

**CRPA
Priority Setting Planning Session
Summary Report
June 26, 2022**

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Introduction

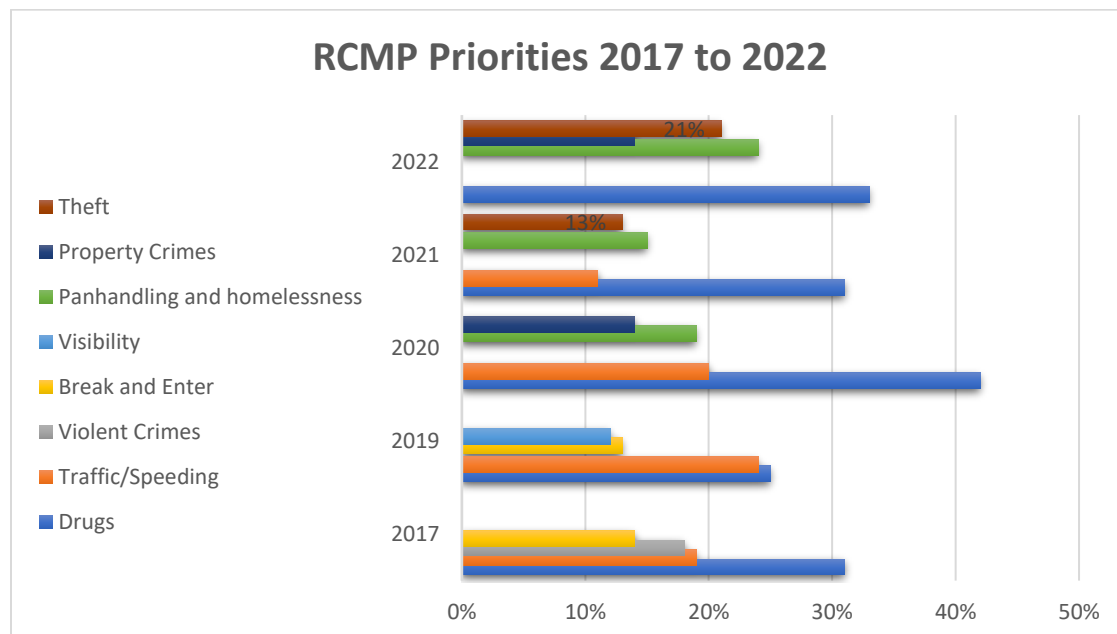
Following extensive stakeholder engagement as part of its strategic planning process as well as public reaction from recent community town halls around public security and safety, the CRPA held a strategic priority planning session on June 22 with the following participants

Interim Officer in Charge, Codiac RCMP – Superintendent Benoit Jollette
Codiac RCMP Inspector – Chantal Farrah
Codiac RCMP, Director of Strategic Planning and Police Support Service, Chuck Savoie
Dieppe Mayor Yvon LaPierre
Dieppe CAO Marc Melanson
Moncton Mayor Dawn Arnold
Moncton CAO Marc Landry
Riverview Mayor Andrew Leblanc
Riverview CAO Colin Smith
Members of the CRPA Board

The session was to begin to set priorities for the coming year (2023) so budget conversations and planning can begin within the coming weeks.

Codiac RCMP Priority Focus

Codiac RCMP presented statistics from ongoing metrics and surveys conducted around calls for service and ongoing public engagement. Since 2017 the shift in community priorities (as determined through RCMP surveys) has shifted as follows:



The RCMP also presented an overview of calls for service from 2019 to 2022 including the crime severity index which shows call volumes by category including

- Property Crimes
- Crimes Against Persons
- Traffic Offenses
- Drug Offenses
- Provincial Statute Offenses
- Other Federal Statute Offenses

Stakeholder Engagement Review

Participants were then given a summary of the CRPA Stakeholder Engagement Report completed in May of 2022. *That report is attached as a summary document to this summary report*

Participant Priority Setting

Each of the municipalities was asked to identify the key priorities/concerns as expressed by citizens, elected officials and municipal staff.

