

JOINT NEWS RELEASE

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Public safety initiatives expanded in Nanaimo

The safety and well-being of Nanaimo citizens is a priority for Nanaimo City Council and the Nanaimo RCMP.

Situation Table Progress

Last month, Nanaimo Council directed staff to work with the Nanaimo RCMP to implement a provincially-funded Situation Table in the City of Nanaimo. Situation Tables, bring together front line staff from the public safety, health, and social services sectors to identify vulnerable peoples in an effort to connect them with services they need in a coordinated and efficient way. And, the concept of Situation Tables aligns well with the work of Council's Health and Housing Task Force and the recommended actions of the Health and Housing Action Plan (HHAP) including supporting an Integrated Coordinated Access (ICA) model.

In past two years, the Nanaimo RCMP Detachment has been experiencing a significant increase in "Check Well Being" calls and calls for service in which individuals are experiencing a mental health crisis. For example, in 2020, Nanaimo RCMP responded to 2,220 Check Well Being calls and an additional 2,442 mental health related calls. The Situation Table, (along with a well-developed ICA system), will create common languages, tools and processes across the public safety, health and social service sector and help individuals access the services they need.

As the details of the Situation Table are being worked out, Constable Joshua Waltman, Nanaimo RCMP's first appointed Medical Health Liaison Officer (MHLO), will continue to build relationships with partner agencies. Since he started with the Detachment in November of 2020, Constable Waltman has met with Nanaimo Regional General Hospital Psychiatric Emergency Services (NRGH PEP), the Island Health Community Outreach (COR) team, and Probation Services. He has also attended calls for service jointly with 150+ separate clients to help find responses that are more effective and reduce emergency call volume.

Community Safety Audit

The Nanaimo RCMP in partnership with the City of Nanaimo and 4th year criminology students from Vancouver Island University started conducting [Safety Audits](#) in selected neighbourhoods throughout Nanaimo. For some residents in Nanaimo, there is an increased feeling of fear that comes with an increase in crime activity. Over time, this has shown to undermine the safety and security of our communities and weakens the cohesiveness of neighbourhoods. The goal of the Safety Audits project is to work in partnership with selected neighbourhoods to find ways to reduce opportunities for crime and incorporate relevant crime prevention programming. Six neighbourhoods have been selected and the surveys are expected to commence in early April 2021.

Quotes

"I am pleased to see the enhanced public safety measures being rolled out by Nanaimo RCMP and Community Policing, with the help and support of the Province and many community partners, that continue to make Nanaimo an attractive place to call home."

Leonard Krog, Mayor, City of Nanaimo

"The situation table will improve the informal process that our new Mental Health Liaison Officer has been working hard to develop with our many partners. By formalizing this process, we hope to better improve our collective service delivery to the most vulnerable in our community. "

Inspector Lisa Fletcher, A/Officer in Charge, Nanaimo RCMP

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