BC POLICING PLAN
Regional Roundtables

Summary Report: August 28, 2012

BRITISH COLUMBIA

BC POLICING PLAN
Protecting Our Future Together

Contents

Statement from the Honourable Shirley Bond, Minister of Justice and Attorney General

THE B.C. POLICING PLAN IS PART OF OUR GOVERNMENT'S efforts to modernize the justice sector and make it more transparent and responsive to British Columbians. The plan will set out goals, targets and performance measures for police over the next three, five and ten years. We recognize that in order for our police to be effective, we all need to be part of shaping provincial priorities and developing solutions that will modernize policing and make it sustainable. That's why the plan is being developed through online and face-to-face engagement with the public and with those who work in our communities every day to prevent and respond to crime.

This report will give you a comprehensive review of the feedback we've received so far from community service providers, local governments, First Nations and police who attended our nine regional roundtables. The ideas and suggestions in this report reflect their everyday experiences working to keep B.C. families safe in our communities.

Our next step is to work on a draft plan using all of the solutions, practices and input we're receiving. In the coming months, we'll be unveiling that draft plan for further public dialogue, so British Columbians have every opportunity to shape the plan before it is implemented.

We can all play a role in protecting our future together and I hope this process inspires you to consider how you can take part in enhancing your community's safety.

Shirley Bond

Honourable Shirley Bond
Minister of Justice and Attorney General

September 13, 2012

1. Executive Summary

THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT IS WORKING ON A STRATEGIC PLAN for policing to enhance community safety and determine common priorities for policing in the future. The plan is being developed in consultation with a wide variety of partners to ensure it reflects the goals and concerns of British Columbians. A variety of approaches are in place to solicit input from stakeholders, partners and communities including regional roundtable meetings, an interactive website, a telephone survey and a series of focus groups.

The initial consultation approach was a series of nine regional roundtables held in communities throughout British Columbia between April and June of 2012. This report provides a summary of the common challenges, issues and suggested solutions raised by participants in the regional roundtables. Individual roundtable reports provide comprehensive records of each day's discussion and can be found in the Appendices and on the Ministry of Justice web site at *http://www.pssg.gov.bc.ca/ policeservices/publications-index/*

In each roundtable, participants discussed the criminal activities and public safety issues in their communities. Overall, participants identified 11 key challenges:

- Drug and alcohol addiction
- Gang activity and drug trafficking
- Mental health
- Domestic violence
- Prostitution and human trafficking
- Sexual abuse and sexual assault
- Seniors' safety and potential elder abuse
- Prolific offenders
- Public disorder and personal safety
- Property crime
- Traffic and road safety

Participants also gave insight into the aspects of their local demographics, economies, and geography that impact and influence the approaches they take with respect to managing the challenges within their communities.

Participants were asked to identify priority issues and encouraged to suggest potential solutions. Generally speaking, participants were concerned about police-related/justice system issues and crime prevention.

1.1. Police

Overall, a key topic of discussion in many of the roundtable sessions was the desire of the participants to see the provincial government provide stronger leadership, better coordination of services, and alignment of funding with key public safety priorities.

Specifically, the topics identified with respect to policing issues fell into four broad themes:

1.1.1. ACCOUNTABILITY

- The police should build stronger relationships with communities
- The current community input structures into local police governance should be reviewed and strengthened
- Police performance should be adequately measured
- Police should manage media relations more proactively
- Police require more specialized training with respect to contemporary policing issues

1.1.2. FUNDING

- A province-wide, equitable police funding formula should be developed
- Funding levels should be reflective of each level of government's responsibility

1.1.3. EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT POLICING (systemic and structural change)

- Justice system reforms should be implemented in order to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of policing
- Sufficient resources should be allocated to social service agencies dealing with mental health, addiction and homelessness in order to relieve overburdened police
- Structural changes to police service delivery models should be considered to decrease police costs
- Innovative and sustainable management of police and civilian staff should be considered to decrease policing costs
- Strategies for reducing the administrative burden on police should be developed

1.1.4. COLLABORATION AND COORDINATION

- Greater collaboration is required between the justice system and related social and health systems in order to achieve true efficiencies and benefits
- Better coordination/consultation/communication is required between levels of government with respect to policing issues
- Mental health and addiction concerns require special attention from justice and social service providers
- A more coordinated response to domestic violence is required

1.2. Crime prevention

Participants expressed their interest in seeing the provincial government demonstrate stronger leadership through the development and implementation of a provincially-led crime prevention strategy. The identification of metrics and measures for effective, evidence-based crime prevention approaches along with the establishment of a clearing house and place for communities to share and explore best practices were identified as important features of the strategy.

Funding for crime prevention and for services to victims was also a key theme of discussion. Roundtable participants also explored the importance of local coordination, citizen engagement and the use of volunteers throughout roundtable discussions.

Specifically, discussions can be categorized into the following themes:

1.2.1. LEADERSHIP AND COORDINATION FOR CRIME PREVENTION

- A provincially-led crime prevention strategy should be developed and implemented
- Local resources are required to coordinate community-based crime prevention and crime reduction efforts

1.2.2. FUNDING

- Consistent, stable and long-term funding is required for victim services and crime prevention programs
- Community programs should be supported to maintain consistent availability of services

1.2.3. CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT

- Volunteers play an important role in addressing community health and safety issues and the coordination of volunteers should be enhanced
- Citizens have an important role to play in improving the safety of their communities and should be engaged
- Finally, participants also discussed programs and approaches they believe are already working well in their communities. These are described in more detail in the "Promising practices" section of this report.

1.3. Next steps

A series of focus groups will be held in the coming months. The topics will include those that emerged as key themes from the roundtable sessions or were identified by the province.

2. Background

AS PART OF THE *FAMILIES FIRST AGENDA FOR CHANGE*, THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT committed to the development a 10-year strategic plan that sets out goals, targets and performance standards for policing. The plan is being established through engagement with British Columbians and in collaboration with police, community leaders and members of the social service sector. The purpose of the plan is to enhance community safety and determine common priorities for policing in the future.

The approach taken is to provide British Columbians with a more open and transparent view of government operations with respect to policing in the province. It also presents an opportunity for the provincial government to engage communities in discussions around crime prevention activities and priorities. Three specific engagement activities have been undertaken, including: a series of regional roundtable sessions; implementation of an interactive website for public consultation and feedback; and a set of focus groups with key stakeholders.

It is important to note that the findings from the roundtable discussions contained within this report are based on feedback received from participants. It is not the intent of the authors to ensure the accuracy of comments or endorse any suggested solutions.

3. Roundtable Approach

AS SHOWN IN FIGURE 1, THE FIRST STAGE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE B.C. POLICING PLAN was a series of regional stakeholder roundtables. These were held from April 2012 through June 2012. The roundtables were held in nine locations around the province, as illustrated in Figure 2. Participants included local government, First Nations representatives, community leaders, social service organizations and local police. Through facilitated discussions and small group break-out sessions, they identified public safety issues, defined priorities and suggested potential solutions for shaping the future of policing and crime prevention in B.C.

3.1. Roundtable topics

Discussion at the roundtables covered the following topics:

- Problems with criminal activity
- Responses to criminal activity
- Core police responsibilities
- Crime prevention
- Policing and crime prevention resources
- Public safety

3.2. Roundtable questions

Key questions designed to stimulate discussion and debate among participants included:

- What are the main types of criminal activities that are occurring in your community and surrounding areas? How is your community impacted by these activities?
- When crime happens in your community, what programs and services are available for those impacted?
- What are core policing responsibilities and have they changed over time?
- How are community members currently involved in crime prevention?
- Do community members feel safe in your community?
- What is working well and not working well?
- What ideas and solutions should be considered?
- What are the priorities?

Much of the information shared during the roundtables was captured, organized and aggregated into themes and summary statements. Participants were informed in advance that no information would be directly attributed to any one person or organization in order to foster an environment of frank and open dialogue.

Figure 3 BC Policing Plan website

The project team reported back to participants after each roundtable through a comprehensive feedback report. These reports were posted on a website designed specifically for facilitating public participation in the development of the B.C. Policing Plan as shown in Figure 3. The purpose of the B.C. Policing Plan blog site is to provide the public with a transparent view of how the B.C. Policing Plan is being developed and to extend the conversations started in the roundtables. The site also provides the public with a forum to respond to the ideas and suggestions being generated by the project.

A copy of each of the nine roundtables reports are also appended to this report (see the Appendices starting on page 29).

Figure 1 Engagement activities and process
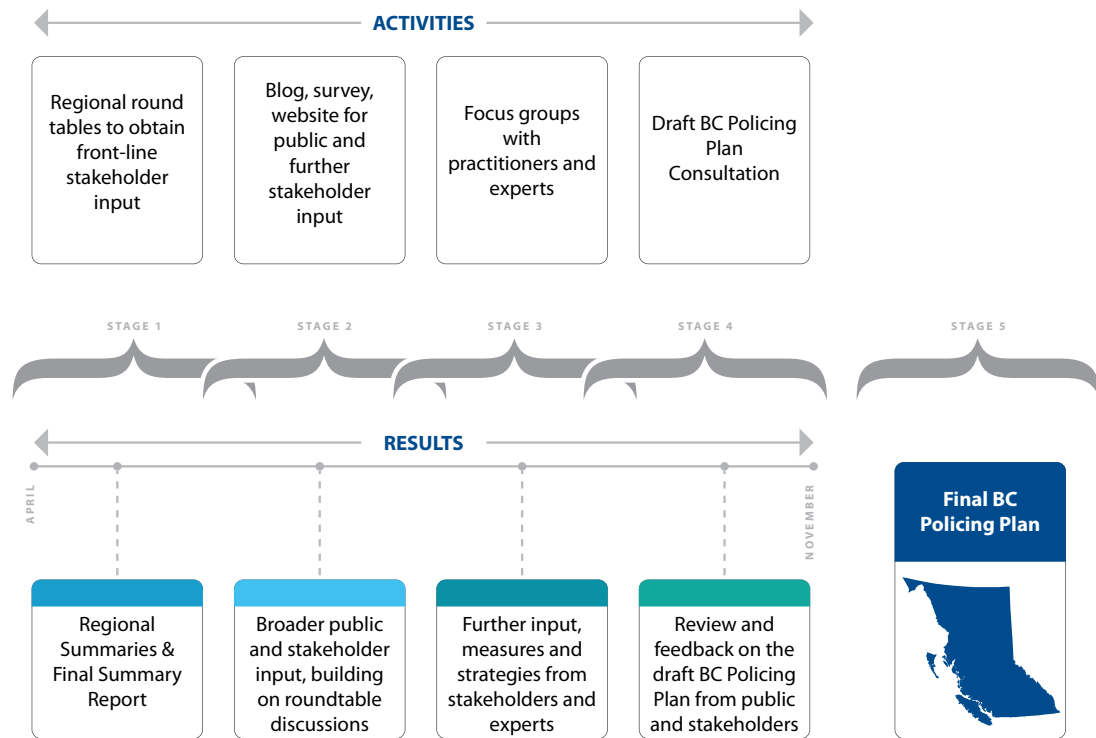
Figure 2 Regional roundtable locations and dates

DATE	LOCATION
April 25, 2012	Victoria
April 27, 2012	Nanaimo
May 4, 2012	Kelowna
May 11, 2012	Prince George
May 22, 2012	Vancouver
May 24, 2012	Surrey
June 1, 2012	Prince Rupert
June 8, 2012	Cranbrook
June 14, 2012	Fort St. John
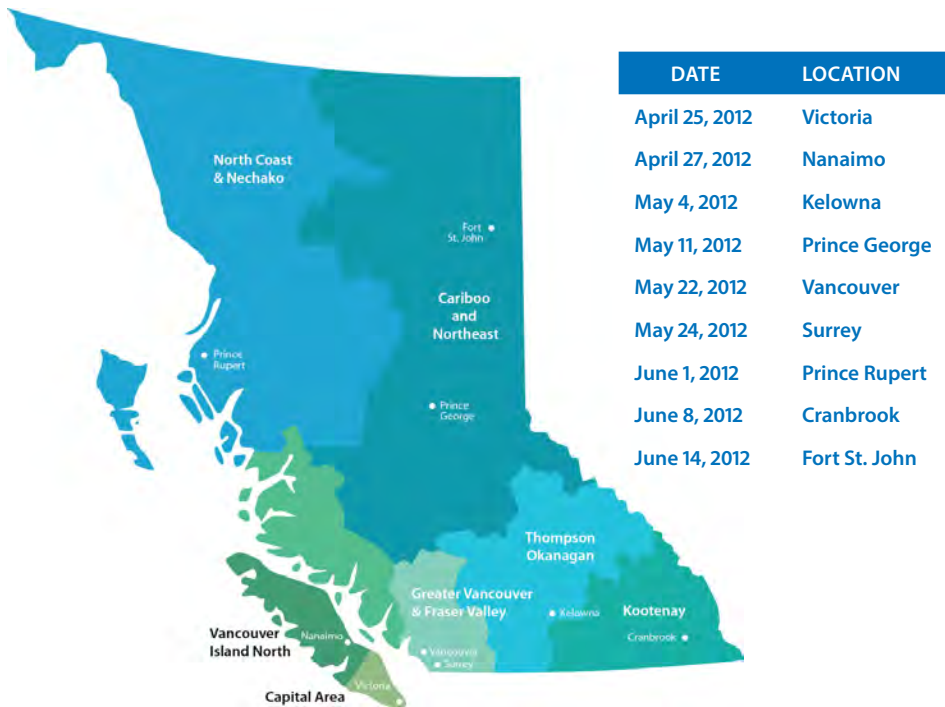
4. Key Challenges

AN IMPORTANT PART OF THE ROUNDTABLE PROCESS was giving participants the opportunity to explain the scope of challenges they are experiencing within their communities. For the most part, the challenges identified by the participants concerned either criminal activities and public safety concerns or broader, more universal societal or structural themes. By and large we heard that many B.C. communities have developed grassroots local networks for trying to reduce and prevent crime. Many participants also discussed the role of the provincial government both in providing sufficient funding for programs and systems as well as working diligently to coordinate justice, health, and social support services more closely.

4.1. Criminal activities and public safety challenges

4.1.1. DRUG AND ALCOHOL ADDICTION

Participants consistently identified a need for better resources to treat and address addictions. Many felt that drug and alcohol abuse are connected to, and drivers of many calls to police. The production, distribution and consumption of illicit drugs and alcohol contribute significantly to residents feeling unsafe in the community. Participants also talked about the role addiction plays in the cycle of crime, particularly with respect to family violence and property crime. Many participants wanted to see alternatives to holding impaired persons in local police cells (e.g., sobering centers).

4.1.2. GANG ACTIVITY AND DRUG TRAFFICKING

Participants told us how their communities were affected by gang activity in a number of different ways. They identified gangs as contributing to an overall sense of community instability, especially where youth and other vulnerable individuals are recruited to support gang activity. Participants noted that gangs often use intimidation or promises of money, status and belong in order to attract members. Drug trafficking in general was noted as a consistent problem across the province, as was the illegal sale of alcohol and drugs into dry communities. Communities in more remote or widespread regions noted that gangs are capitalizing on lower police presence.

4.1.3. MENTAL HEALTH

Participants consistently identified the need for greater supports to address mental health, addiction and homelessness. Many discussed the impact of the closure of mental health facilities on already thin policing resources. In general participants felt it was unfair that local police were primarily responsible for responding to mental health related incidents that could be handled by other support systems. Many participants felt that these incidents were reducing police availability to deal with other public safety concerns. There were also concerns about the use of criminal justice interventions on participants who may be handled more appropriately through medical support.

4.1.4. DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Violence in relationships and families was a prevalent matter of discussion among roundtable participants. Violence against women dominated the roundtable conversations, but violence against men, children and the elderly was also discussed. Participants talked about the complexity of trying to provide support and interventions for victims and their loved ones in light of the number of different agencies, all operating independently and with varying degrees of stability and capacity. While participants viewed demand as outpacing available supports, they also talked about the need to eliminate overlap between agencies and utilize integrated case management in order to operate more

effectively. Participants also discussed the need to develop new program areas when required (e.g., more programming for men).

4.1.5. PROSTITUTION AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Prostitution and human trafficking were often raised in discussions around drug and alcohol addiction, gang activity and violence against women. Participants noted the prevalence of prostitution in areas where drug use and trafficking is high. The problem was seen to be more acute in areas where the financial means to pay for both drugs and prostitution are high. Human trafficking was raised by many participants as an emerging, but little known criminal activity in communities.