Dieppe

- Noise (from motor vehicles)
- Speeding
- RCMP presence within the community
- Drug related issues/offenses
- Increasing complaints around panhandling and homelessness
- A small number of Break and Enters
- Copper related thefts

City of Moncton

- RCMP response times to calls to policing service (911 and general)
- RCMP follow up on reported crimes
- Community safety
- Property Crime

- Improved Communications – We need to tell the “story” better
- A growing perception that “nothing is done” related to property crimes and public safety
- A belief that RCMP are not “aggressive” enough when dealing with criminals
- A belief that the justice system is too lenient on criminals
- A growing belief that there is no point calling 911 because “nothing will be done”
- A growing belief that downtown Moncton is not safe
- A perception that RCMP only focus on organized or major crimes
- Evidence that crime and security issues are having an impact on economic growth
- A belief that the CRPA needs to prioritize community needs/wants
- A belief that there is a lack of CRPA accountability
- A desire for citizens to better understand the roles of CRPA, RCMP, Province and Municipality
- A concern over the tone displayed on 911 calls to RCMP
- A desire to have Codiac RCMP look at best practices in other RCMP communities (Kamloops ex)
- A concern over reported comments by officers/RCMP (i.e – We’re losing the city)
- Concerns over the lack of a communications officer
- Concerns that there are known drug houses within our community that are allowed to continue to operate
- People wanting RCMP to make it “more uncomfortable” for criminals

Riverview

- Responsiveness to calls for assistance
- Concerns over tone/rudeness around 911 calls – has led to people not wanting to call
- Lack of communications to citizens and municipality
- Lack of education on how the system works (priority call system)
- Leadership (previous)
- Community Policing – how engaged RCMP is in community. Today there is a missing connection - “We need more presence”
- ATV misuse
- Speeding
- Growing homeless impact (tent sites, doorway occupation)
- Growing presence of needles
- Copper wire/catalytic converter theft
- Growing frustration with the justice system
- A similar model to CPU in other parts of Codiac Region
- Growing issue with youth gangs/drugs

Group Discussion

A group discussion around priorities highlighted a number of concerns including:

- Potential vigilante justice
- Lack of communications
- A challenge in our community with insufficient media outlets/channels
- Are the challenges related to numbers of bodies or/and other factors?
- An agreement that while there are factual challenges and perceptual challenges, each needs to be addressed in some way

Key Priorities

Following excellent and engaging discussion, the municipalities prioritized the following key areas;

- Increased focus on Community Policing
- Communications and Education
- Decisions that come from data and public input

Next Steps

Codiac RCMP has been asked to finalize modelling to address these issues which will include:

1. Increased number of operational officers
2. Greater emphasis on communications including hiring of comms officer and development of communications strategy. This will include how all stakeholders can better work together on education, awareness and engagement
3. CRPA to bring preliminary budget numbers to councils for discussion
4. Councils to vote on proposed budget increases
5. CRPA to direct RCMP on outcomes/next steps

CRPA Stakeholder Report

May 6, 2022

Developed by Portfolio Solutions

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Overview

For community and business leaders, policing in Greater Moncton is an ongoing and very current topic of discussion.

Portfolio Solutions was asked to conduct a series of conversations with community stakeholders across the Codiac region. We spoke with several groups including dozens of individuals who all had opinions on the role of policing in our community and the quality of the current policing service. As well, each of the stakeholders who took part in this exercise had clear beliefs on what changes to the current policing service, or model, are needed to improve policing across our region.

At a high level, most stakeholders referenced police visibility and police integration within our community as two of the biggest gaps today with the policing service in Codiac region. Many stakeholders referenced examples of policing services in the late 90s and early 2000s that saw more visibility and more community involvement.

As well, stakeholders often referenced the high and continually rising costs of policing for this region as a reference point that service should be “better not worse” than it was in the past.

Finally, stakeholders, when prodded, had little knowledge, understanding or opinion of the CRPA and its oversight function of the Codiac Policing Service. For those who were more aware (primarily elected officials), there was reference to a lack of visibility and accountability by the CRPA in linking community needs to the execution of policing services.

