



## Kingston Police

### Public Agenda Information Report

To: Kingston Police Service Board

From: Scott Fraser, Chief of Police

Subject: Community Safety & Support Initiative

Date: July 9, 2025

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#### Information:

**That** the Community Safety & Support Initiative Report, Report Number 25-48 is for information only.

#### Background:

In July 2024 Sergeant Jason Hughes and Constable Clint Wills were tasked to work in the Community Oriented Response and Enforcement Unit to focus on the Community Safety and Support Initiative.

The issue of homelessness and open-air drug use, particularly in the downtown core, was flagged and became the focus for the implementation of enforcement strategies. Of concern:

- Many unhoused sleeping on the streets/sidewalks/front steps and behind downtown businesses
- Many were sleeping either on, or between, benches that were put in place to help beautify Kingston's downtown. These benches offered places to sit for users/consumers of the downtown business district
- Many of the unhoused were using drugs in the open area of the downtown and showing no regard for the citizens that were using the area
- Many of the unhoused were yelling and screaming while under the influence. This frightened citizens. Sgt. Hughes and Cst. Wills personally watched women with young children jump from being startled by one of these unhoused men yelling/screaming

- Many of the unhoused had grocery carts filled with both belongings and garbage and were pushing/pulling them up and down the main streets of the downtown area and were impeding sidewalks used for pedestrian traffic.

Officers spoke to several business/restaurant owners in the downtown area as well as members of the Downtown Business Association who requested additional support, as their businesses were being greatly affected and they felt that the public were not using the downtown as much because they did not feel safe.

### Outreach Strategy

Kingston Police recognized that for this strategy to be successful, relationships with outside and invested agencies must be built. Kingston Police officers have developed, built, and strengthened relationships with agencies such Addictions and Mental Health Services (AMHS), City of Kingston By-Law, Housing Services, Community Shelters, and the Integrated Care Hub. Officers spoke to members of these agencies explaining the need for enforcement of open-air drug use and enforcing Community Standards By-Laws, particularly around loitering and impeding sidewalks for pedestrian traffic. Officers explained that they would be enforcing criminal laws pertaining to possession of stolen grocery carts that are used by many unhoused individuals to move and store their belongings. Police worked with the agencies, who assisted in providing storage bins and facilities for some of the unhoused belongings. They were also able to speak to some of their higher risk clients and educate them on the enforcement that would be starting. Police managed to build and strengthen relationships with agencies where the relationship may have been strained at times in the past. Sgt. Hughes and Cst. Wills gained the trust of many of the managers and staff members of these agencies, who would contact them directly at times when police assistance was required.

### Proactive Presence Strategy

A proactive presence of patrolling hot spots in the downtown core, city parks, and private property with community partners such as By-Law and AMHS Street Outreach staff resulted in the communication that violations of rules and regulations would be enforced.

### Statistics

Recent compilations of statistics between August 2024 and June 10, 2025, are as follows:

- 131 calls for service regarding encampments attended by police throughout Kingston
- 28 By-Law tickets issued for violations of Community Standards/Safe Streets
- 11 *Liquor Licence and Control Act* tickets issued (mainly for consumption of alcohol in places other than private residences such as city streets and parks)
- 36 Criminal Code charges

- 10 arrests regarding outstanding warrants to arrest
- Approximately 90 grocery carts were seized by police and returned to store owners, at an approximate value of \$500 each (\$45,000 total value)

These numbers are expected to be slightly higher, however, the cyber incident which occurred at the beginning of January 2025 has impacted our ability to accurately determine statistics for the period of November 1, 2024, through to March 31, 2025. As a result, while we were able to generate some numbers, the data above is not necessarily an accurate representation of the affected time period.

#### Financial

Cost resources dedicated to this initiative are limited to the salaries and associated benefit costs of the two officers involved. For the period of July 1, 2024 to May 31, 2025, this amounts to approximately \$337,000.

#### **Contact:**

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