4.1.6. SEXUAL ABUSE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT

In addition to violence in relationships, sexual abuse and sexual assault were frequently raised as issues. Many participants noted that often rural areas and small communities do not have access to the same resources and facilities for victims of sexual abuse as urban centres and larger communities.

4.1.7. SENIORS' SAFETY AND POTENTIAL ELDER ABUSE

In addition to elder abuse, participants raised the vulnerability of seniors as targets of crimes such as theft, fraud and home invasion. Participants also noted that seniors are the most likely residents to feel unsafe in their communities, especially where there are drugs, alcohol, unsupervised youth and seasonal population changes that affect public perception of safety.

4.1.8. PROLIFIC OFFENDERS

Roundtable participants discussed the significant impact that prolific offenders have on communities (i.e., a small number of offenders can commit a large number of offences, usually to support an addiction). Some participants noted that while increased police supervision of prolific offenders is beneficial, it is not a substitute for programs that help offenders deal with the root causes of why they are involved in criminal activity.

4.1.9. PUBLIC DISORDER AND PERSONAL SAFETY

Many participants noted that communities are challenged to ensure public spaces are shared and respected rather than dominated and damaged. The behaviour of both individuals and large crowds were viewed by participants as affecting feelings of public safety. The most commonly noted negative behaviour included public intoxication, open drug use and prostitution. Participants noted that these activities can take over properties, neighbourhoods, or areas of the back country. Bush parties and seasonal recreational tourism were often identified as sources of potential public disorder and safety concerns.

4.1.10. PROPERTY CRIME

Property crime was commonly referenced by participants, particularly vandalism, graffiti, vehicle theft and theft from vehicles. Police and non-police participants alike agreed that these crimes affect a great number of people on a more personal and direct level than more serious and/or violent crimes. Timely response from police is expected; however, participants recognized that police response to property crimes takes away from other policing priorities, while at the same time, little police response impacts negatively on public confidence and satisfaction with policing.

4.1.11. TRAFFIC AND ROAD SAFETY

Dedicating sustained police resources to traffic enforcement was identified as critical to maintaining safe roads and public safety. Participants viewed road safety as an ongoing concern for communities and agreed that police should continue to focus on impaired driving, reckless driving, distracted driving, speeding and pedestrian safety.

4.2. Regional challenges

4.2.1. DEMOGRAPHICS

Participants discussed the impact of unique demographic patterns on community safety and noted that different demographic compositions can bring diverse criminal activities into focus. Areas with younger demographics have criminal activity more centred on drugs and prostitution while areas with larger elderly populations see more criminal activities like fraud, property crime and elder abuse. Some participants noted that another population factor that affects community safety is tourism and seasonal recreation. Community populations expand and retract by as much as three times their average size during busy tourist seasons; consequently, police near popular ski and lake resort areas can experience major peaks in demand which place considerable strain on community resources.

4.2.2. ECONOMICS

Many participants noted the impact that economic cycles have on the prevalence of crime and public safety issues as well the availability of resources to deal with those concerns. Economies reliant upon a natural resource operation or a dominant source of revenue have been impacted by the rise and fall of industry, creating a boom/bust environment. Participants expressed concerns that the increased wealth from industrial growth in small communities has come at a high price in terms of community health, as a consequence of activities such as drug use and prostitution. Some participants noted that this phenomenon is apparent in many communities in northern B.C. whereas southern metropolitan areas with more diversified economies experience less impact. Participants also agreed that in communities where the economy is eroding, families become more unstable with an increase in the illicit drug business, drug and alcohol abuse, and family violence. Consequently, police and related community support services are stretched thinner by these demands.

4.2.3. GEOGRAPHY

Participants spoke about the distinctions between regions and rural versus urban communities, and how those factors impact on the prevalence or prominance of many of the criminal activity and public safety challenges identified in the previous section. Participants noted that large, urban communities have significantly more police and support resources than their rural counterparts. Rural communities require police to cover a much larger geographical area with detachments as small as one or two members and rural landscapes often present challenges that urban centres typically do not face. Participants discussed concerns about expectations in smaller communities where police are expected to cover more ground with fewer resources and offer the same range and quality of services as urban centres that have more community support services.

5. Policing-Related Issues and Suggested Solutions

WHAT FOLLOWS IS A DESCRIPTION OF THE FINDINGS from the focussed discussions with roundtable participants concerning their priority issues and ideas for potential solutions with a particular emphasis on policing-related issues. The purpose of this description is to distill wide-ranging discussion points into constructive themes. These themes are grouped into four broad categories: (1) accountability; (2) funding; (3) effective and efficient policing strategies (systemic and structural); and, (4) collaboration and coordination. Not all issues generated suggested solutions, and there is some overlap of issues and ideas.

5.1. Accountability

5.1.1. POLICE-COMMUNITY RELATIONS

The police should build stronger relationships with communities

Participants expected local police to stay current about the services and supports available within the community and for police to use that knowledge to help victims navigate the system effectively, thereby building trust in the process and within the community. In a number of communities, participants who work with victims of crime noted that some clients feel unsafe reporting crime due to a lack of understanding of the system and a lack of trust in authorities, including police.

Participants across the province recognized that cultural traditions, language, and historical relationships within the community influence community engagement with the justice system. Participants noted the importance of bridging cultural differences in order encourage the reporting of criminal activity and increase the effectiveness of crime prevention initiatives.

Many participants expressed a desire for greater awareness of and respect for indigenous ways of solving community problems.

Some participants were concerned about the loss of familiarity and understanding of communities that result from the typical change over of RCMP officers in rural detachments every two years.

Solutions suggested by roundtable participants

- Police should attend community events, participate in community activities in non-enforcement roles, and ensure that officers 'fit' their communities.

- Transfer policies that remove officers from communities every few years and frustrate community relationship building should be reconsidered. Similarly, the perceived practice of sending new recruits with little experience to northern or remotes areas should be reassessed.

- First Nations members should be invited to the decision-making table concerning integrated or collaborative case management discussions that involve members of their community.

- The relationship between police and First Nations could be improved through a greater expansion of First Nations policing and allowing First Nations officers to police the communities where they are from.

- Aboriginal youth would benefit from programs that allow them to interact positively with police.

- Police need to put more effort into establishing relationships/outreach to marginalized groups such as new immigrants, the queer community, and First Nations.

- Increased cultural sensitivity training is recommended not just for police but also for dispatchers.

5.1.2. COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNANCE OF POLICING

The current community input structures into local police governance should be reviewed and strengthened

In addition to a general desire for increased community input into the development of policing priorities, many participants were unhappy with the current structures in place to facilitate that input. It was noted that communities with a municipal police department have a vehicle for civilian oversight and input into policing through a municipal police board. While some communities policed by the RCMP have local police committees, for others the link to local police is through local government.

Many community representatives were not happy with the current structures for participation or input. Similarly many local government participants were also dissatisfied with the same structures or processes. Some participants in communities with a police board expressed frustration with the police board appointment process.In some communities policed by the RCMP, participants acknowledged that a new Annual Performance Planning process has had a positive impact and improved opportunities for input into policing priorities and expectations.

Solutions suggested by roundtable participants

- The means by which community input into policing issues is facilitated should be improved and strengthened.

- The police board appointment process should be reviewed.

5.1.3. POLICE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Police performance should be adequately measured

Overall, participants expressed a desire for consistent, clear performance measures and metrics for policing across the province. Participants saw problems with existing measures since crime statistics do not reflect the administrative workload of a file and case burdens do not consider demands like travel time for police in remote areas. Some participants also suggested that policing should run like a business, with strategic, long-term planning and business management concepts driving decisions about overtime, technology and other major cost drivers.

Solutions suggested by roundtable participants

- Stakeholders need to work together to find common ground in the development of appropriate measures for policing.

- Police leaders should have training/skills in business management.

5.1.4. POLICE-MEDIA-COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Police should manage media relations more proactively

In discussing public safety, and the importance of feeling safe in their communities, participants often talked about the challenges of how the public gets information about policing. Many felt the public was getting an inaccurate picture of the actual crime in their community, and their local police, because of media focus on negative and sensational stories. Officers and community members alike expressed concern that there may not be a resolution of this issue with traditional types of media; others suggested it was an opportunity for police to find new ways of engaging with the public directly, particularly through social media.

Solutions suggested by roundtable participants

- Police leaders need to get out in front of negative stories and own them/take responsibility.

- Police should consider expanded use of social media to educate and inform communities about crime and public safety issues.

5.1.5. POLICE TRAINING

Police require more specialized training with respect to contemporary policing issues

Most participants recognized the high expectations placed on police with respect to their skill-set and level of performance; however, participants wanted police to have increased specialized training with respect to contemporary policing issues. Police participants acknowledged that it is a challenge to get officers through mandatory or elective training in a timely manner while also meeting the community expectations of day-to-day police work.

Solutions suggested by roundtable participants

- New police training should focus on key challenges such as mental health and family violence as well as intercultural connections and cultural sensitivity.

- Additional training for police, nurses and doctors likely to encounter sexual abuse and sexual assault victims was also suggested as an example of a circumstance where a lack of training can contribute to a reduced reporting of the crime and the potential re-victimization of victims.

- The provincial government should provide funding for training when new responsibilities or tools are developed, such as provincial policing standards or new legislation.

5.2. Funding

A province-wide, equitable police funding formula should be developed

Many participants identified the need for a fair and equitable police funding formula that reflects those responsibilities. They felt that citizens should pay the same for policing regardless of the population of their community or whether it is policed by the RCMP or a municipal force. Some participants also suggested communities should be free to pay for the level of policing that meets their needs.

Funding levels should be reflective of each level of government's responsibility

Participants suggested that the funding formulas have to reflect each level of government's responsibilities and that there needs to be clear communication, acceptance and understanding that fewer resources means that certain types of calls may no longer be attended by police.

Solutions suggested by roundtable participants

- The provincial government should work with communities to develop an equitable police funding formula.

- Funding levels should reflect federal, provincial and municipal government policing responsibility

5.3. Effectiveness and efficiency (systemic and structural)

5.3.1. JUSTICE SYSTEM REFORM

Justice system reforms are required in order to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of policing

Participants expressed concern that the justice system was not only inefficient, but it does not deliver meaningful behaviour change on the part of offenders or public satisfaction, despite the fact that significant time and resources are invested in the operation of the system. Some participants expressed concern that the public's skepticism about the justice system had an impact on perceptions of police.

Participants in general wanted to see expanded use of these alternatives to the criminal justice system. They discussed a wide-range of ideas and often returned to the need for additional restorative justice programs. Participants viewed restorative justice as a promising practice for addressing criminal activity in a community-focused way that educates an offender while still holding that person accountable for the offense. Participants also acknowledged that restorative justice only works well for certain types of offenses and certain types of offenders. It may not work for sexual assault and intimate partner violence and some offenders respond better to other forms of community accountability.

Solutions suggested by roundtable participants

- More intervention programs and supports should be made available before crime has been committed because many programs that are intended to reduce re-offending could be effectively tailored to preventing crime by those who are at risk, particularly with respect to domestic and family violence.

- The provincial government should continue to look for opportunities to take issues out of the courtroom to create a sense of resolution for communities and those directly impacted, including the offender and the victim.

- The provincial government should explore ways to streamline the justice system through technological enhancements.

- Restorative justice programs should be an integral part of the justice system.

5.3.2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF POLICE

Sufficient resources should be allocated to social service agencies dealing with mental health, addiction and homelessness in order to relieve overburdened police

Most participants saw social issues like homelessness and mental health as provincial government responsibilities that have been transitioned onto police and, by extension, onto municipal budgets. Participants often discussed "mandate creep" as harmful to police performance and community satisfaction. Participants explained how police have become the default agencies for a wide range of calls that might be better handled by other specialized social service response teams. Participants expected core police responsibilities to include patrols and a high visibility in communities but felt that presently the police are often required to act as social workers, counsellors, and mental health workers.

Solutions suggested by roundtable participants

- It would free up policing resources significantly if mental health, addiction and homelessness issues were supported by strategic, sustained efforts by the provincial government.

- The provincial government should lead a dialogue with communities and local governments to define and clarify core responsibilities for police agencies. Communities should be part of defining those responsibilities in an ongoing, sustainable way.

- Public education is required for the public concerning the burden of false or inappropriate calls to police.

5.3.3. COST MITIGATION STRATEGIES

Structural changes to police service delivery models should be considered to decrease police costs

Participants agreed that police costs continue to increase each year and that the upward trend is not likely to change. There was general consensus amongst participants that significant savings in police costs could effectively be achieved through structural changes to police service delivery models. Three topics dominated these discussions:

- A recurring discussion focused on the potential use of other law enforcement professions (i.e., bylaw officers, sheriffs, auxiliaries, reservists) to perform duties that do not require a fully trained police officer. Many participants felt that significant cost savings could be made from such models (often referred to as 'tiered policing'). There was some objection to these suggestions, particularly around the use of sheriffs as alternatives.

- Generally speaking, the integration of specialized services was endorsed by participants, including the introduction of specialized integrated teams for particular crimes (e.g., Integrated Homicide Investigation Team) or the enhanced integration of shared services (e.g., emergeny response teams). Even though most participants commented positively on integration as a strategy for reducing policing costs, concern was raised about the lack of a consistent funding, governance and evaluation framework for existing integrated teams. Participants also reported a need to define the responsibilities of local police in relation to regional, integrated, provincial or federal police units.

- During the roundtables held in Victoria, Vancouver and the Fraser Valley, participants raised the issue of regionalized police forces. This topic elicited divergent responses from participants and a general consensus on the topic was not evident. Notably, comments in favour of regionalization were more dominant in the Vancouver and Fraser Valley roundtables, while participants in the Capital Regional were more likely to favour enhanced integrated policing.

Solutions suggested by roundtable participants

- The provincial government should look for opportunities to coordinate or transfer certain roles and responsibilities to other law enforcement professions (i.e., bylaw officers, sheriffs, auxiliaries or reservists).

- The provincial government should assess innovative approaches in other jurisdictions that have shifted some policing responsibilities onto other law enforcement professions.

- There should be a formal dialogue with stakeholders to establish funding formulas, governance mechanisms, and information sharing agreements for integrated teams.

Innovative and sustainable management of police and civilian staff should be considered to decrease policing costs

Most participants were of the opinion that changes in how police agencies manage their human resources could reduce the costs of policing. A wide range of topics were covered during the discussions, but generally speaking participants were interested in how both civilian and police staff are deployed.

Some participants in urban areas expressed interest in reducing department staffing through the integration or centralization of a wide range of administrative functions such as: policy and procedure development; internal auditing; records management; criminal records checks; and crime analysis. Some participants also expressed interest in civilianization of many of these functions.

Participants also discussed the need for more crime analysis and evidence-based practices in order to ensure police allocate resources according to need. Some participants observed that current shift scheduling practices are governed by collective agreements, making it difficult for police agencies to align its human resources with identified needs.

Participants expressed frustration that their local police are often operating below authorized strength and are challenged to fill vacancies and leaves. They also noted that with police supervisors over extended with other duties, less time is being spent supervising or mentoring front line officers.

Solutions suggested by roundtable participants

- As part of any discussion concerning the integration of services, consideration should be given to integrating administrative functions and civilianization of operational positions.

- The provincial government and police agencies should ensure that crime analysis capacity is adequate to ensure that police resource allocation is evidence-based.

- The RCMP should establish a central pool for filling vacancies and addressing seasonal demands.

- Retired police officers could continue to work in certain capacities such as court liaison or community patrol.

Strategies for reducing the administrative burden on police should be developed

Many police participants expressed frustration by the amount of hours police officers must spend on paperwork due to court decisions. Participants talked about lessening the administrative burden on police organizations by potentially reforming processes around charge approval, time spent in court, time spent entering data, etc. For example, some participants felt that while PRIME was implemented to facilitate a more integrated policing environment, it is a labour intensive program and fairly time consuming for police to utilize.

Solutions suggested by roundtable participants

The province should facilitate discussions with stakeholders on potential technological solutions/enhancements and/or procedural changes to reduce some administrative burden.

5.4. Collaboration / coordination

5.4.1. SYSTEM COLLABORATION

Greater collaboration is required between the justice system and related social and health systems in order to achieve true efficiencies and benefits

The concept of 'breaking down silos' was discussed extensively by roundtable participants.