The following report highlights the conversations and input we received from stakeholders across our community. Interviews with various community organizations and sectors (including social services, healthcare, education, business and residential) have identified several opportunities and recommendations.

While critical of certain aspects of the current policing service, it is important to highlight that no individual, group, or organization was critical of the services being delivered by the RCMP today, but rather critical of the services they believe are not being offered or focused upon. Many stakeholders gave the RCMP high-praise for their abilities and professionalism – particularly in the areas of major crime and drug enforcement.

Our Stakeholder Engagement Approach

For this engagement, Portfolio Solutions used a series of group and one-on-one interview sessions to engage organizations and individuals across the region.

Groups and organizations were identified, in conjunction with the CRPA leadership, and invitations to participate were sent from the CRPA to these identified stakeholders. Once those who were willing to participate were confirmed, interview sessions (both virtual and in-person) were scheduled. Each of the sessions lasted between 60 and 90 minutes.

As part of this engagement, participants were provided with the strategic primer developed by BoardWorks for possible advanced reading.

The base questions used for these engagements included the following.

1. What are your current thoughts on policing in the Codiac Region?
2. What improvements would you like to see?
3. What trends are you seeing in our region and what are their implications for policing?
4. What are the opportunities, challenges, and risks for policing in the Codiac Region?
5. What are the critical priorities for policing over the next five years?
6. What does success look like for community-based policing in our region?
7. The CRPA currently measures performance against 24 key performance indicators relating to community, traffic, crime, vulnerable populations and financial (<https://crpa-aprc.ca/crpa/codiac-rcmp/quarterly-reports/>). Are they measuring the right things, or do you have other suggestions?
8. Is there anything else you would like to add in relation to the development of a strategic plan for the CRPA?

Additional questions were explored based on where conversations went and on the specific responses from each group or individual.

To ensure openness, what was specifically said within each interview will remain anonymous. This was to ensure that stakeholders provided honest opinions so that we might capture an honest overview of the community's thoughts on policing, policing services and the CRPA.

Throughout the report we include various quotes from stakeholders to reinforce specific points. In these cases, these quotes represent a theme or sentiment expressed by multiple stakeholders. We highlight the single stakeholder quote just to reinforce what was being said.

Our Stakeholder Groups

Community Organizations

- Boys and Girls Club
- CCGM
- Taskforce on Homelessness and Downtown Security
- GMHSC
- United Way
- GMLIP
- YMCA Board
- Ability NB

Downtown Businesses

- Capital Theatre
- Atlantic Lottery
- Atlantic Wellness Center

Education

- NBCC
- Crandall University
- U de M

Healthcare

- Horizon
- Vitalité

Municipal/Regional Organizations

- 3+
- Moncton City Council
- Dieppe City Council
- Riverview Town Council
- City of Dieppe Bylaw Enforcement
- City of Moncton Bylaw Enforcement
- Town of Riverview Bylaw Enforcement

Invited but declined or did not respond to multiple requests

- Expansion Dieppe
- Downtown Moncton Inc
- Beausejour Family Crisis Center
- River of Pride
- Assumption Vie
- Irving Group of Companies
- CCNB
- High school principal - Mathieu Martin

- Superintendent DeSilva; J Division

What We heard

Current Thoughts on Policing

Most respondents highlighted having good relationships with the RCMP and indicated that the perception of policing in our community is fairly positive “compared to other places in Canada.” Some individuals and businesses highlighted great responsiveness from the RCMP when required, while others indicated the response times were very slow and frustrating.

While, in most cases, lacking any specific knowledge or detail about the role of policing, policing methods or trends or policing priorities, most stakeholders indicated that policing in our region lacks the visibility and integration needed within the Greater Moncton (Codiac) region to ensure a safe community.

