



# Corporate

NO: R176

# Report

COUNCIL DATE: July 23, 2001

<b>REGULAR</b>			
TO:	<b>Mayor &amp; Council</b>	DATE:	<b>July 11, 2001</b>
FROM:	<b>City Manager For Chair, Public Safety Committee</b>	FILE:	<b>8020-001</b>
SUBJECT:	<b>Police Services and Priorities</b>		

## 1.0 RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:

1. Council receive the report.
2. Council direct that a high priority be given to deal with the Drug and Prostitution issues in the City.
3. Council approve an additional twelve officers effective immediately, in particular, to assist with the above priority.
4. Council particularly direct that the forthcoming twenty Auxiliary Officer Volunteers be optimally deployed to further support this priority.

## 2.0 BACKGROUND

Council has identified dealing with drug and prostitution issues in Surrey as a priority. Several delegations have appeared before Council requesting effective action, more resources and a higher priority towards this issue. In response to the more recent delegations heard by Council, Council committed to taking further actions expediently.

### **3.0 DISCUSSION**

In response to this complex but persistent issue, the City has undertaken a number of initiatives. These include:

- **Integrated Services Delivery Team**

These teams have been established in all 5 districts with District #1 team being the most active in dealing with the prostitution issues and those areas associated with these offences. In the case of District #1 (City Centre), meetings are held every month with all agencies being involved in identifying problems/solutions and a co-ordinated team effort toward the prostitution problem.

- **Operation Sweep**

Since the fall of 1999, under the coordination of District #1, a high visibility policing presence in the form of uniformed and plainclothes members has been in place to deal with persons involved in street-level crime (drug trafficking, prostitution, Liquor Act offences and other activity) detracting from the sense of peace and security for the residents and merchants. This initiative has been supported by the creation and infusion to the area of a Beat Patrol and augmented by the Bike Section, DART members and other support services which have directed attention to the area comprising the core of City Centre (134-138 Street between 100-108 Avenue).

- **D.A.R.T. (Direct Action Response Team)**

Established only recently, this unit is now working directly with Bylaw, BC Transit, Skytrain, Fire Department, BC Hydro, RCMP, Social Services and the Ministry of Housing on identifying “high” problem areas throughout Surrey and taking a systematic approach in addressing these problems. The RCMP and Bylaw, working as a co-ordinated unit, have placed specific emphasis on the areas where prostitutes and ‘johns’ are conducting their illicit business, congregating and dealing in illegal drug activities.

- **Bylaw initiatives**

Bylaw has taken steps to identify the problem areas through the City, assisted with co-ordination of all Departments in taking pro-active steps to curtail/eliminate the continuance of these activities. Property owners have been ordered to clean up their properties, remove all areas of cover where illegal activities may be concealed. In co-operation with the Utility Companies services have been changed or re-located to a different area to curtail these activities. Dilapidated houses have been taken down by the City or property owners.

- **New Grow-Op Bylaw**

This is a new bylaw established in June 2001. The RCMP advise there have been more than 12 – 14 grow operations removed since Council passed this Bylaw. Other City Departments such as Fire and Bylaws are also involved in these operations. All property owners will be invoiced accordingly for the direct cost of City resources expended. The position that is being taken is – all property owners and tenants will be held responsible for these costs.

- **Graffiti Clean-up**

Bylaw have taken a pro-active approach in having the resident and businesses clean up their properties. A clean-up leaflet was developed to address the responsibility of property owners to have graffiti removed from their buildings and outbuildings. This leaflet also provides a list of those agencies that may assist with graffiti clean up. As well, graffiti from City properties is removed expediently.

NOTE – An initiative is being developed through the Manager of Parks, Manager Contracts & Solid Waste and the Manager of Bylaws & Licensing whereby a Graffiti unit could be assigned within the City for immediate removal (48 hours).

In view of the continuing drug and prostitution issues and their significant negative impact on communities, the Public Safety Committee recommends to Council that:

- A high priority be given to deal with the drug and prostitution issue.
- Twelve additional RCMP officers be approved, effective immediately to assist with this priority.
- Twenty Auxiliary Officer Volunteers, soon to become available to Surrey Detachment, be deployed such as to optimally support this priority.

It is noted that preventative initiatives and measures are key to meaningful and sustainable progress and are urgently needed. However, preventative strategies require that all agencies (not only City services e.g. Police, Bylaws, Operations & Fire) such as legislation, judiciary, social and health agencies work in a coordinated manner, if there is to be any chance of meaningful progress. To this end, the Public Safety Committee and senior staff from various City Departments, including other agencies, propose to explore and initiate a practical and affordable action plan.

#### **4.0 FUNDING**

The above recommendations require an additional funding (City's share) of about \$400,000 for the Year 2001, which can be funded as follows:

- From potential savings from the RCMP Contract related to recruit training costs and E-Division overhead, as per Council's earlier resolution.
- From the “one-time” projected savings for 2001 of various City departments.

However, the 2002 operational budget will require to be adjusted which can be undertaken as part of the annual budget process.

#### **5.0 CONCLUSION**

To respond to immediate drugs and prostitution issues, Council approval of twelve additional RCMP Officers is recommended together with consideration for a higher priority for dealing with these issues. As well, urgent and optimal responsibilities are suggested for soon to be available, twenty Auxiliary Officer Volunteers to further assist with this priority.

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For Councillor Dianne Watts,  
Chair, Public Safety Committee