Participants spoke often about the effectiveness of collaborative approaches between agencies, especially where law enforcement and local service providers are able to discuss issues and solutions collaboratively, share information and maintain cross-agency awareness.

Another collaborative approach which participants cited as very effective were inter-agency response units which team police officers with other service providers to respond to specific types of calls. Examples included the RCMP's Car 67 and Vancouver Police Department's Car 87, which pair police with mental health workers to respond to mental health-related calls.

Despite the considerable enthusiasm for collaborative efforts, participants discussed at length the long standing barriers to information sharing as a key impediment to progress with this strategy. Current privacy legislation at both the federal and provincial levels creates hesitation or requires

that information sharing happen informally between parties. When staffing changes occur, informa-tion-sharing and trust is not always easy to re-establish.

Solutions suggested by roundtable participants

- Barriers to information sharing, such as privacy and liability concerns, should be addressed at a policy level so that information can be shared safely between the different agencies that are often interacting with the same individuals.

- Participants asked for direction, including potential changes to legislation, as to what personal information can and cannot be shared.

- At a more strategic level, participants advocated for increased collaboration between provincial government ministries and different levels of government with respect to issues such as public safety/mental health/health and education.

5.4.2. POLICE-GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

More sufficient coordination/consultation/communication is required between levels of government with respect to policing issues

Many participants discussed the need for government stakeholders to have a way to participate in planning for policing in a coordinated, strategic manner. Some participants felt there is a need for stakeholders to advocate for policing funding at the provincial level (where competition for dollars is intense), and a requirement for a forum for local concerns to be raised and addressed by the province at a strategic level and not as individual issues. Furthermore, participants were concerned about the lack of continuity in information flow from the federal and provincial governments concerning poli-cing issues as well as ongoing confusion around the division of responsibilities.

Local government participants from some RCMP policed jurisdictions expressed considerable frustra-tion with respect to their role in governing the workings of the RCMP contract. Issues such as RCMP overtime costs, insufficient staff, impact of the backup policy on rural/remote areas, were raised.

Solutions suggested by roundtable participants

- In communities policed by the RCMP, more opportunities should be created for communities to have dialogue with all levels of government concerning how the RCMP delivers its service, including scheduling, back-up policies, member pay, budget cycles and the affects of amalgamating detachments.

- There should be a forum for local and provincial level representatives to discuss and plan for policing in a more strategic, integrated way.

- The current legislative and regulatory framework for policing should be examined by federal, provincial and municipal governments to ensure it is aligned with current realities of modern policing.

5.4.3. COORDINATED RESPONSE TO SPECIFIC ISSUES

Mental health and addiction concerns require special attention from justice and social service providers

In keeping with the overall theme of system collaboration, participants repeatedly singled-out mental illness and addiction as issues that require special attention. Generally speaking, participants were of the view that properly resourced services to address the social/health issues of mental health, addictions, dual diagnosed persons and homelessness are needed to not only free up police resources but to also provide better outcomes for citizens.

Participants were generally supportive of prolific offender management strategies as a means of dealing with mental health/addiction issues; however, they were concerned that the use of enforcement (and the related use of administration of justice offences) was not supported sufficiently by rehabilitation and treatment programs. There was also some concern expressed about 'displacement' of prolific offenders from one community to another depending on local policing resources and strategies.

Solutions suggested by roundtable participants

- The provincial government should properly coordinate and fund programs aimed at treating mental illness and addiction.

- A regional or provincial crime reduction strategy is required to deal with displacement and resources concerns.

- Specially trained police are needed to attend and work with mental health experts when responding to certain calls for service.

- Legislation should be amended to allow police to release mentally ill persons to a nurse/hospital and not require physician approval.

- Drug addiction should be dealt with as a health issue and not as a criminal.

A more coordinated response to domestic violence is required

Domestic violence was recognized by participants as an area where considerable effort had been put into the development of programs and practices; however, many participants felt a more coordinated response is required. Participants suggested domestic violence in particular would best be dealt with in a holistic way, with centralized, provincial level oversight and responsibility. They also suggested a provincial central risk assessment team for highest risk cases. Some participants noted that the new Provincial Office of Domestic Violence at the Ministry of Children and Family Development may help to improve domestic violence response across the province.

Participants gave examples of local activities working well to address domestic violence, primarily by leveraging and growing the expertise of the different partners and sharing information, which allows for better support to victims and offenders and, at times, the prevention of further violence through collaborative safety planning. Integrated case management teams were frequently cited as having a positive impact in local communities (see Section 6.0 for a list of promising programs and practices). Finally, participants discussed the importance of creating domestic violence responses that assist both the individual victims and that focus on healing families in their homes, rather than removing the family and leaving the abuser in the home.

Solutions suggested by roundtable participants

- The provincial government should provide centralized oversight for domestic violence responses.

- The provincial government should create a provincial central risk assessment team for highest risk cases.

6. Crime Prevention and Support for Victims – Issues and Solutions

THE FOLLOWING SECTION SUMMARIZES DISCUSSIONS WITH ROUNDTABLE participants concerning their priority issues and ideas for potential solutions related to crime prevention and programs and services supporting victims. These themes are grouped into categories: (1) Leadership and coordination of crime prevention ; (2) funding; (3) citizen and volunteer engagement. Not all issues generated suggested solutions, and there is some overlap of issues and ideas.

6.1. Leadership and coordination for crime prevention

6.1.1. PROVINCIAL CRIME PREVENTION STRATEGY

A provincially-led crime prevention strategy should be developed and implemented

Participants overwhelmingly pointed out the effectiveness of breaking through the underlying cyclical, cultural or generational factors behind crime citing many examples of effective crime prevention programs and initiatives. Participants also expressed a perceived absence of leadership and direction and inconsistencies in crime prevention programming from one community to the next. They also identified a lack of metrics and measures for assessing the effectiveness of crime prevention approaches. In some cases, this has resulted in costly investments in programs that have not proven effective.

Participants expressed a clear desire for a provincially-led crime prevention strategy that sets out a framework for crime prevention programming across communities and focuses efforts toward priority issues. They also indicated the importance of identifying and communicating what works. Doing so might reduce competition between organizations, foster coordination between them and provide clear direction to police on their role in crime prevention, which currently varies by community and according to available resources. Although participants expressed a desire for a certain level of standardized programming, communities still wanted the freedom to tailor crime prevention to their unique needs and culture.

Participants also identified the importance of working with youth in order to prevent crime. Participants largely wanted to see more activities for youth that promote resiliency, build athletic skills and make cultural and cross-generational connections, including martial arts, swimming, self-defense, cultural camps and aboriginal canoe journeys. Participants also raised the effectiveness of using social media to canvas youth for their interests and to promote activities targeted at getting youth off the streets and doing something productive together.

Solutions suggested by roundtable participants

- Metrics and measures for crime prevention programming should be established and programs should be evaluated against these
- Establish an inventory of what programs are already working in communities successfully, reducing any duplication and identifying programs that are evidence-based and should be expanded provincially
- Establish a provincial clearing house for crime prevention and provide opportunities for communities to share best and promising practices
- Consider mandating specific crime prevention programming for consistent implementation in all communities

6.1.2. LOCAL COORDINATION

Local resources are required to coordinate community-based crime prevention and crime reduction efforts

In addition to the need for a provincial crime prevention strategy, many participants identified a need for local coordination of crime prevention efforts. Because serious crimes demand more police time, property crime and other nuisance crime goes unresolved, impacting the community's sense of satisfaction and safety. Communities with fewer police lack the necessary resources to maintain a consistent focus on these issues as they try to manage competing priorities.

Crime reduction initiatives and programs that assist communities in collaboratively dealing with prolific offenders are effective but also resource intensive and they are not in place in all communities. While some participants questioned whether crime prevention should fall within the role of police, others identified a clear need for dedicated, police-based? crime prevention and crime reduction units. Regardless of the approach, participants agreed that local personnel were required to coordinate local efforts and liaise with other community resources.

Solutions suggested by roundtable participants

- Identify and assign local crime prevention/community policing coordinators
- Establish dedicated crime prevention/crime reduction units

6.2. Funding

6.2.1. CRIME PREVENTION AND VICTIM SERVICE PROGRAM FUNDING

Consistent, stable and long-term funding is required for victim services and crime prevention programs

Participants discussed funding for victim service and crime prevention programs. With respect to victim service programs, participants expressed that the current funding model contributes to challenges in providing a consistent level of service delivery. Although services to victims of crime are mandated provincially they are not fully funded by the province. In some areas, municipalities contribute funds and in other areas it is the Regional District. The amount of funding that municipalities and regional districts provide also varies from community to community resulting in different levels of service delivery. For example, while the province does not fund victim services to be available 24/7 some communities report using municipal/regional district contributions to support a 24/7 service. While in other communities there may be an expectation of a similar level of service, resources aren't available to provide/sustain it.

While victim service program funding and core crime prevention funding has been relatively stable, many raised concern that additional crime prevention funding is offered in short cycles and that criteria often favour pilot programs, while evidence-based programs that show positive outcomes all require long timelines to demonstrate results. They also pointed out that these initiatives are among the first things to be put aside when budgets become tight and police resources are consumed with responding to criminal activity. Participants identified the benefit of smaller grants in supporting multiple projects and at the same time expressed the importance of larger funding amounts and longer-term commitments that allow for demonstrating results.

Participants called the process of acquiring funding time consuming and labour intensive, with criteria that is always changing. Many of these comments focused on crime prevention grants funded through provincial Civil Forfeiture Office proceeds of crime, which vary from year to year.

Solutions suggested by roundtable participants

- Reassess how funding is being allocated through the Victim Surcharge Special Account

- Consider returning the proceeds of crime according to where the cases originate so the community impacted by the crime can put those funds toward crime prevention

- Revisit the funding model for police- and community-based victim service programs to ensure consistency in the delivery of services

- Funding commitments for victim services and crime prevention should be made over 3-5 year terms in order to allow for measuring results and to allow for greater stability for agencies contracted to deliver services

6.2.2. CONSISTENCY IN THE AVAILABILITY OF SERVICES

Community programs should be supported to maintain consistent availability of services

Participants felt their communities would benefit from greater consistency in the capacity of different agencies to collaborate in supporting victims, reducing reoffending and preventing crime. Participants who provide support to victims of crime, especially those who provide support to those affected by sexual, domestic, and family violence said they are often needed at all hours of the night and are susceptible to burn-out from being over-worked. Participants expressed concern that the current efforts of police-based victim services and community program staff to try and balance the demand with existing resources presents the potential for victims to be re-victimized through the system. Resource inconsistencies also mean that expectations of police and community service providers continue to grow. For police in northern and remote communities, for example, they are responsible for all aspects of a file from call to conclusion.

Community agencies and programs that offer services for violence against women in relationships, male victims of violence, offenders, victims, restorative justice, mental health, housing, animal control, outreach and volunteerism were recognized as important community support efforts that can have significant positive impacts; however, these agencies typically operate on a 9-5 basis and many have uncertainties about the long-term stability of their funding.

6.3. Citizen engagement

6.3.1. VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers play an important role in addressing community health and safety issues and the coordination of volunteers should be enhanced

Participants talked at length about the positive impact of volunteers and the value they bring to addressing community health and safety issues. All roundtable participants expressed how important volunteers are in communities to drive a number of program and services that would otherwise be under-resourced or non-existent. Those volunteers build relationships that reach across the community. Participants often spoke of the need to re-engage the communities and figure out new ways to promote and grow volunteerism. Participants also discussed the challenges associated with recruiting, training and maintaining volunteers.

Solutions suggested by roundtable participants

- Dedicated and possibly paid local resources should be put in place to manage community volunteer programs. This would reduce the burden on existing volunteers and engage more people from the community.

Citizens have an important role to play in improving the safety of their communities and should be engaged

Participants raised the importance of engaging citizens in efforts toward improving public safety. Citizens play an important role in watching over their families, friends, neighbours and communities. They indicated that increased engagement builds momentum in communities and results in a sense of local pride and increased awareness and diligence around suspicious activities and criminal behaviours.

Solutions suggested by roundtable participants

- Develop and implement communications strategies that describe how citizens can keep their communities safe and free from crime.

- Encourage the use of programs that engage citizens in crime prevention efforts (e.g. Block Watch, Citizens on Patrol, Crime Watch, etc.)

7. Promising Practices and Programs

THROUGHOUT THE ROUNDTABLES, PARTICIPANTS COLLABORATED TO IDENTIFY key challenges and issues, and suggested potential solutions. Participants also identified many programs they believe are already having a positive impact in their communities. These programs fall into a variety of categories (some with considerable overlap) including: integrated responses; crime prevention; alternatives to the traditional justice system; domestic violence response; among others. The level of description provided for the programs noted below are based on input from participants in the roundtable discussions. As such, a more fulsome description is provided for some programs, while others either represent broad topic areas (e.g., restorative justice) or specifically named programs.

Note: What follows is a list of programs discussed during the roundtables by participants. It is not intended to be a comprehensive list of all programming available, but instead to serve as a reference point for those individuals interested in continuing this dialogue.

7.1. Integrated responses

7.1.1. INTEGRATED POLICE UNITS

Integrated police units draw together police officers from different jurisdictions to provide specialized resources to deal with cross-jurisdictional and local crimes. Examples cited by roundtable participants as effective included:

- Integrated Road Safety Unit (IRSU)
- Integrated Homicide Investigation Team (IHIT)
- Integrated Child Exploitation (ICE) Unit
- Integrated Gang Task Force (IGTF)

7.1.2. INTEGRATED APPROACHES TO VULNERABLE PERSONS

Participants discussed integrated approaches to proactively assisting vulnerable persons such as youth at risk and child victims through programs that involve schools, other community partners and potentially police and social services. The intent of these programs is to build a network of support around the most vulnerable members of their communities. Examples cited by roundtable participants as effective included:

- The Abbotsford Youth Crime Prevention Project and the Surrey Wrap Project which target youth at risk of gang and criminal involvement
- Integrated Case Assessment Teams in Vernon and Surrey that deal with domestic violence.
- The "HUB" program based in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, where front line workers from various agencies work together to mobilize resources to address short term needs and issues for individuals and families.
- The ZEBRA Child Advocacy Centre in Alberta was raised as an example of a multi-disciplinary team including police, the Child Protection Unit, child-at-risk response teams, Alberta Children's Services, Crown prosecutors and community volunteers who take a child-focused stance and preserve a safe environment for child victims.

7.1.3. INTEGRATED POLICE AND OTHER SECTOR RESPONSES

Integrated response teams pair police resources with professionals from other sectors to respond to specific issues. Examples cited by many roundtable participants as effective included:

- Car 87 (Vancouver Police Department) and Car 67 (RCMP) which pairs police and mental health workers to respond to mental health related calls.

- Car 86 (Vancouver Police Department) which pairs police and child protection workers to respond to calls involving domestic disputes, family violence and child welfare matters where violence is an issue.

- The Surrey Mobile Action Response Team which is a sexual assault and domestic violence victim support team made up of forensic nurses, emergency response personnel and the Surrey Women's Centre to provide support to victims in danger regardless of whether they report or not.

- The Integrated Mobile Crisis Response Team (Vancouver Island Health Authority) which is a mix of law enforcement, health, social work and child and youth care workers who provide services to persons experiencing urgent/emergent mental health problems.

7.2. Crime prevention

7.2.1. COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

Participants by and large identified programs as effective when they foster an awareness of the community, and where neighbours watch out for each other and stay alert to hazards that put them at risk. Specific examples cited by roundtable participants as effective included:

- Kelowna Neighbourhood Issues and Resolution Committee (NIRC) which coordinates neighbourhood and creek clean-ups, a neighbourhood watch program, graffiti removal, citizen patrols and advertises community awareness.

- Vancouver Neighbourhood Integrated Service Teams (NIST) in which community teams comprised of City departments (such as Police and Fire) and other community agency employees (such as health and social services) work together across organizational boundaries to help communities solve problems.

- Ksan House Society's Damp Shelter which provides shelter for intoxicated people who need a safe place to stay for the night with shower, hot meal, and clean clothes. This type of facility alleviates additional burden on police.

- Community Response Networks bring together service providers who are interested in addressing and preventing elder abuse.

- Situational Crime Prevention program that utilizes an Auxiliary Police officer to go door to door in the community to alert residents to potential victimization and provide them supports and information to make themselves safer and tell them how important it is to watch over their community, i.e., engage people to take an active role in crime prevention.