“Moncton feels less safe than it used to. There is a general feeling of being unsafe in our downtown and that there is no police presence to make it safer.” – community stakeholder

“We don’t see police presence in our downtown. This affects businesses and the people who live here.” – community stakeholder

“A lack of patrols by car, on foot or on bike leads to a lack of physical presence and therefore a lack of awareness on what’s happening on our streets.” – community stakeholder

In fact, this visibility and community integration issue was identified and discussed by every organization and individual we spoke with. Participants highlighted personal or relayed experiences around downtown security issues, homelessness issues, mental health, and addictions issues that, stakeholder believe, requires more focus and attention by the Codiac RCMP.

“We considered opening a second location in downtown Moncton but decided not to move forward because of concerns with safety.” – community stakeholder

“Our staff doesn’t feel safe downtown.” – community stakeholder

“A lack of police presence makes downtown seem dangerous.” – community stakeholder

“Officers need to build a relationship of trust with the businesses downtown so they can call on them when something happens.” - community stakeholder

Some organizations did indicate a belief that these rising safety and security issues are due to increased drug availability, a growing homeless population, and a growing challenge with

mental health issues. Others added that there is an impression that, even when RCMP come to a situation dealing with homeless or mental health challenged individuals, nothing happens and there is no follow up.

These rising challenges in the downtown and a perceived lack of police presence led to many conversations about reporting. Many stakeholders relayed personal or shared stories of how many businesses and residents have stopped reporting issues to RCMP because they seem *“uninterested in dealing with the situation or they just don’t care.”* We heard several examples of residents and businesses not reporting crime because they have become discouraged at the lack of responsiveness or results.

Several the community groups engaged indicated that businesses and residents now want to be involved in the solutions moving forward. Most importantly, these groups indicate there is a growing frustration and that its time their voices were heard.

These conversations inevitably led to conversations around community policing. While a limited number of engaged stakeholders knew what the technical description of community policing is, many referred to the idea of community policing as a synonym for greater visibility and connectivity with community groups and residents.

“Seems like there is a lack of community policing. There are models in the US that are working better than what we are currently doing including foot patrol, citizen patrol etc.”

Often these community policing discussions led to broader conversations about the accountability around homelessness and a lack of a plan to solve this growing challenge. Stakeholders believe the entire system is incentivizing homelessness and making it easy to turn to crime in our communities. Many believe greater rates of incarceration is the solution to our problem.

Several stakeholders shared examples of the need for downtown businesses to hire private security to deal with the growing downtown security challenges. Businesses like banks, performing arts center and more have all been forced to hire private security to deal with individuals (homeless) that are bothering customers and patrons.

Several stakeholders shared their belief that the RCMP are understaffed in our region which is why there is a lack of visibility on our streets and within our communities.

“Seems that the police are grossly understaffed and there is not enough and not enough in the right places.” – community stakeholder

“Other CMAs of our size (over 100,000) have forces with 180 to 200 members. At 142 we are greatly understaffed.” - community stakeholder

In addition to being under resources, several stakeholders also referenced a high turnover rate

“I’m seeing lots of turnover which causes a break in the level of service.” – community stakeholder

Another key area of discussion in most conversations was around the perceived lack of “integration” or “connection” by members of the RCMP in the Greater Moncton community.

“It seems like the RCMP aren’t interested in being part of our community. Important programs like DARE don’t exist anymore. We need these programs more than ever and no one is offering them.” – community stakeholder

Many stakeholders provided historical references of how police were more involved in our schools, neighbourhood watch programs and community organizations and how that doesn’t seem to exist anymore. Some went on to say they believe that this is because many young officers who are assigned to this region are more concerned with how quickly they can leave and get to a more desired posting.

“The majority of officers are not from this region. The new recruits are coming from other parts of the country and don’t seem to care about the community because their plan is to go somewhere else.” – community stakeholder

Several the stakeholder interviews included comments around the cost of policing in Codiac region. While stakeholders could not articulate the cost of policing for the region (other than a \$54 million commitment for a new building), most stakeholders did position the cost for policing as being “very expensive for what we get.” When prodded, much of this opinion was formed through media reports and things they have heard/seen on social media.

Several stakeholder groups shared their belief that RCMP are very good to responding to major situations and many referenced June 4th, other active shooting incidents, major crime incidents etc. but that they seem to struggle with growing trends of mental health and indications related crime.

