

March 3, 2009

A coordinated approach to maintaining a safe community

Kamloops, B.C. – The City of Kamloops is pleased to announce the formation of the Coordinated Enforcement Task Force which will address issues in relation to crime and safety in the core commercial areas on the North Shore and in the downtown.

"I am extremely pleased with the direction this task force is taking in creating important partnerships to ensure the safety and well-being of its citizens," says Mayor Peter Milobar. "Kamloops is a wonderful, safe and healthy community and we aim to keep it that way."

The Coordinated Enforcement Task Force will be chaired by Mayor Peter Milobar and will include partners such as members of City Council, RCMP, By-law Enforcement, the North Shore Business Improvement Association, the Kamloops Central Business Improvement Association, Chamber of Commerce and the City's new Social Development Supervisor, Jennifer Casorso.

"I am excited to announce that the Kamloops RCMP has become a partner in a highly proactive enforcement unit dedicated to the RCMP's commitment to Safe Homes and Safe Communities," says RCMP Inspector Yves Lacasse. "The task force will utilize an ongoing consultative approach with existing internal and external groups within the community," added Inspector Lacasse.

The mandate of the task force is to oversee the coordination of enforcement and facilitate ongoing communication with the community's business interests, social agencies via the social development supervisor and the public through these partners. The primary objective is to enhance the well being of and to support safe, enjoyable environments within these commercial core areas. This mandate is based on addressing the following four community safety priorities:

- Targeting priority areas.
- Focus on most frequent offences.
- Focus on victims as well as perceptions and fear of crime.
- Anti-social behaviour.

According to Inspector Lacasse, the task force will tackle issues related to the criminally transient person(s), who enter or are already entrenched within the community. "These individuals perpetuate a negative perception of our city's core by engaging in these activities which impacts the feeling of safety in a given area. Geographically the initial focus of the task force will be the downtown core, the North Shore business district and the inner city parks."

The task force will rely upon the coordinated enforcement efforts of the RCMP and By-law Enforcement Services, a priority City Council has identified and supported with additional RCMP and By-law staffing, equipment and programs. As well, the task force will consult the business improvement associations and the social development supervisor to formulate and provide effective strategies to reduce criminal activity and social disorder issues. Communication strategies to enhance public safety in these core areas will also be implemented.

"Kamloops has vibrant and successful business cores that our residents and visitors to the City frequent daily; however, there are problem activities that occur and impact perceptions of safety for the public," says Jon Wilson, Community Safety and Enforcement Manager for the

City of Kamloops. "The coordinated efforts of our partner agencies to the task force will approach these areas with zero tolerance for behaviours and actions that are criminal, unsafe or are contrary to the City's by-laws and thereby contribute to these perceptions; this is about Kamloops being safe and keeping it that way," added Wilson.

The task force will be employing ongoing strategies to assist in the mandate. RCMP and By-law Enforcement will be visible, conducting foot and bike patrols throughout the summer, graffiti control efforts will be supplemented with a new discount paint program to encourage prompt removal, panhandling and other anti-social activities will be targeted and crime prevention and public education strategies will be provided for businesses and the public. These strategies will be reviewed on an ongoing basis by all partners involved with the task force.

The task force is also concentrating on streamlining the communication channels when reporting a crime or concern.

- To report a crime, contact the RCMP:
911 if it is an emergency
250-828-3000 if it is a non-emergency
- To report a by-law concern, contact Community Safety and Enforcement:
250-828-3409
- Business concerns, call one of the Business Improvement Associations:
North Shore Business Improvement Association 250-376-2411
Kamloops Central Business Improvement Association 250-372-3242
- Social planning concern, contact Jennifer Casorso, Social Development Supervisor:
250-828-3758

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