- Children Who Witness Abuse Program and the Violence is Preventable Program are school-based programs that teach the dynamics of abuse in order to interrupt violence in relationships and families.

Many of these programs also involve significant police participation, such as:

- Watch programs–Block Watch, Neighbourhood Watch, Bar Watch, Rural Crime Watch, Sister Watch

- Crimestoppers

- Community Policing Associations and Committees

- Police Liaisons–Neighbourhood Liaison Officer, First Nation Liaison Officer, School Liaison Officer

- Integrated First Nations Policing Unit (West Vancouver)

7.2.2. YOUTH FOCUSSED PROGRAMS

Participants generally agreed that programs directed at youth can contribute to decreases in property crime such as vandalism and help to deter young people from becoming involved in drugs and gangs. Specific examples cited by roundtable participants as effective included:

- Community-based programs such as Big Brothers and Big Sisters
- DARE, PARTY, Risk Watch (generally directed at educating youth about the dangers associated with drugs, binge drinking, etc.)
- Anti-gang programs such as those offered by the Abbotsford Police Department (e.g., Operation Lode Star, Operation Tarnish)
- Blueberry River Against Gangs (BRAG)
- Rising Spirit Youth Centre
- Traditional Culture Camps
- Circle of Courage program
- Naskarz program in the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver

7.3. Alternatives to the traditional justice system

Many participants discussed the value of alternative solutions to the traditional justice system. Much of the conversation was focussed on the ethos of restorative justice programs and the need for coordination and funding. Other participants raised the implementation of specialized courts as innovative alternatives. Specific examples cited by roundtable participants as effective included:

- Vancouver Aboriginal Transformative Justice Services
- Community Court/Drug Court
- Domestic Violence Court
- Aboriginal Justice Strategy Programs

7.4. Domestic violence response

As noted in Section 5.3.4., domestic violence was discussed at length by roundtable participants. Many promising practices and programs were noted. The following is a list of examples of the various types of initiatives underway:

- The Vernon Domestic Violence Unit and Integrated Case Assessment Team (ICAT)–involves crown, police-based victim services, community-based victim services, and Ministry of Children and Families and leverages extensive expertise from among the parties.
- Stopping the Violence, Children Who Witness Abuse and Safe Homes program partnerships.
- Local Violence Against Women In Relationships (VAWIR)/domestic violence committees that are typically comprised of representatives from the justice and child protection systems and may include other representatives from the health and social service sectors. Committees work to develop local, coordinated responses to issues such as domestic and sexual violence and serve as a forum for discussing issues that may arise in the community. In some communities, these committees include the resource industry and businesses so they work on violence against women more broadly as a negative social issue in the community.
- Police-based domestic violence units with specially trained officers and Crown (e.g. risk assessment).

7.5. Other types of programs and practices

Participants also discussed a number of other types of promising programs and practices that can be grouped in those involving civil remedies/administrative penalties and those associated with advances in technology.

7.5.1. CIVIL REMEDIES/ADMINISTRATIVE PENALTIES

- Civil Forfeiture Program
- Immediate Roadside Prohibition

7.5.2. ADVANCES IN TECHNOLOGY

- OSMV E-Ticket
- Red Light Cameras
- VPD Twitter account
- Speed reader boards
- Bait car programs
- Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (a multi-disciplinary approach focused on urban planning and community design to deter criminal behaviour, e.g., better lighting, electronic surveillance, alarm systems, among others).

8. Next Steps

IN THE COMING MONTHS, THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT will hold a number of focus groups with key stakeholders to further assist with the development of the strategic plan. The purpose of the focus groups is to engage participants in a dialogue about the future of policing and public safety in British Columbia.

Discussion topics will include community engagement in policing, crime prevention and public safety, gangs and guns and police performance management. Focus groups will also be held to continue the discussions around key themes raised in the roundtable discussions, such as: the impact of mental health on policing; the need for multi-agency collaboration and coordination of systems and services; the desire for an equitable police funding formula; and potential structural and systemic changes required to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of policing. Strategies developed by focus groups will feed into the BC Policing Plan which will be posted on the BC Policing Plan website for public discussion and feedback.

Appendices

Roundtable # 1 – Capital Area: April 25, 2012

We want to thank all of the participants in the Capital Area roundtable for taking the time to share their ideas, identify issues and discuss possible solutions to prevent and respond to criminal activity in their communities.

ROUNDTABLE FORMAT

A total of 30 people attended the first BC Policing Plan roundtable in Victoria on April 25th, 2012. Participants included local government representatives, victim service and community support organizations and policing agencies. The goal of the roundtable was to capture constructive input from participants towards defining priorities and solutions on policing, crime prevention, and public safety in their community and for the province. To that end, participants were divided into three groups and engaged in six different cafe-style discussions throughout the day, including:

1. Problems with criminal activity

2. Responses to criminal activity

3. Crime prevention

4. Public safety

5. Core policing responsibilities

6. Police and crime prevention resources

For each topic, participants were asked to identify key issues, solutions and priorities.

KEY THEMES

The following key themes emerged from the group discussions.

Crime Prevention: Identifying and understanding the root causes of crime, and proactively assessing the environment for signs of potential increases in criminal activity is needed. Participants also identified that policing is only one facet of the larger social services picture. Prevention through the support of at-risk groups including youth, those with mental health issues and the transient population is key to the prevention of crime.

Community Driven Policing: Community members are looking to be engaged by police agencies to play a more active role in their communities. In working with police agencies, community members hope to improve the quality of service by actively communicating, sharing information, and identifying the primary challenges faced by their community.

Restorative Justice: Providing more comprehensive rehabilitation and support to both the victims and perpetrators of crime through social programs and education. The focus of the initiative is crime prevention through supporting vulnerable citizens and reducing the likelihood of re-offenses.

Sharing of Resources Across Jurisdictions: Sharing resources across jurisdictions would help backfill/back-up a vacant position and assist with special assignments. Removing organizational silos and creating relationships between jurisdictions would utilize resources more effectively. These resources can then benefit smaller and remote communities in a manner similar to the larger urban centers. This happens to a degree already but it has never examined within the context of return on investment.

Roles, Responsibilities and Continuity: Clearly communicating the roles and responsibilities of police officers to communities will help develop more effective strategies and priorities that align more readily with the public need. Providing better transition of knowledge and skills when personnel are moved/transferred will ensure continuity of relationships which is critical when there is a high degree of integrated roles in maintaining public safety.

Funding: Need to look at how funding can be more effectively distributed among agencies to have the greatest impact on crime and crime prevention.

Standardization: Developing and releasing new province-wide standards for things such as training that spans across all police – not one for RCMP and another for municipal police departments. Standardization scope must be carefully measured though to provide enough flexibility and not be too prescriptive. Each community has a different set of needs and problems and police need the flexibility to contour their approach as required.

Centralization: In tandem with an examination of standardization for some aspects of policing, centralization of certain services was suggested as a possible means to become more efficient and consistent for everyone involved. Centralizing administration, information management and deployment of certain integrated services was seen as an option worthy of exploration.

SUMMARY BY TOPIC

1. Problems with criminal activity

Issues:

- Drugs and alcohol: the presence of drugs within communities relates to the amount of crime and the transient population. Drugs affect the community in the type of businesses and people it attracts. This issue is most notable in large urban centers

- Domestic Violence: domestic violence seems to be more evident in many communities and providing services along the continuum of care was identified as crucial for effectively addressing domestic violence

- Targeted crime: crimes targeting the elderly, crimes in specific communities. Gangs are more sophisticated on how they are infiltrating communities.

- Mental health issues need to be addressed to improve public safety

Priorities and Solutions:

- There is a need for more robust bylaws (such as bylaws that respond to graffiti)

- Early diagnosis of youth at risk is key before they become involved in criminal activity – engage services needed to assist them, including education, community services, social services, and health authorities

- There needs to be a concentrated effort to look into ways of sharing information between police agencies, programs and government

- Shift from suppression to prevention and community collaboration

- Education on the scope of duties to clarify the mandate of police officers

- There needs to be an integrated task force for dealing with bigger issues across the province; this would provide a more focused view and resolution

- Understanding that policing is part of a continuum of social services delivery

2. Responses to criminal activity

Issues:

- Need for better strategies to address drugs and drug trafficking
- Inability to provide community policing
- Insufficient communication with the community about policing issues and priorities
- Lack of consistency of resources and support
- Drug courts are not well resourced

Priorities and Solutions:

- Need to get the communities more involved in discussing issues and developing solutions
- There needs to be a more balanced way to deploy resources based on community needs, issues and existing support systems
- Communities need to set priorities and work with all agencies to focus on priorities
- Ease the burden on the criminal justice system through other social programs and initiatives
- Regional strategies: develop greater borderless attitude by assisting neighbouring communities through sharing of resources and programs, greater integrated planning, removing organizational silos and creating inter-agency relationships where needed
- Mental Health Crisis response team is considered to be an effective program
- Take targeted areas and bring together expertise from various services
- Expand restorative justice programs
- Increase the level of communication between police and the community in the development of strategies and priorities
- Need to look into doing a 10-year plan that rolls continually forward every 5 years regardless of political landscape
- Proactive–preparedness–responsive–follow-up–through the integration of programs, relationship building collaboration, interrelationships amongst agencies

3. Police Core Responsibilities

Issues:

- Police core responsibilities are not defined
- Funds can be used more efficiently if the focus is on quality of life; need more holistic approach and less fragmentation of issues and responses between services
- Social issues (e.g., mental health) are becoming a major cost driver/core responsibility of police
- Need to ensure that legislation governing police and courts is in line with the current needs
- The relationship between police and dealing with mental health issues is under resourced
- Back and forth gaps between police and services of other agencies

Priorities and Solutions:

- Focus more on building relationships
- Pro-active approach to social issues and crime, and being visibly pro-active in the eyes of the public
- Integrated units: seeing better information and better results

- Community driven; community needs to be more engaged
- Federal, provincial, and municipal governments need to determine the level of funding, roles and responsibilities that come from all three levels of government and communities
- There needs to be the development of appropriate metrics that we can all understand, relate to, and measure effectively

4. Crime Prevention

Issues:

- Difficult to find volunteers who can be security cleared in rural settings
- Lack of governance
- Lack of continuity when officers being transferred and moved around
- Crime prevention is the responsibility of the community–not just the police

Priorities and Solutions:

- Ensuring community programs are marketed correctly for optimal effectiveness
- Removing organizational silos and creating engaging relationships
- Need more programs that target at-risk youth such as mentoring, drugs and alcohol (which is not classified as crime prevention)
- Need to identify and address the root causes of crime: education, poverty, housing, mental health issues, addictions, child abuse, and Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder
- School and communities are doing proactive activities and programs on crime prevention–There needs to be more focus on these programs through communication and funding commitment

5. Public Safety

Issues:

- Media offer a perception of criminal behaviour that is often inaccurate and sensationalized.
- The challenge is to address reality while also recognizing the need to address the public's perception of how safe they feel.
- Limited governance link between Mayor and council, the public, and police agency
- The public is not reporting crime because they feel that crime is not being responded to
- Program stoppage due to lack of resources

Priorities and Solutions:

- Need for more programs at the community/ground level: provide more eyes and ears for law enforcement
- Identifying early warning signs (cues for the development of a potential crime problem)
- Success depends on the engagement of the community and citizen engagement
- Need to create a greater sense of community
- Improve communication surrounding policing–incorporate the positive and more proactive messages rather than only focusing on negative comments
- Balancing between immediate need and long term sustainability and success
- Provide ways and means (such as bus passes) for individuals (including youth) to keep busy at night
- Develop programs, vehicles, and channels to increase police visibility

- Help new members of communities integrate
- Volunteer appreciation: recognize volunteers

6. Policing and crime prevention resources

Issues:

- Disconnect between politicians and policy makers
- Need to examine funding model
- Better funding is needed at the provincial level
- Crime prevention is not adequately resourced
- Dificultly filling vacancies in a timely manner
- Better resourcing of social agencies/social issues could result in more police resources available for "core" policing functions
- When funding tightens, the behaviour of tightening resources starts to occur; we need to work towards being smarter and more efficient on how we deploy our services
- When social service programs get cut at the federal/provincial level (e.g., mental health), it affects local policing. Local governments cannot influence funding decisions of other levels of government but they can control local policing resources. Police end up taking on responsibilities they are not either well equipped on or trained in
- Roles and responsibilities are not consistent across the province–we need to go back to the scope and legislative mandate of agencies

Priorities and Solutions:

- Consider police funding in relation to the total scope of funding opportunities available and as a partner with other linked agencies and professions. Federal, provincial, municipal and other communities need to determine the level of funding, roles and responsibilities that come from across all three levels of government and communities
- Appropriately placed/trained volunteers
- Centralization and integration of administrative functions
- Having good oversight in place to develop learning organizations towards being capable of responding to change
- Look into finding a balance to recruit, attract resources to elevate the succession planning so we are proactively dealing with the bigger issues.
- Align resources with strategic priorities/analysis of needs
- Recognizing the region: develop more of a borderless attitude by assisting your neighbouring communities through sharing of resources and programs. Looking towards more integrated planning Removing organizational silos and creating inter-agency relationships where needed.
- Invest into the police auxiliary support and determine how community involvement can help

Roundtable # 2 – Vancouver Island North: April 27, 2012

We want to thank all of the participants in the Vancouver Island North roundtable for taking the time to share their ideas, identify issues and discuss possible solutions to prevent and respond to criminal activity in their communities.

ROUNDTABLE FORMAT

A total of 31 people attended the BC Policing Plan roundtable in Nanaimo on April 27th, 2012. Participants included local government representatives, representatives from First Nations communities and agencies, victim service and community support organizations and policing agencies. The goal of the roundtable was to capture constructive input from participants towards defining priorities and solutions on policing, crime prevention, and public safety in their community and for the province. To that end, participants were divided into three groups and engaged in six different cafe-style discussions throughout the day, including:

1. Problems with criminal activity
2. Responses to criminal activity
3. Crime prevention
4. Public safety
5. Core policing responsibilities
6. Police and crime prevention resources

For each topic, participants were asked to identify key issues, solutions and priorities.

KEY THEMES

The following key themes emerged from the group discussions.

Crime Prevention: Need to address domestic violence, mental health issues and the use of drugs and alcohol as part of improving crime prevention activities and the delivery of programs in communities. Learning how to prevent repeat offenders from manifesting and addressing visual displays of crime such as graffiti was also discussed. Supporting at-risk groups, especially youth and those with mental health issues and the homeless population was identified as important to the prevention of crime.

Funding: Ensuring that there is consistent and sustainable funding for crime prevention programs. Funding criteria tend to favour crime prevention pilot projects or new projects as opposed to ongoing programs; it may take some time for a pilot project or a new project to either secure ongoing funding or prove its value beyond one funding cycle.

Community Relationship Building: "the police are the public and the public are the police". Improved relationships between members of the community and police require a breakdown of existing barriers. Police need to be more accessible and visible and the public needs increased familiarity with the officers in the community. Participants discussed the importance of working with the public and other agencies in rural settings as critical to addressing public safety.

Rehabilitation and Support Programs: Assisting those in need of additional support and social services will remove them from the justice and healthcare system, freeing up valuable policing and health care resources.

Education and Awareness on Key Issues: Building community understanding and knowledge in support of crime prevention.

Continuum of Service: Identify policing not as a standalone entity but as a component in the social system for improving the quality of life of citizens through social programs, education, mental health services, crime prevention, and law enforcement.

Proactive Policing: Due to the limited resources of police services, policing agencies are currently unable to allocate sufficient resources to build lasting relationships with community groups and implement effective proactive strategies focusing on prevention and awareness.

Community Engagement: Policing services sometimes perceive difficulty reaching out to the community to obtain dedicated involvement on issues other than "hot topic" issues. Members of the community believe that police services need to make more of an effort to engage and involve the community.