A few stakeholders indicated there has been an improved in overall communications over the past few months while others indicated that leadership inconsistency within the RCMP has caused challenges over the past few years.

Some stakeholders referenced the image of the RCMP as a negative, referencing national news stories around RCMP and its organizational challenges.

Other specific comments/thoughts

- RCMP seem uninterested in dealing with things like misuse of accessible parking

- Enforcement for infractions of bylaws and laws that affect vulnerable populations seem to be low on the priority list
- Communication with stakeholders and agencies that work with vulnerable populations seems too little to none
- Need for emergency response plans to address how police deal with people with disability
- Mental health issues within the force seems to be increasing
- Lots of groups could help the RCMP with prevention but it requires communications and engagement

What improvements would you like to see?

By far, the biggest improvement stakeholders would like to see is greater visibility of police presence within regional communities and in the downtown core.

Many stakeholders talked about a better connection/integration of police within our communities and community organizations

Several stakeholders outlined better connections between police and youth, police and seniors, police and immigrants/newcomers and police and community organizations.

Several stakeholders raised the question or idea on whether it would be possible to add an additional policing service in the Codiac region to support the increase in crime and security issues.

Some front line first responders outlined the importance of enhanced training events that would include all first responders

Several stakeholders mentioned they would like to see the composition of the policing service match the growing diversity of our community.

Trends, Opportunities, Challenges and Priorities

Trends

Many referenced the increasing complexity of calls. One example often cited was a call dealing with a “homeless” person that is sometimes drug related, sometimes mental health, sometime violence and sometimes a mix of all these situations.

Stakeholders talk about a growing trend of increasing requests for service. While everyone acknowledges the need to have police presence at active crime scenes and emergencies, there is a growing expectation of having police presence for comfort or “in-case” situations.

Many referenced the growing diversity of our region and the need for greater awareness and sensitivity in dealing with new Canadians. Many referenced the relationship that immigrants had with police in their native countries creates a negative perception of police. This tends to carry over as they settle in our region. Stakeholders believe there is an opportunity, with more integration and presence to address these perceptions through engagement and awareness.

A few stakeholders highlighted the aging population trend and the linkage to a growing segment of our population that requires more services or have increasing needs.

A few the groups talked about the growing issues with mental health with certain segments of the population. Some went on to talk about the mental health challenges for police themselves (PTSD related challenges).

Stakeholders indicated that there appears to be more petty crime. Lots of conversations around stolen property.

Stakeholders indicated that the continued growth of Dieppe and Riverview also brings new and unique challenges to those communities that require police involvement including increased complaints about speeding and noise.

Some stakeholders with more working knowledge of crime issues throughout our community talked about a growing youth gang challenge where we are seeing a growing number of youths with access to guns, involved in trafficking and involved in organized crime.

Some stakeholders talked about an increasing rate of cybercrime -particularly against women. Similarly, stakeholders talked about a growing rate of hate crimes (racism) – particularly against newcomers to our region.

There is a growing trend of less public support for policing in general thanks to stories like George Floyd in the US and reports of abuse within the RCMP

Challenges

The growing availability of drugs was cited by many stakeholders as a significantly growing challenge for RCMP and law enforcement in our community. Particularly the access to cheap (\$5) Crystal Meth is causing many challenges across our community.

A number cited a growing criticism of the RCMP and policing in our community,

Several stakeholders referenced a lack of communication by police on an ongoing basis. This was often linked to the lack of visibility conversation.

Several Moncton centered stakeholders talked about the challenge COVID-19 has created in the downtown core. Many indicated that a lack of people has led to homeless and others “taking over” our public spaces. Many indicated that it would take greater police involvement to reverse this trend. This has also led to a heavy increase in garbage, visible drug use and aggressive panhandling.

Opportunities

“Foot patrol in the downtown and police engaging with business owners,” – community stakeholder

“While not just an RCMP issue, we need to take back our downtown. The city needs to bring people back downtown. We need to bring back downtown vibrancy.” – community stakeholder

When it comes to appointments to the CRPA Board, municipalities would be able to do a better job if needs for specific skills were identified by the board so qualified people with the right skills could be added.

