing commitments due to its significant recruiting challenges, inability to retain members in the community, bureaucratic policies and procurement systems, and ever-increasing costs. These concerns are further compounded by the unknowns concerning the future long-term ability of the RCMP to perform contract policing across Canada.

A Grande Prairie municipal police service will be an integral part of the community, locally accountable, focused on community policing and able to respond effectively to ever-changing community needs. The service will be better able to support the long-term growth of the City of Grande Prairie as a vibrant community where residents can live, work, and play without fear of crime.

## 9.1 Recommendation

The recommended next step for Council is to approve the development of a detailed Transition and Community Engagement Plan to further assess the opportunity to establish a modern municipal police service.

The Transition Plan will describe in detail the necessary regulatory, planning, community engagement, staffing, equipment, training, records management, technological and operational steps, funding requirements, and timeline for the new municipal service to become the police service of jurisdiction for the City of Grande Prairie.

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