SUMMARY BY TOPIC

1. Problems with criminal activity

Issues:

- The presence of repeat and prolific offenders in the Justice system
- Homelessness and the increase of transient population is contributing to an increase in criminal activity
- Increase in domestic violence is having an impact on communities
- The prevalence of drugs and alcohol
- Increase of individuals with mental health issues that don't have sufficient support services available to them are contributing to criminal activity
- Graffiti as it relates to broken window syndrome, is propagating an increase in crime

Top Priorities:

- Education and awareness around drugs and alcohol
- Leadership: people need to assume their role and responsibilities within all levels of leadership
- Identifying what an affordable housing model looks like and finding links between housing and social services
- Domestic violence units
- Engage service groups because they have money and are dedicated to finding solutions (such as Rotary clubs) although – grants are now sparse from these groups

Priorities and Solutions:

- Organized crime initiatives such as dress codes in bars and scanners for driver's licences
- Graffiti task force and dealing with nuisance behaviour
- More government support to provide services to vulnerable citizens such as those with mental health problems or addiction
- The development of a community position to act as a Social Justice Advocate
- Adhering to the philosophy of restorative justice
- The sharing of information about program delivery to identify best practices by allowing for more oversight so that detachments can be open and increase dialogue
- Reassure the public through visibility and police presence

- Use the internet and social media to communicate good news stories, achievements, and acknowledge individuals within the community for accomplishments

- Youth education on drugs, gangs, and community pride and awareness

- Increased access to social services such as affordable housing, women centres, grants, and community events

- Creating awareness of the key problems within communities and solutions available

- More policing: numbers, dollars, visibility

- Obtaining adequate and consistent finances and resources

- Universal cost sharing in police services to efficiently distribute funding

- Clearly defined roles for agencies and what their responsibilities are

- Improved consistency within the justice system for convictions

- More crime analysis to better identify and prepare for crime influxes and to take preventative measures

2. Responses to criminal activity

Issues:

- Resources not available for Domestic Violence Unit

- The updating and refreshing of preventative programs such as Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) program, which seeks to prevent the use of controlled drugs, membership in gangs, and violent behaviour

- The system is not able to support individuals who desperately need assistance

- Management of individuals who require social assistance end up being managed by police which takes up police resources and causes increased overhead

- Need health facilities and detox centers to manage individuals with mental health and addictions

- Lack of sufficient court time and court backlogs: need to identifying what is causing this

- Court does not address individuals' needs: as a result public perception is affected and there is a continued waste of police resources as people go in and out of court

- Dealing with remand days – travel days – court attendance–all equate to wasted police resources

- Lack of facilities for long term care offenders who face mental health issues

- RCMP spend time dealing with individuals with substance or mental health issues: resources wasted – individuals not treated properly

- Health facilities are strained because resources are allocated to individuals with mental health and addiction issues

- Lack of long term, sustainable funding for community organizations

- Understanding from Government that all communities' needs are different: what works in one community doesn't work in others – issues are different

Top Priorities:

- Best Practices for specific programs (for example, Prolific Offender Program)

- Increased engagement at the community level

- Find a way to integrate community and police – have community and police work closer together

- Mandate and legislation is needed to ensure coordinated and efficient services are provided

- Increase resources for Victim Services programs in the communities based on increase in crime

Priorities and Solutions:

- Collaboration and partnerships in communities: multiple partnerships, inter disciplinary teams (multi dimension) involving all stakeholders

- Parenting and Teaching is vital to crime prevention through social development so police can focus on prolific offenders

- Community organizations (chamber, social service agencies) identify what programs are important to contribute to, and in what way they should be supported such as providing resources or fund raising

- Police awareness of what the communities issues are

- Update and continue to use the DARE and HOPE programs

- Prolific Offender management: property crime reduced by 30% in community – individuals who are identified in the Prolific Offender Program are a priority – Multiple organizations are working together in this program

- Police revisiting Prolific offenders when they are incarcerated to check in and show the individual that they matter

- Using community Intelligence: information is then tasked out on problem individuals to multiple agencies, such as who are the drug addicted individuals in a community

- Community Strategy for re integration: Parole, Victim Services, Police and community working together to address individual's challenges

- Interaction between RCMP and other emergency response agencies

- Graffiti taskforce: database kept of all offenders – property owners paint over vandalized property promptly to maintain appearances and public perception of the community

3. Police Core Responsibilities

Issues:

- Lack of institutional flexibility in providing services that meet the unique needs of individual communities

- Lack of continuity with regime changes in government

- RCMP backfilling: it takes too long to fill vacancies.

- Responders must look beyond immediate responsibility – don't just look for the criminal offence but the social issues present at a call that other agencies might be able to be proactive on. Need to be able to respond in a contextual way

- Justice system that community perceives as not working

Priorities and Solutions:

- Form a board of governance and distribute appropriate power to communities which would incorporate an element of local governance

- Push some of the responsibilities back to community

- Need more inter-agency communications

- Set goals and objectives and connectivity between law enforcement, social services and the community

- Community priority setting through dialogue and relationships

- Visible leadership from the municipal, provincial, and federal levels

- Annual planning to define accountabilities
- Clear channels of communication to allow the public and agencies to collaborate
- Making dialogue a part of ongoing communications strategy
- Finding new and innovative ways to engage the public: it is hard to engage them unless it is a hot topic
- Bike patrol and ambassadors for the community
- Nuisance property and social disorder committee

4. Crime Prevention

Issues:

- Crime and crime prevention are interrelated and must be treated as such
- In order to make a difference the whole community has to be involved
- Removing the silos amongst agencies
- In some areas there is too much going on–need to focus on certain priorities and do them well

Top Priorities:

- Community-based multi sector task forces- getting all the groups together
- Key is working with youth- they are the future
- Important to manage high risk youth to ensure they do not fall into deviant behaviour or gang-related activities

Priorities and Solutions:

- Mentoring and tracking information and issues such as with high risk youth
- RCMP to be seen as maintaining safety, and the duties they perform are clearly differentiated from MCFD or Social Workers
- In small communities, the volunteer fire departments work well with RCMP
- An increase in Citizens on Patrol programs
- Developing the Domestic Violence Coalition
- Involving the community is a key aspect of effective implementation of restorative justice
- Funding toward programs for youth and cultural programs
- Graffiti program – clean-up with community members addresses "broken window syndrome" whereas when graffiti is left, it creates an expectation that is acceptable in the community
- Engage community in all kinds of problems that public are interested in
- Meet with community and hear their concerns to encourage more community engagement
- Look at challenges as opportunities to explore solutions
- Youth and Elder programs with police involvement

5. Public Safety

Issues:

- Dispatchers at 911 do not understand Aboriginal cultures
- Some first nation individuals are not open to calling 911, they do not have trust that officers will arrive in time

- Homelessness is an issue – they are very visible and the general public see these individuals as a threat and interprets the condition of the community as such
- Ineffective justice system: perception exists that justice system doesn't work – repeat offenders – revolving door
- Criminal legislation is overridden by Judges and the courts
- Lack of education on where the crimes are being committed, who is the offender, crime stats and data
- Relocation of officers after they have built relationships in communities: major loss to the community, relationship building has to be recreated
- Negative media stories on policing: no public defence of police

Priorities and Solutions

- Developing an effective communications and media strategy
- Cultural sensitivity when hiring for dispatchers and officers – need to learn and understand aboriginal culture
- Public needs to reconnect with their community: have folks invest in their community
- No cookie cutter approach: all communities are different, needs are different
- 911 is available for public at all times
- Timely response to all calls – all emergency services are responding
- Visibility of Police officers – seeing them on the street
- Strategic Communication – creating awareness campaigns on police initiatives and how the public can get involved
- Cooperation of first responders (victim services, police, firefighters, paramedics): all working together to respond to an emergency situation
- First nations Policing officers in communities – Aboriginal Gang Awareness Unit in BC
- Enable and encourage positive media communications – positive stories
- Building personal relationships between community and police
- Police are fully engaged in the community

6. Policing and crime prevention resources

Issues:

- Inadequate funding and resources to maintain current with community needs
- Responsibility often falls on RCMP as opposed to other agencies
- Lack of community engagement and involvement
- Integrated Road Safety Unit (IRSU) program: funding and removing operational silos
- Being proactive as opposed to reactive to crime
- Socially minded and policing from the perspective of the public
- Provincial and municipal split or division of who's responsible for what
- Provincial resources lacking in surrounding communities; city resources have to go to surrounding communities

- Increasing demand and burden on the courts from a small number of cases using large amounts of resources

Priorities and Solutions:

- Volunteers such as having the community get involved with preventing break-ins
- Volunteer leadership – need support and leadership in order for these programs to be successful
- Create timely and broad awareness through social media
- Allocation of resources appropriately across the province – address high costs of homicide investigations vs. street policing
- Need provincial wide FBI style responsible for "high crimes" such homicides and fraud
- Integrated Road Safety Unit (IRSU) program – one advantage is people aren't ticketed (which is a negative experience) by their local officers

Roundtable # 3 – Thompson Okanagan: May 4, 2012

We want to thank all of the participants in the Thompson Okanagan roundtable for taking the time to share their ideas, identify issues and discuss possible solutions to prevent and respond to criminal activity in their communities.

ROUNDTABLE FORMAT

A total of 63 people attended the third BC Policing Plan roundtable in Kelowna on May 4th, 2012. Participants included local government and aboriginal community representatives, victim services, community support organizations and police agencies. The goal of the roundtable was to capture constructive input from participants towards defining priorities and solutions on policing, crime prevention, and public safety in their community and for the province. To that end, participants were divided into four groups and engaged in four different cafe-style discussions throughout the day, including:

1. Problems with and Responses to Criminal Activity
2. Police Core Responsibilities and Crime Prevention Resources
3. Crime prevention
4. Public safety

KEY THEMES

The following key themes emerged from the group discussions:

Public Safety through Communication: People feel safer in their community when they know effective programs such as Block Watch are in place. Building relationships requires better communication and visibility between the community and the police. Sensationalism by the media about crime results in public misunderstanding of the real situation and misalignment of expectations and resources. Increased public education about public safety and how resources are allocated and measured would create a more accurate understanding of the real issues communities are facing.

Police Core Responsibilities: Police core responsibilities should not include providing social services as they are neither counsellors nor social workers. Prevention and support programs should be funded adequately to meet community needs so that police are not unnecessarily burdened.

Funding: Apply funding in the right places by investing in long term strategies (example, crime prevention) and not short term fixes. Look for incentives for municipalities to put money into crime prevention and other community policing strategies. There should be a provincial police funding formula that is fair and equitable. Everyone should be paying the same for police services regardless of where they reside.

Lack of funding is an issue across all services. If more police officers are added, there also needs to be more funding into the infrastructure which supports policing such as halfway houses, corrections, and the courts.

Volunteering and Community Involvement: There needs to be a continuum of support across the justice system and social sectors. Volunteers are a necessary component in supporting these agencies. Funding should be allocated to a volunteer coordinator whose mandate would be to bolster volunteer numbers, provide recognition to volunteers and manage volunteer programs.

Collaborative and Integrated Approach: There should be more of a comprehensive community response to address some of the issues faced by police (for example, people with mental health and/

or addiction issues). This would enable police to focus on the type of criminal activity that they are trained and equipped to respond to.

Integrate community resources so that police officers don't have to respond to calls that should be handled by other agencies (for example, social services, community-based drug/alcohol addictions programs, etc) which would result in a more effective and appropriate use of resources. Involving all key relevant stakeholders is necessary in identifying where redundancies and shortcomings are occurring so that services can be optimally distributed

Sharing of information: Confidentiality and information sharing policies and legislation impede agencies from working collaboratively. Integrated Case Assessment Teams work well when police and justice system agencies partner with community and women's service organizations.

Diversity of Community Needs: Rural and urban communities have different needs and impact each other in many ways. For instance some communities have significant gang issues and organized crime. The needs of the community and the services available to the community vary depending on the size of the community and how services are funded. Services tend to be concentrated in larger urban centres and it is more difficult for people living in rural areas to access them.

The influx of visitors during peak times is a problem in tourist areas. In these communities, strategies must be developed to address the seasonal demand for law enforcement personnel. Rural and urban communities need to communicate and coordinate their strategies so that criminal behaviour is not just displaced from one town to another.

Lower police visibility in rural areas may lead to people underreporting crime. Criminals target rural areas because they can carry out their activities with less risk of being noticed and reported.

Crime Prevention: Police visibility such as foot patrol and bikes enhances public safety. Strategies such as increased lighting in parks and on roads, and video surveillance were cited as examples of initiatives that make people feel safer.

Chronic homelessness has an impact on criminal activity in communities. Inadequate and unaffordable housing perpetuate social problems that underlie aspects of criminal activity. Social problems are intertwined with criminal activity and are often the root cause. There is a need for collaborative crime reduction programs with youth and First Nations representation on the committees supporting these programs

Integrated Strategic Planning: Annual Performance Plans (APP) are key for police planning. This planning goes beyond core policing to defining what initiatives communities are looking for the police to address. Working with the community and other agencies to identify best practices and how they are applicable across the Province will help integrated planning efforts.

Provincial and Municipal governments need to invite Aboriginal communities to program planning committees addressing policy. Support greater networking between local agencies, leveraging local knowledge and expertise, rather than awarding contracts to outside parties.

Removal of Bureaucratic Obstacles: There is inadequate prosecution of criminal behaviour, such as domestic and sexual violence (example, staying charges, or sending the charge back to police). Slow and inadequate justice system legislation is creating backups in the courts. Coordinating the development of province-wide policing and justice system strategy was recommended.

SUMMARY BY TOPIC

For each topic, participants were asked to identify key issues, solutions and priorities.

1. Problems and Responses to Criminal Activity

Issues:

- Violence Against Women (VAW) and Domestic Violence (DV) policies and training require partnerships between police, healthcare, and the justice system

- Substance abuse (alcohol, drugs) is an underlying cause of criminal activity

- Drug trafficking in schools is affecting youth and can lead to a criminal lifestyle

- Demand for illicit drugs leads to criminal activities such as grow-ops

- Gangs are fueled by the drug trade, and when they enter communities they have a sense of control over the community. Gangs are well organized and know who is going to buy or sell drugs, and how to manipulate the market

- There is insufficient post-incarceration support for prolific offenders; without this support the likelihood of reoffending is high

- There is a lack of oversight on prolific offenders while they are in the legal system (such as when they are waiting for court dates or on probation)

- Without proper social support, mental health issues can manifest as criminal issues

- The geographic location of certain communities that are close to the border presents a unique challenge in dealing with drug running and trafficking

- Lack of border security allows for easy smuggling access for criminals

- The lack of police capacity results in reactive policing; agencies are forced to choose their priorities and emphasis is placed on call response

- Police should maintain a higher level of sensitivity when dealing with vulnerable or marginalized people

- Police needs to work with the aboriginal community in removing barriers, stereotypes and bias

- Need to address the unique social challenges facing aboriginal communities to aid in crime prevention and crime management of issues such as gangs and prolific offenders

- There is no early intervention system in place; a young person at risk must be caught engaging in criminal activity before the criminal justice system can act, especially on issues related to drugs and drug trafficking

- Hiring more officers is not necessarily the answer: more officers generate more cases, stalls in court, and impacts court capacity. All components of the justice system must be resourced adequately to allow the system to function effectively

- Provincial resource shortcomings impact municipalities: police and community agencies with limited resources end up having to fill in the gaps (for example, mental health)

- Centralizing services into larger regional centres impacts smaller communities by limiting their access to primary response services such as detox or rehabilitation facilities

Priorities and Solutions:

- Vernon's Integrated Case Assessment Team – police and justice system partnering with Ministry of Children and Family Development and community and women's service organizations-performs tasks such as building safety plans, and assessing criminal orders which reduces breaches significantly as almost all accused are found guilty. This results in a more efficient use of resources and reduces duplication.

- Immediate Roadside Prohibition (IRP) -administrative process diversion program works well and removes burden on the courts

- Youth programs such as DARE (Drug Awareness Resistance and Education) is effective

- Youth involvement programs such as Cadets and Boy's and Girl's Club keep youth active and reduce the likelihood of deviant behaviour such as vandalism

- Prevention programs such as CrimeWatch, Mothers Againt Drunk Driving, and other volunteer programs are useful

- Prolific offenders program (property crime, primarily) has significantly reduced crime in the communities – it was recommended that the program be expanded to domestic violence and drunk drivers.

- First Nations service agencies should be invited to sit on Prolific Offenders Program committees, especially since First Nations tend to be over-represented within the program.

- Restorative Justice is effective in making victims and community at large feel engaged and empowered. These programs also have the potential to save money and decrease court backlog

- Increase collaboration and relationship-building between stakeholders by identifying a cross-agency designate in each organization who can help establish roles and responsibilities and build integrated management relationships among agencies

- Invite people from different community organizations to share ideas on procedures and mandates which will help law enforcement agencies understand where the gaps and unidentified opportunities lie.