“By removing police from our schools, we have lost a real opportunity to connect that generation with law enforcement and to influence behaviour. Bringing this back would be a big opportunity.” – community stakeholder

What Does Success Look Like?

“More visible police presence in our neighbourhoods and downtown. Also, more presence in Riverview and Dieppe.” – community stakeholder

“While not a responsibility of the RCMP, we need more services and more outreach for homeless.” – community stakeholder

“More police presence in and around the Avenir Centre during events.” – community stakeholder

“Constant presence in Dieppe and Riverview – not just when needed” – community stakeholder

“A low and controlled crime rate in the Codiac region” – community stakeholder

“Significantly more action and support around the area of mental health.” – community stakeholder

“Citizens are more aware of the role of police and the role of citizens themselves.” – community stakeholder

“The ability for our policing service to build more meaningful relationships with the community.” – community stakeholder

“The continued modernization of our policing resources.” – community stakeholder

“Success is more people supporting our downtown businesses and enjoying our town while feeling safe,” - community stakeholder

Success equals more outreach programs for populations in need,” - community stakeholder

Current Measures/Missing Measures

Other KPIs stakeholders would like to see the CRPA measure

- A breakdown of all stats by community (Riverview, Dieppe, and Moncton)
- Crimes involving immigrants/hate crimes
- Crimes involving youth (details)
- Drug-related offenses
- Child abuse/neglect cases
- Number of crimes related to homelessness
- Number of Domestic violence incidents
- Number of Cybercrimes committed, investigated, and solved.
- Number of crimes involving mental health issues (not just mental health act)
- Mental health leave for staff
- Quality of service
- Percentage of calls where an officer is dispatched
- By-law infractions around misuse of accessible parking
- Staff engagement
- DUIs
- Satisfaction of the end user
- Sick days of officers, short term disability, health of the workforce

“These reports and stats should be better communicated and provided with better context. I don’t believe 94% of our community feels safe anymore.”- Community stakeholder

CRPA

The area that garnered the least conversation and clearly the area where stakeholders had the least amount of understanding was around the CRPA and its role in the delivery of policing services in the Codiac region. Even a few elected officials were challenged to articulate the role of the CRPA.

When given a brief overview of the role, many stakeholders immediately indicated that board members should be more visible and accountable to better represent the needs/wants of the community.

“Very disappointed that my comments today are the same comments I gave the last time the CRPA did a strategy plan (many years ago), and the situation has not improved and, in many cases, has gotten worse.” – community stakeholder

“The CRPA members need to be more visible and accountable. Their names and contact information should be published on the CRPA website,” - community stakeholder

Others indicated that, despite the governance structure, the CRPA didn't have much functional power in helping to steer priorities and direction of the current policing service provider.

“RCMP police under a national focus. Their directive comes from Fredericton which comes from Ottawa. We have very little ability to impact what they do and how they do it.” – community stakeholder

There were also references to recent presentations by members of the CRPA including references to employment numbers being inaccurate or misleading.

Much of the conversations around the CRPA point to a lack of communications, awareness and understanding about their role and their ability to affect change.

Feedback and Learnings

In summary, the stakeholders engaged for this exercise believe strongly that the current police service in Greater Moncton lacks the visibility and community connectedness required to adequately deliver the policing services that residents and businesses are looking for.

Throughout all the conversations a few themes or pillars emerged. These include.

1. Community Coverage (visibility)
2. Community Connection
3. Communications
4. Cost vs value
5. Crime management and prevention

There is also clear divide within the community on what the role of Codiac region's policing services provider is. While some see it as the organization tasked with ensuring safe and vibrant communities, others see its role as a police organization responsible for managing and solving major crime.

Finally, the lack of knowledge or understanding around the CRPA and its roles has created challenges for municipal governments and other organizations in being able to manage the growing expectations from citizens on what the RCMP should be doing within our neighborhoods and municipalities across the region.