- Support greater networking between local agencies and leverage local knowledge and expertise

- Stronger cultural relationships, partnerships and agreements are needed with Aboriginal communities. Penticton Indian Band and RCMP have developed a protocol which resulted in strengthening their partnership, building trust and has resulted in an increase in reports of crime; Native liaison officer comes to the reserve which builds trust

2. Police Core Responsibilities and Crime Prevention Resources

Issues:

- Victim Services and crime prevention programs are mandated by Province but not fully funded by the Province

- The police funding formula is not consistent with community needs as it is based on population and not criminal activity

- The cost of managing crime and punishment is far greater than the cost of preventing crime

- Funding can be disproportionate to the geographic size of detachment. Rural areas receive resources and funding based on small population size but are required to service large geographical areas including backcountry and marine areas

- There is inequality in the level of police service individuals receive and how much they pay towards policing services

- A lack of funding is an issue across all services

- Adding more police also requires additional funding for infrastructure such as transition houses, corrections, and courts: there has to be a continuum of funding across the justice system and into social sectors

- Funding should be pooled and allocated across agencies based on needs

- Individuals get released from hospitals because they don't have a psychiatric diagnosis. Police end up picking them up and taking them to Kamloops psychiatric hospital only to be told there is no bed or the individual cannot be admitted. Because there is no bed, the individuals end up being released or put in

cells. The entire time a police resource is tied up escorting the individual to various agencies and services, trying to find fitting accommodation

- Agencies such as the National Crime Prevention Centre hands out pilot funding for new programs but when the pilot stops, funding is gone

- Need to find ways to help police work smarter and faster – there is too much paperwork (administrative burden placed on police officers)

- Increasing demands from the courts (e.g., around disclosure) are placed on police officers

- Police core requirements have become more complex due to increased expectations from the province and time intensive due to the increased paperwork required

- Domestic violence should be housed under the same ministry – Justice. Currently domestic violence programs are housed under the Ministry of Children and Family Development. Participants felt it should stay under the Ministry of Justice as it is part of the justice system

- The RCMP Act is old and needs to be revamped – there is a need to give the RCMP the tools and authority to be able to fill vacant positions

- The charge approval process is creating another level of bureaucracy: The high standard of charge approval is set by the Crown yet police must ensure the quality of investigation. Whether police should be the ones laying charges is something the Province should examine.

- Freedom of Information issues: police are unable to share information with community agencies and vice versa (e.g. between RCMP and Min. of Children and Family development) – they can't share information about youth at risk for example, creating inefficient barriers

- Government has brought in some good legislation though police don't have the resources required to enforce it all

- In rural areas there is a perception that the police will do nothing so they don't report crime. Expectations are lower in rural areas.

- A disconnect exists between province and municipalities around funding priorities with respect to policing

- Police are performing duties beyond their scope of practice due to shortcomings in social programs

- The RCMP have been taking on more and more functions and trying to be everything to everyone – we need to define the mandate of police

- Responsibilities vary between communities: there doesn't seem to be a formula for service allocation between small municipalities, rural areas and larger municipalities

- Many communities do not perceive crime prevention as a component of police core responsibilities. There is a need to clarify what policing core responsibilities are

- Hang-up 911 calls are a huge problem and a burden on police resources who have to respond to those calls

- Need to have someone dedicated within detachment to crime prevention

- There is a need to develop protocol between aboriginal community's private security company and the RCMP

Top Priorities:

- Devising better funding formula to ensure everyone is paying evenly for policing services regardless of where they live

- Provincial government should mandate a minimum level of victim services in regional districts that refuse to implement a tax for these services.

Priorities and Solutions:

- Identifying agencies with best practices and implementing practices province-wide

- Increase funding for training: lobby government for more money to provide better access to community resources and the expertise to provide training to build community connections

- Ensure community members are educated on how dollars are spent and how the police budget process works

- Training programs on victim services are needed for both police and the public

- Paying for proactive and core policing – if a municipality wants more core policing then it must provide funding

- A more realistic measurement tool is needed for allocating resources, taking into account the unique needs of urban and rural areas, as well as the size of the municipality

- Examine and restructure crown policy on charge approval

- Determine the viability of restorative justice alternatives in certain circumstances

- Freedom of Information Act (FOI) impacts police ability and agencies to share information

- There is a need for political will to make changes that will improve things at the appropriate levels within law enforcement agencies and the government

- Integrate community resources so that police officers don't have to respond to calls that should be handled by other agencies

- Search and rescue (SAR): identify within detachment 1 SAR person to become the expert and respond to calls

- Provide more social service facilities dealing with mental health, detox and rehabilitation

- Educate the community through brochures, at schools and through agencies about what police do so that community members don't end up calling the police for minor incidents (ie hurt animal on side of the road)

- By-law officers and conservation officers are not readily available 24/7. There is usually only 1 by-law officer for a big region so they don't make themselves available to the public. As a result police pick up the calls that these officers can't respond to

- Need to train dispatch operators so that they know how to deal with a variety of complaints more effectively and know the region they operate in

3. Crime prevention

Issues:

- Public are not calling crime stoppers because the calls are not being answered due to lack of capacity in detachment to respond to calls

- System falls apart when issues get to Crown and Courts – there seems to be a lack of understanding in effectively identifying and managing mental health and addictions issues

- Displacement of Repeat Offenders and crime – due to the effectiveness of the Prolific Offender Program in large centres it drives offenders to smaller communities where less resources are present

- Organized Crime and drugs are a big issue: vulnerable people are getting recruited into organized crime

- PRIME is costing too much – isn't giving us what we were told it would – it is labour intensive

- The funding model for crime prevention needs to change – both a lack of funding and a lack of understanding as to who provides the funding are major issues

- Changes in the duration of funding committed to programs such as the Aboriginal Justice Strategy create challenges in maintaining programs and their effectiveness

- Programs that are offered in Municipal detachment cannot be implemented at the Provincial level because the resources aren't there in Provincial detachments

- Sustainable funding is important to allow for development in crime prevention programs

- There has been no increases in First Nation Policing Budget – the result is more demand with less funding and resources

- All emphasis is placed on the offender and not the support of victims

- Without appropriate resources the likelihood of criminal re-offense is very high. It is not the role of police to take preventative measures yet a great deal of police time is spent dealing with repeat offenders.

- Police are spending time shepherding people to services and taking on the role of social services

- The cost of volunteer coordination and recruitment: security clearances, recognition, training and supervision

- The number of individuals who volunteer is decreasing

- The volunteer demographic tends to be younger seniors who only commit to a few initiatives

- Training of volunteers is a challenge – time, manpower to training, need to invest to give them the necessary skills

Priorities and Solutions:

- The visibility of Police – allowing police to work overtime or on their time-off in the community has made an enormous difference in engaging the public

- Youth programs that offer anger management, addictions, mental health, sexual health and high risk behaviour education and support are needed

- Restorative Justice – alternative to first time offenders (helps prevent and reduce crime) as it keeps people out of the system

- Raising income assistance rates to address poverty – address related crimes and organized crime

- There is value in using alternative approaches – restorative justice, community courts, family preservation courts to address foster care issues

- Involve youth at a young age to mitigate potential involvement in organized crime later in life

- Address social isolation – everyone can and should be included in community

- Sustainability and coordination of volunteer groups

- Volunteers are necessary in the continuum of policing services – having an individual within the community in a paid position who recruits, trains, and recognizes volunteers would support this need

- Tax deduction for volunteers (volunteer hours for tax benefit) to encourage more people to volunteer their time

- Volunteer pooling to reduce burnout among volunteers and effectively staff different volunteer agencies such as Citizens Patrol, Speed Watch, and Traffic Control

- West Kelowna Community Policing association extends reach of RCMP – with many volunteers

- Prolific Offender Management Program: tracks prolific offenders and is having success by maintaining contact with them and knowing their whereabouts.

- DARE – police in schools important for rapport and relationship building

- Integrated Case Assessment Team (ICAT) – high risk referral, RCMP member runs through system and if an individual is deemed high risk all members of team come together for risk assessment and safety planning

- Grants need to be provided for more than 3-5 years in order to measure results – measuring results takes time and needs to be funded accordingly

- Grant application process needs to be reviewed – it currently rewards the best proposal writers instead of rewarding the programs that actually need the funding

- Agencies at the Federal, Provincial and Municipal levels need to work with First Nations Communities to expand dialogue and address issues together

- Remove and relax confidentiality between policing agencies to ensure information can be shared

- Create a collaborative mental health model to address mental health issues in communities

- More partnerships and communication within the community – it is important knowing what others are doing

- Locate jurisdictional overlaps to avoid duplication and ensure priorities don't get skewed – Funding formulas and policing and health boundaries don't allow sharing of resources for these issues

4. Public Safety

Issues:

- The influx of population during peak times is a big problem in tourist areas. These people are unknown to the police and the community, and these groups generally contribute to the increase of drugs and partying in the community

- Business community concerned with increased theft and vandalism during tourist season

- Not enough police resources to manage the influx of people into communities

- The media creates a perception that crime is rampant and skews the real issues communities are facing. Media focuses on allegations against police services and not enough on the positives

- Negative media leads to public misconceptions and mistrust in police

- Visible crime such as prostitution, drugs, and social disorder including the transient population and loitering youth reduces the feeling of community safety

- Problem is the transfer of RCMP members (constant transfer in and out) does little to foster community relationships: small communities have a life span for RCMP members

- A repercussion of successfully combating crime in one small community is that criminal activity is merely displaced into the surrounding communities.

Top Priorities:

- Increase police visibility

- Build relationships and increase communications within the community and police

- Increase education in the community: teaching trust, not fear

Priorities and Solutions:

- Communities need to communicate their initiatives to surrounding areas to develop strategies to address the root cause of crime and increase crime prevention.

- Integrated Case Assessment: Working together for the safety of the community (such as in Vernon and Penticton). There needs to be more public awareness on such programs

- Marketing programs effectively to the public to help with public confidence and improve the feeling of community safety

- In First Nations communities the focus is on drug- and alcohol-free programs. Community members have been working to increase awareness of these programs within their own community.

- Citizen on Patrol and Crime Watch gives law enforcement extra eyes and ears and supports the idea of community based policing

- DARE program is a tool that is used to effectively reach out to youth

- Partner for Safe and Effective Communities: All non-profits meet once a month, identify problems and create an action team to address issues

- School liaison programs are effective: teachers and police work together to reach the kids; police build relations with the schools and the children

- The Neighbourhood Issues and Resolution Committee (NIRC): The program involves bylaw enforcement department to help with the issue of social disarray in communities and educate the community as to who to call and when to call

- Block Watch, Rural Watch and Speed Watch work well as they engage the community and lead to safer neighbourhoods

- Annual performance plan (APP) is key for police planning because it looks beyond core policing and into specific initiatives that the community is looking for the police to address each year

- Tripartite agreement (First Nations): dedicated police service that can focus on first nation problems and issues. It would be more effective if the First Nations police officer came from the community that he/she serves.

- Youth programs that are youth driven: educate youth and engage them in conversation on their impact on public safety.

- Crime Stoppers are a big support to police

- Help communities feel safer by increasing police visibility during peak seasonal times: the greater police visibility the greater the community sense that police are active

- Hire students for the summer to work with law enforcement in high density tourist areas

- Positive media messaging: important to inform public of the good things that are happening in the community

- RCMP to work directly with community leaders and speak to the community on a regular basis

- Environmental factors: increased lighting in parks, roads, and Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) make people feel safer

- Identify risk factors and the root causes of criminal activity to better prevent crime

- More significant and meaningful consequences for violent crimes (more deterrence)

- Increased public education on police initiatives and the real issues facing communities

Roundtable # 4 – Northeast & Cariboo: May 11, 2012

We want to thank all of the participants in the Northeast & Cariboo roundtable for taking the time to share their ideas, identify issues and discuss possible solutions to prevent and respond to criminal activity in their communities.

ROUNDTABLE FORMAT

A total of 38 people attended the fourth BC Policing Plan roundtable in Prince George on May 11th, 2012. Participants included local government representatives, aboriginal community representatives, victim services, community support organizations and policing agencies from throughout the Northeast and Cariboo region. Minister of Justice Shirley Bond also attended to provide opening remarks and listen in on some of the discussions. The goal of the roundtable was to capture constructive input from participants towards defining priorities and solutions on policing, crime prevention, and public safety in their community and for the province. To that end, participants were divided into five groups and engaged in five different cafe-style discussions throughout the day, including:

1. Problems and Responses to Criminal Activity

2. Crime Prevention Responses to Criminal Activity

3. Police Core Responsibilities

4. Public Safety

5. Policing and Crime Prevention Resources

For each topic, participants were asked to identify key issues, solutions and priorities.

KEY THEMES

The following key themes emerged from the group discussions:

Mental Health Issues: Police have limited resources to accommodate individuals with mental health needs. There are limited or insufficient supports and facilities for individuals with mental health issues so they are continually cycled through the criminal justice system. A need exists for more support and programs to keep people with mental health issues from continually re-entering the justice system.

Breaking the Cycle of Criminal Activity: Long term solutions that focus on the root causes of crime are needed to break the cycle of criminal activity. Crime and violence are inversely related to a person's overall well-being, health, education and family environment.

Building a Stronger Sense of Community: Instilling pride in the community helps to create a heightened sense of accountability in the community. Community members are better prepared to prevent crime and enhance public safety when they feel connected to each other and their own communities. Social programs that engage individuals to play an active role, as well as programs that build upon community culture strengthen the community as a whole.

Community Responsibility: Enhance community accountability by inviting communities to step-up and take a role in watching out for criminal activity and taking steps to prevent crime. Creating awareness of the positive things happening in the community is essential for building momentum and reinforcing proactive community behavior.

Volunteerism: A dedicated (paid) resource or intermediary to manage, organize and attract volunteers would help to ensure better coordination and sustainability of community involvement.

Domestic and community violence: Violence and abuse in society, such as domestic violence or bullying is a major issue. It has a significant impact on personal well-being as well as the community as a whole. To reduce this impact, the root causes or social determinants of crime including, poverty, addictions, mental health, lack of support resources, historical violence and acceptable violence (cultural tolerance of violence) need to be addressed. Positive role models inside and outside of family structures for youth need to be increased. Establishing an early warning system for intervention will help support community members before an assault occurs. Commitment is needed to have dedicated local domestic violence officers. Treatment and services such as information and education must be available not only to women but also to men in an effort to reduce the likelihood of domestic violence occurring and re-occurring.

Youth Support: Early and sustained interaction with police, community role models, elders, and other community leaders is critical to crime prevention. Programs are needed to support families in providing youth with secure and stable environments in which to live. Youth mentoring other youths was also described as rewarding and worthwhile.

Gang activity: Youth are drawn to gangs for financial and social status. In order for communities to compete with gang recruitment, they must proactively offer something equally attractive to youth. Gang violence and recruitment are increasing. Having increased police visibility and presence on the street is an effective form of crime prevention. Police also need to be aware of high risk teens so they can establish safety plans and reach out to these teens in their communities. Police are able to keep up pressure on gangs by pooling community resources in a focussed manner. Different skills, standards and job descriptions are needed according to where police officers are stationed.

Information sharing and collaboration: The policing strategy should link to the education, health, finance, transportation, and social sector ministries and reflect the unique roles they each play in improving public safety and crime prevention. A better understanding across agencies is needed to outline the programs and services that exist in order to best utilize all resources.

Reduce overlaps and duplications in service providers by increasing their collaboration and information sharing. Provide longer term funding so agencies can plan longer term and don't have to reapply for funding each year. Address concerns over liability so that information can be shared safely – this will involve education and potential changes to legislation. Establish monthly meetings among law enforcement providers to discuss issues and solutions collaboratively and maintain cross agency awareness. Currently there are challenges with disseminating information across agencies and resources due to variation in Freedom of Information restrictions between agencies.

Summary by topic:

1. **Problems with and Responses to Criminal Activity**

Issues:

- There is a tendency to use a "one size fits all" response rather than looking at specific needs for specific regions or communities

- Programs around youth education and respectful relationships work well, but are constantly challenged due to lack of funding

- The policing strategy should include links to education, health, finance, transportation, and social sector ministries to reflect the role they each play in the continuum of social services and improving quality of life

- Incidents of crime are correlated with mental health needs: responses by law enforcement do not adequately address the mental health support needs of many individuals

- Mental health and addictions are often over diagnosed: many cases are dealt with using short term solutions which do not solve the long term problems

- There is limited or insufficient support facilities for individuals with mental health issues so they are continually cycled through the criminal justice system

- There are very limited services available for males who are victims–only for male offenders

- Need more diversionary and rehabilitation programs to keep people from re-entering the justice system

- There are challenges around disseminating information about programs to ensure the public is well-informed

- Rework how domestic violence is handled by social services to support families more proactively by providing information and education to both men and women upfront in an effort to reduce the likelihood that domestic violence occurs/continues

- Excellent work is being done across various agencies but these successful practices are not being well communicated or passed on to other agencies so they may take advantage of things that are working well

- Funding models should be flexible enough to account for unique regional issues as well as geographic challenges and population

- Gang violence and violence stemming from gang recruitment and initiation is a growing issue

- Human trafficking is a hidden issue that should be explored further

- Cross jurisdictional activity relating to gangs, drugs, and sexual exploitation as gangs have the ability to operate across different jurisdictions

- Urban centers provide the largest market for drug trafficking while the rural areas provide opportunity for cultivation of the drugs

Top Priorities:

- Establish funding for programs, agencies and education on community issues and social services

- Take inventory on services available to reduce duplication

- Use statistical reports to see what's working well and utilize that data to assess programs

- Support families where they live and find ways to bring services to them

Priorities and Solutions:

- People from smaller communities need treatment programs while they're in jail as well as when they get out on probation–without having to travel great distances

- Need to define and outline exactly what programs and services exist so that resources can be focused more accurately on where they need it most

- Need to ensure that services are available to both males and females

- Communities have experienced success using dedicated crown counsel for managing domestic violence

- Continue to establish collaborative relationships with other agencies who can each bring something to the table – much more effective than working in silos

- Connecting people to their culture and the culture of the community through programs to strengthen the sense of community

- Establishing domestic violence units similar to the prolific offender team to deal with chronic domestic violence situations police are continuously responding to

- Continue education on different cultures so that agencies can better support people across cultural silos

- Put funding in place for transition houses across communities to educate men and women in an effort to bring about long term change

- Expand the First Nations policing program based on relationships built at the community level. First Nations policing officers should remain in community for longer periods.

- Address privacy issues to allow for increased information sharing in support of programs such as the Homeless Intervention Program (HIP)

- Increase training and support to manage increased driving offenses and traffic volumes

- Establish an integrated court model like the one used in Victoria for people with severe, chronic mental illness

2. Crime Prevention

Issues:

- Communities are currently not supporting each other – Neighbours have a role to play in strength of community and community safety

- Violence and abuse in society, such as domestic violence or bullying is a major issue and has a major impact on the personal well-being of those affected and the community at large

- Observing the root causes or social determinants of crime including, poverty, addictions, mental health, lack of resources, knowledge and then mitigating these causes is a key supporting element of crime prevention

- There is a need for victim services to offer both immediate and long-term support

- There is a lack of positive role models inside and outside the family structure for youth

- Volunteer demographics is an issue – there is a need to attract younger individuals to fill imminent gaps in the aging volunteer population

- The media's focus on crime impacts public perception of safety and increases the perceived amount of criminal activity

Top Priorities:

- Need to work with and engage youth to reduce the likelihood of deviant or criminal activity

- Addressing poverty and how it can be managed

- Engagement with community in crime prevention

- Standardization and training related to VAWIR (Violence Against Women in Relationships) Policy

- Crime and violence are connected to a person's overall well-being and health – intangible costs related to these issues emerge in the future, by investing in the front-end we will save in health care, social service, and legal costs in the long term

Priorities and Solutions:

- Visible police presence works and is an effective form of crime prevention

- Early and sustained interaction with police, elders, community leaders throughout childhood will have a positive impact on youth crime

- Education on community issues, as well as personal development programs give people the tools to better support themselves and their families

- Social media can be used as a tool to address crime prevention by creating opportunities to connect with youth

- Need to provide education to youth through the communication channels they use most such as social media and electronic devices

- Increase the number of programs designed to allow youth to support and mentor others

- Make volunteering part of the education curriculum and give youth credits for the volunteer work they perform

- Community accountability – communities need to step-up and take a role in watching out for criminal activity and taking steps to prevent crime

- There needs to be a resource or intermediary to manage, organize and attract volunteers

- Engaging members of the community to participate and interact in community development helps create a better understanding of the big issues they face

- Crime prevention initiatives should focus on improving quality of life and increase access to services that support healthy living and personal well-being

- Reallocating of funds as opposed to new funding – community objectives can be met by sharing resources where they are most needed

- Ensuring that the sources of funding for law enforcement are being managed efficiently and allocated appropriately

3. Police Core Responsibilities

Issues:

- Core responsibilities have evolved rapidly over time and depend on the size and location of the community

- There is a need for different skills, standards and job descriptions depending on where a police officer is stationed

- Citizens need to be educated on when it is appropriate to call the police, and to understand the role police play

- Due to the lack of funding provided to support services, police absorb additional responsibilities such as managing individuals with mental health issues or children in group homes

- Expectations of what police are responsible for must be realistic: if the expectation of police is to be first line responders for everything, they will need the appropriate training and funding to meet these expectations

- Although all core police functions are vital, due to an increase in demand and limited resources, police have to prioritize which services they focus on

- Due to limited availability of social services in both capacity and operating hours, people call the RCMP because they are the only service available

- Roles and responsibilities of police have increased through legislative changes and societal pressures

- Strong leadership is necessary for managing the relationship between law enforcement and the community

- Need more integrated, multi-agency response notably in prevention and intervention between law enforcement and social service entities

Top Police Core Responsibilities:

- Maintaining Public safety

- Catching criminals (keeping peace: serve and protect)
- Investigating crime
- Preventing crime (multi-faceted prevention)

Priorities and Solutions:

- Understand the younger generation of law enforcement officers and capitalizing on their understanding of current methods of communication such as social media in reaching out to youths
- Educate the general public about law enforcement responsibilities
- Maintain high visibility through physical police presence in communities
- Look at developing a provincial framework to help communities set up integrated teams of health, housing, addiction services, police, and other related services
- Encourage community members to utilize the opportunity of the RCMP Annual Performance Plan: used by RCMP to establish priorities by consulting with community leaders and elected officials
- Establish monthly meetings among law enforcement and community service providers to discuss issues and solutions collaboratively and maintain cross-agency awareness
- Look at revisions to the Freedom of Information Act (FOI) to allow for greater information sharing among agencies and police
- Public attitudes and perceptions toward crime need to be changed through positive awareness campaigns about what the real issues are
- Generating more involvement takes leadership—communities need more people to take charge
- Police need to remain current in their skills and abilities by continuously training to reflect current practices

4. Public Safety

Issues:

- Both traditional media and social media portray crime in a manner that skews public perception and does not necessarily reflect the reality of criminal activity or the key issues facing communities
- Legislated privacy rules don't allow sharing of sex offender information in certain circumstances
- The community needs to be aware of the big issues and the social programs that are available in support of solutions
- In certain areas of the community people do not feel safe, and feel that these areas are unsafe for others as well
- Women are far more likely to be victimized and likely feel less safe.
- Increased aggressiveness and proliferation of gang activity greatly reduces any perception of safety in the communities that are affected
- Gangs are recruiting from First Nations and are feeding into the gangs operating in larger centres like the Game Tight Soldiers.
- Youth are joining gangs to address family needs that are not being met

Top Priorities:

- Communicate the facts to the public so that the real issues are correctly understood
- Break down negative stereotypes
- Create awareness of the positive things happening in the community

- Instill pride in the community, with pride comes a sense of ownership by the community
- Increased RCMP visibility on the streets of the community
- Addressing the issues with gangs and organized crime
- Some of the responsibility for public safety needs to be shifted to community
- Need to increase long term thinking and solutioning focused on preventing criminal activity as opposed to short term solutioning focusing on stopping criminal activity

Priorities and Solutions:

- Acknowledge the positive contributions of local youth
- Team up older kids with younger kids – this helps youth transition more effectively when they have a role model
- Use youth as facilitators for community events
- Supporting youth to embrace their culture and heritage to build a sense of community
- Having a program where elders welcome kids as they enter schools, this helps with relationships
- Police need to respond to negative media coverage with their own positive campaigns
- Have a communication plan that is very accessible for the public, with the goal being to keep the community updated on crime statistics and news
- Police need to put high risk teens on safety plans, need to speak to these teens when they come to our community
- Use social media to channel messages from law enforcement to the public
- Have a visible presence of uniformed officers
- Citizens on Patrol makes people feel safe, same with Block Watch
- Build communities with Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) in mind
- Having a visible presence of citizens in and amongst the community also helps to increase public safety
- Empower communities to take responsibility for themselves and inspire community members to be more involved
- Long term transitional housing for women is working (5 years' placement vs 1 year)
- The community needs to take back some responsibility so that RCMP can focus on the job they have

5. Policing and Crime Prevention Resources

Issues

- Vacancy patterns in the policing detachments – filling vacancies is challenging as operating at full staff capacity would result in funding challenges
- There is no solutioning for housing support for individuals post incarceration
- Allocation of resources is not in sync with the supports needed for victims of crime
- The ineffective transfer of information and the high approval threshold for the charge approval process has made the system ineffective
- Restorative justice is not being utilized enough. The criteria for alternative measures programs/extrajudicial sanctions (e.g. offender must accept responsibility) and the absence of consequences for failing to successfully complete a restorative justice program when used as an extrajudicial measure is discouraging referrals to restorative justice programs.

- There is a lack of resources and education within law enforcement to manage relationships with different cultures

- The RCMP has an image and trust issue with the public as it only takes a few negative experiences to overshadow the good work being done

- There are not only "silos of excellence" but funding silos as well that create an atmosphere were agencies are competing for the same funding

- There are multiple overlapping support groups that are working independently and are trying to draw on the support from the same individuals or groups when they should be working together

- There needs to be a policy at a higher level encompassing the sharing of information between agencies within the social services continuum

- Victims services which work very closely with the RCMP are poorly resourced, resulting in lack of staff to adequately meet demand

- There are no transition homes for men post incarceration

- Rural areas are "getting what they pay for" - municipal officers can come in and provide coverage but provincial policing resources need to be increased

Priorities and Solutions

- Creating a presence of the local police force in the schools and in the community –being proactive and building relationships

- Commitment locally from superintendent, having a dedicated domestic violence officer

- Longer terms for first nations policing liaison - increasing the length of tenure would allow officers more time to integrate themselves within communities

- Allowing the RCMP to support small communities by having detachments in the communities even though the numbers may not justify it

- RCMP able to keep up pressure on gangs by focusing their resources

- Ability to front end load on incidents using "Surge" capacity such as in a small detachment – if a homicide happens you can get the extra resources in to support

- Creating programs to address specific issues within the community such as the Prolific Offender Program, which is working well and involves multiple agencies collaborating and working together

- Consolidation of services is working well in terms of saving money – single agency handling several different funding contracts

- The concept of public service triage which involves housing all the services required in one place and providing wrap around support to individuals providing all the services they need

- The public perception of law enforcement is very important and various strategies and policies to achieve this have and are being developed

- Continue to build upon the concept of locums/relief squads - move in when quickly needed and required

- Need to support the RCMP to perform their primary duties without having to take on responsibilities that should be managed by social services

- Put in place resources so that the police do not have to fill the gaps of other agencies that don't operate 24/7; the RCMP are the only ones available to respond to calls after hours

- Use a more consolidated approach by establishing working groups with joint vision or cause

- Address concerns over liability so that information can be shared safely – this will involve education and potentially changes to legislation

- Establish a sustainable long term funding approach that is integrated and connected across all ministries providing human services

- Shift more of the funding into treating problems and not the symptoms - start a new generation that is more proactive

- Open shelters for men; remove them from the home rather than the women and children: need to stop the revolving door and give them the same information we give women – shelters for men providing education and life skills

- Refer individuals to the appropriate service provider instead of law enforcement trying to be all things to all people

- Set up only a few consolidated service agencies and provide longer term funding so that they don't have to reapply year after year, and change the model so that funds not spent by March 31st do not have to be sent back

- Make the provincial government departments just as accountable for the money that they receive as the provincial government makes agencies accountable for the comparatively small amount of money they receive

Roundtable # 5 – Greater Vancouver: May 22, 2012

We want to thank all of the participants in the Greater Vancouver roundtable for taking the time to share their ideas, identify issues and discuss possible solutions to prevent and respond to criminal activity in their communities.

ROUNDTABLE FORMAT

A total of 52 people attended the fifth BC Policing Plan roundtable in Vancouver on May 22nd, 2012. Participants included local government representatives, victim services and community support organizations, aboriginal representatives and policing agencies. The goal of the roundtable was to capture constructive input from participants towards defining priorities and solutions on policing, crime prevention, and public safety in their community and for the province. To that end, participants were divided into four groups and engaged in four different cafe-style discussions throughout the day, including:

1. Problems and Responses to Criminal Activity
2. Police Core Responsibilities and Crime Prevention Resources
3. Crime prevention
4. Public safety

KEY THEMES

The following key themes emerged from the group discussions:

Integration within and among communities is crucial to promoting and enhancing crime prevention and public safety activities and behaviours. Police should continue working to build comprehensive relationships with all social and cultural groups within the larger community. Humanizing the police force through increased visibility and community interaction will contribute to building better relationships and community trust. Police priorities should be determined through dialogue with the community by bringing everyone together in a community process. The process of relationship building is interrupted and affected by transferring and reassignment of community based officers; it takes time and energy to rebuild relationships. Building layers of community champions to respond to issues is a key component to sustaining community involvement.

Communication and education is a priority. Having the Vancouver Police take a proactive position by informing the public of their initiatives through multiple channels such as social and mainstream media is effective. Communications strategies should be designed to address public safety as well as public perceptions of safety. Communities must work together and take responsibility for public safety. Public safety perception is greatly influenced by the culture, demographics and history; all of which exist within each community.

Crime prevention and intervention programs that are proven to work should be identified at the provincial level to help target actions aligned with community vision and province wide methodologies. As local and provincial government move more toward transparency, accountability and value for money, they will require evidence based information to justify expenditures. Programs should be based on provincial standards with a clear evaluation process to gauge program effectiveness in different communities. Both mandatory programs as well as optional programs should be available to allow them to customize the services they receive based on their needs.

Long term thinking and funding are needed to ensure programs are sustainable and address long term solutions. In addition, some programs have benefits that are difficult to measure in the short

term. Multi-year funding for crime prevention is needed so that the effectiveness of such programs can be measured and best practices can be identified. Political terms and government policies are not conducive to funding long term programs which typically take longer to demonstrate results but can be more effective than short term solutions.

Investing in youth early helps to prevent criminal behaviour. Education, mentoring and interaction with youth have shown positive benefits. Interaction in schools and involvement in after school programs can be an effective way to curtail youth from gang and criminal activity. We need to invest in youth through a more holistic approach and design programs that begin as early as pre-school.

Allocating existing police resources more efficiently may assist with budget cuts and funding uncertainty. As local community based services are cut back, police are being asked to perform duties that are outside their scope of training and therefore are not always delivering the quality of service(s) that they strive to and are expected to deliver. Filling the gap between the front end services that police provide and support services that must be filled through more comprehensive social care, mental health and addiction services would help ensure that the right people with the right training are addressing community needs and free up police resources for core policing functions.

Identifying best practices in other jurisdictions could help police develop effective law enforcement programs (e.g., crime prevention and crime reduction programs) and work with community agencies to support an effective continuum of social services. Inefficiencies exist in the justice system that are creating backlog in the courts and also creating frustration and scepticism in the public eye.

Provincial leadership with respect to evaluation processes and performance measures for policing and crime prevention would promote greater consistency of services, effective data and information sharing between agencies, and comparative analysis.

SUMMARY BY TOPIC

For each topic, participants were asked to identify key issues, solutions and priorities.

1. Problems and Responses to Criminal Activity

Issues:

- Gang impact on vulnerable youths being introduced to drugs and criminal behaviour
- Cases of domestic violence that go unreported, or where the victim does not want to proceed with charges
- A large proportion of crime goes unreported, especially in aboriginal communities
- Combating organized crime requires a lot of resources and time; currently the provincial resources are not sufficient to be effective
- Most complaints pertain to low level crime such as property crime, graffiti, break-ins, and vehicle thefts
- Domestic violence and the resulting intergenerational trauma
- Increases in the number of aboriginal youth gangs
- White collar crime such as identity theft, cyber-crimes, Ponzi schemes, mail theft, credit cards, and debit machines
- Gambling – there is an increase of young people gambling online
- Substance related crimes such as drug dealing, trafficking, grow ops, and, alcohol related crimes
- Human trafficking for sex trade or for labour

- People move away from communities with excessive crime, or hide from the community because of crime

- Existing restorative justice programs are under-utilized

- New immigrants are finding it difficult to integrate into communities; as a result both parents and children have a higher likelihood of participating in criminal behaviour

- Existing links between the health and criminal justice sectors do not offer long-term sustainable support to individuals with mental health issues, but instead continuously cycles them through the medical and criminal justice system

- The justice system is not effectively managing repeat offenders as they are ending back up in the community. The justice system (courts) should make the protection of victims and communities their primary goal.

Priorities and Solutions:

- Better training for police officers on family violence in support of breaking the cycle of violence in family units

- Long term sustained education and funding programs for children and families;

- Inform people about the issues in their community in a manner that engages them to get involved or take action (eg, Block Watch)

- Involve the Ministry of Education to educate youth about public safety and creating youth programs designed to keep them out of criminal activity

- Ensure programs are aligned with the community wants and needs

- Identify who is responsible for managing programs in the community; how programs are funded, and staffed

- Create school district partnerships with agencies to achieve sustainable funding to address youth related issues

- Clearly define for the public what criminal and health issues are and how they are managed differently

- Define measures for success on programs responding to criminal activity – measurement of effectiveness

- Build stronger social bonds between community members to improve trust and a sense of community belonging

- Build community knowledge to help in developing an accurate perception of criminal activity and identifying the real issues that must be addressed

- Promote physical education and healthy living for both youth and adults

- Develop an overarching provincial strategy to address drug addiction

- Review root causes of crime and identify effective treatment rather than incarceration

- Allocate more proportionate amount of the health budget to address mental health and addiction

- Increase training for police to manage mental health and addictions as first responders; education is needed to better understand current trends and issues facing communities

- Utilize more video conferencing for court cases and police testimony to speed up the process

- Develop provincial programs such as a common pawnshop identification registry and provincial strategy to address marijuana grow ops that can be utilized across all jurisdictions

- Enhance traffic safety programs, especially for immigrants on BC road rules and pedestrian safety awareness and education

2. Police Core Responsibilities and Policing and Crime Prevention Resources

Issues:

- Police agency core responsibilities are continually expanding due to increased needs for social services that are not being met
- Crime prevention should be the focus of the entire community and not just the responsibility of police
- Environmental design needs to be considered as a crime prevention tool (e.g., well-lit streets)
- The role of police needs to be clearly defined to reduce the disconnect between what the public perceives as a police responsibility and what is realistic to expect from police
- High turnover of police inhibits long-term relationship building with communities, especially for rural communities
- Sensationalism in the media distorts public perception of the real crime and safety issues in their communities.
- A strategy for succession planning in police departments is required as many senior members are set to retire
- There is a need for better information and data sharing across community agencies
- Increased administrative work is taking up a sizable portion of the officer's time and resources
- There is a need to better identify at-risk people and have the resources in place to support them
- Restorative justice is applied inconsistently across communities: in some cases the referral process is not working well and is under utilized
- Public engagement should be increased as law enforcement agencies need to strive to better educate the public and non-profit organizations about there role in preventing and responding to crime
- Accountability needs to be improved and clearly defined through independent review and auditing of law enforcement agencies
- Integration of services must happen at the provincial level to increase cooperation and reduce competition among agencies
- There is a need to dedicate more time to rehabilitate offenders; current programs seem to be primarily focused on victims
- Compassion fatigue is an issue: police resources get tired of repeatedly dealing with the same issues and challenges
- The current funding model needs to be examined and methods such as regionalization should be considered to better direct resources where they can be used most effectively
- Need to keep stats current and develop methods for obtaining accuracy in data collected/alternatives to official crime stats as a large proportion of crime currently goes unreported
- Sister Watch is a good example of a program where police officers are directly involved in helping a vulnerable population (women in the downtown eastside)
- The Surrey Wrap Project between Surrey School District, Surrey RCMP and the BC Integrated Task Force is a good initiative as it provides intensive wraparound services to at risk youth who exhibit signs of gang behaviour.

Top Priorities:

- Staffing enough front line police officers to effectively respond to calls

- Need consistent community funding for crime prevention and social development programs
- Increase training requirements for officers
- Solve the 'revolving door' problem by providing services linked to prevention, intervention and rehabilitation
- Avoid duplication of resources and achieve direct funding through amalgamation

Priorities (Core Responsibilities) and Solutions:

- Respond to serious criminal offenses and follow up on calls with investigations
- Enforce laws and maintain order
- Hold people accountable through court process
- Keep adequate records on lower priority offenses to make sure they can be addressed when resources become available
- Engage the community in the policing process to allow people to have a voice and express their concerns
- Police have to understand the social environment of the people they serve
- Police need to be aware of community resources available so they can refer people to where they can obtain the support or aid required
- Ensure there is effective internal discipline and police keep their own members accountable
- Intelligence gathering and statistical analysis of crime data are helpful investigative tools
- The responsibility of police is to act as mediators, community leaders, and educators in improving the quality of life of citizens through crime prevention and law enforcement
- Maintain greater understanding of new laws to keep abreast of ongoing changes in legal process
- Traffic safety and traffic control are a priority of police agencies
- Provide adequate compensation and training for police officers.
- Establish processes to regularly engage communities and community resources. NEST (Neighbourhood Integrated Service Teams) are effective at addressing local issues in a coordinated manner.
- Creating specialized units to deal with major issues such as domestic violence
- Integrated programs such as Car 86 (a program combining social workers and police responding together in the same vehicle) or IHIT (Integrated Homicide Investigation Team are working very well and need to be maintained
- PRIME is an example of a data and information sharing program helping police agencies share information across municipal and regional boundaries
- Outreach efforts within communities through social media (VPD Twitter account) are working well

3. Crime prevention

Issues:

- The response time for non-emergency calls is far too long
- Policy in managing criminal events such as domestic disputes are not being followed correctly creating inconsistencies in the services provided by police
- There are no measures currently in place to accurately determine the effectiveness of crime prevention initiatives

- Relationships with minority groups need to be improved and efforts need to be made to better understand their needs
- Within the current system issues have to reach a certain threshold before they are addressed (e.g., a young person has to actually be caught breaking the law) and by then the impact is far greater than if preventative measures were taken sooner
- Current funding for restorative justice is too small to have a visible impact
- There are no consistent standards for evaluating best practices in crime prevention
- Layers of bureaucracy are creating inefficiencies in the justice system
- There is hesitation to provide money for crime prevention initiatives due to the inability to measure and assess the effectiveness
- There is a lack of clarity on the roles and responsibilities of the public and law enforcement with respect to crime prevention
- Society sees police as a solution to social problems; expectations must be more realistic
- There is a lack of time and resources to take concepts for integrated programs and put them into practice
- There are not enough policing resources to implement proactive policing approach
- Relationship building with communities is an intangible asset that cannot be measured when assessing levels of funding
- A disconnect exists between what is happening at the service delivery level and leadership in police agencies
- Absence of police board in RCMP jurisdictions – there is no direct voice for the people of the communities
- Drug addiction and possession needs to be treated as health issue and not just an offence warranting jail time
- Downloading mental health issues from the province onto police is a regular occurrence
- Loss of municipal/designated police force members to RCMP due to higher paying positions

Top Priorities

- Provide support to members of the community with addictions or mental health issues
- Provide culturally sensitive and linguistically appropriate services
- Look beyond short term costs of an investment to the long term outcomes
- Evaluate programs and set standards by which they can be measured
- Enhance communication between police and communities
- Increase referrals to community justice (restorative justice)
- Support investment in youth before they enter into the justice system
- Provide better access to training and training subsidies
- Continue cultural sensitivity training for police to educate and break down barriers
- Provide evidence-based, consistent and well-funded anti-gang and anti-drug programs for youth
- Improve access to information and data to aid in the prioritization of programs and initiatives
- Provide provincial, standardized crime prevention programs from which communities can choose to implement
- Increase collaboration at all levels and not just on the local level

- Maintain a leadership role in evidence based policing in Canada

- Receive acknowledgement from stakeholders that crime prevention is a shared responsibility

Priorities and Solutions:

- Ensure services are available for persons with addictions, in particular in the Downtown Eastside Vancouver. Mental health and childhood abuse/difficult family situations are closely related

- Communities used to have neighbourhood liaison officers who didn't directly solve the problems in the community but ensured the problem was being solved

- Identify a compendium of crime prevention programs at the provincial level, mandating some programs while making others optional

- Increase accessibility to support centers such as detox and rehabilitation facilities

- Provide mandatory cultural sensitivity training for all law enforcement

- Provide funding for an aboriginal policing unit and improved victim services for aboriginal communities

- Implement a real time crime centre that knows criminal event patterns, movement of criminals across boundaries, etc. (i.e., centralized intelligence centre)

- Police priorities should be determined through face to face dialogue with the community. Bring everyone together and make it a community process. Those most affected by the issues need to be better engaged such as youth, seniors, aboriginal people and others. It needs to feel like the community is creating it. There is so much power/wisdom/insights from community engagement; it increases safety and public perception of police being someone you can turn to for help. Public safety is something that is in everyone's interest.

- Public education of policing – people would appreciate knowing what police are doing. If people can access this information from police directly rather than media, internet, it would be better. This is the age of "open data".

- High turnover in RCMP policed communities can be difficult for communities as one of the most challenging tasks is rebuilding relationships

- Provide multi-year funding for crime prevention programs and make sure the effectiveness of the program can be measured and best practices can be identified

- Need an evaluation process for crime prevention programs that can be used to compare results across different agencies

- For each risk factor that makes youth susceptible to crime there is a resilience factor that can help to mitigate risks

- Retired/outgoing RCMP acting as liaisons could help new officers get to know communities

- Reach out to new immigrants and marginalized individuals to build an inclusive environment within communities

- Engage the development industry in Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design–Developers should consult with police agencies about optimal design to deter crime on major new developments. Interest is there but there are limited police resources to fulfill this role.

- Intelligence gathering and intelligence led policing are working well in reducing crime

- Provide services that link children, youth and families together

- Tap into communities to see what works. Try to find out what works in that community and how can we support more of that. Avoid cookie cutter approach. Allow aboriginal communities to determine programs.

4. Public Safety:

Issues:

- There is no clear understanding of what community factors influence public safety, what is missing from certain communities and how it can be restored
- Police and community programs alike need to foster "inter-culturalism", not just multiculturalism. If we're geographic neighbours we need to work together on community safety and crime prevention.
- The perception of public safety is distorted and inconsistent with what the reality is
- Defining public safety and who is responsible for maintaining it
- Public safety is undermined in certain areas due to community members being intimidated by perpetrators from cooperating with police
- Difficulty in managing the perception of public safety as it is greatly influenced by the culture and demographics that exist within each community
- Police are relocating or being reassigned after only a few years creating a disruption in the relationship between police and the community
- The amount of funding, and how efficiently current funding is being utilized is an ever present issue
- Police are expected to take on too great of a role in public safety in addition to managing crime prevention, acting as counsellors and providing social service support
- Lack of social support services such homeless shelters and rehabilitation centers
- Inefficiencies exist in the justice system that are creating backlog in the courts

Top Priorities:

- Build layers of community champions to respond to issues
- Building connections between individuals in the community is important, such as police building relationships with community members
- Increase media accuracy in reporting crime and highlighting the real issues
- Communications strategies should be designed to address public safety as well as public perceptions of safety. Police should communicate, inform and educate the public, such as having the Vancouver Police take a proactive position in informing the public on their initiatives through mainstream channels such as social media

Priorities and Solutions:

- Police need to provide current information to the public about public safety so that the public can have an accurate view of public safety issues.
- Integration of marginalized individuals such as those with mental health issues into the community
- The whole community must work together to share a universal sense of public safety
- Have police work to build comprehensive relationships with all social and cultural groups within the larger community
- Expand co-operative programs in high crime areas such as Vancouver's downtown eastside that engages the community on what is happening around them
- Humanize the police force through increased visibility and community interaction to build better relationships and community trust

- Identify where a broader, more visible police presence is effective and where a more subtle approach is appropriate
- Survey the community at large to gather their opinions on public safety
- Streamline the justice system by changing the charge approval process which creates delays
- Take a more holistic approach to crime prevention
- Create an online system to allow for the electronic reporting of crime
- Use social media to allow citizens to connect with law enforcement and voice their thoughts and concerns
- Create better relations between police and the media
- Increase information sharing between the agencies.
- Build the continuum of involvement between community, volunteers, security and police

Roundtable # 6 – Greater Vancouver & Fraser Valley: May 24, 2012

We want to thank all of the participants in the Greater Vancouver & Fraser Valley roundtable for taking the time to share their ideas, identify issues and discuss possible solutions to prevent and respond to criminal activity in their communities.

ROUNDTABLE FORMAT

A total of 60 people attended the Sixth BC Policing Plan roundtable in Surrey on May 24th, 2012. Participants included local government representatives, victim service and community support organizations, First Nations and policing agencies. The goal of the roundtable was to capture constructive input from participants towards defining priorities and solutions on policing, crime prevention, and public safety in their community and for the province. To that end, participants were divided into four groups and engaged in four different cafe-style discussions throughout the day, including:

1. Problems with and Responses to Criminal Activity
2. Police Core Responsibilities and Policing and Crime Prevention Resources
3. Crime prevention
4. Public safety

KEY THEMES

The following key themes emerged from the group discussions:

Focus on community policing is needed to encourage culturally sensitive conversations to occur in order to maximize community involvement. It is important to get culturally diverse members of the community to get involved in providing input on community decisions. Citizens should be engaged in activities to enhance public safety and promote crime prevention.

Supporting children and youth is an important aspect of crime prevention and enhancing public safety. Identifying at risk children and youth in schools who are susceptible to becoming involved in criminal activity or gang violence and providing support services to them is critical. Programs or behaviour that encourage young people to get to know police at a personal level would help young people see police as public safety partners. Programs must focus on youth from as early as preschool to ensure negative influences in their environment do not shape their behaviour as they grow and learn.

Strong media relations are critical to keeping the public informed and engaged in public safety and crime prevention. There is a need to strike a balance between educating the public on criminal activity and celebrating successful apprehension and crime prevention efforts, so that perceptions of community safety are not skewed. Police need to work with local media to create a trusting relationship and to ensure that whenever possible the public is receiving an accurate picture of the criminal landscape.

Provincial integration across ministries would maximize the effective use of limited resources through the breakdown of organizational silos. Often different ministries are servicing the same clientele, sometimes without knowledge of the programs and initiatives other ministries have. Smart decisions need to be made using community and regional input regarding the allocation of resources to address crime prevention, social services and public safety education. Partnerships on key initiatives between agencies and ministries could be directed or coordinated by the Province.

Restorative Justice initiatives and offender rehabilitation programs are more effective in addressing repeat criminal activity than the traditional court system. Emphasis should be placed on restorative justice and offender rehabilitation initiatives that seek to break the cycle of criminal behavior through providing supervision, support and reintegration of offenders back into society.

Evolution of policing is resulting in a smarter police force with more emphasis on critical thinking and communication skills over physical presence, as the scope of the roles and responsibilities of policing have grown due to the criminalization of social problems. Criminal issues and social issues must be differentiated and handled separately to reduce the strain on the justice system and clarify the role of police. Ensuring that there are support programs that address issues of poverty, homelessness and mental health would allow police to spend more time focusing on crime rather than social issues.

SUMMARY BY TOPIC

For each topic, participants were asked to identify key issues, solutions and priorities.

1. Problems and Responses to Criminal Activity

Issues – main types of criminal activities:

- Organized crime and gang activity
- Domestic violence
- Street level disorder created by panhandlers, transients and neglected properties
- Drug trafficking
- Lower level crimes such as vandalism and B&Es which directly affect the most people
- Young people who are exploited by gangs or are taken into the sex trade because they are caught up in the drug culture
- Unreported crimes such as elderly abuse that results in inaccurate reporting of crime statistics
- Closure of support facilities such as the Riverview Institution results in individuals with mental health issues ending up on the streets being managed by police
- Police are spending a large amount of resources dealing with individuals with mental health issues as continuous support programs are not providing adequate aid
- Bullying in schools
- Prolific offenders and the immense burden they create on the justice system
- Proliferation of drugs and petty crime is leading to cultural acceptance/normalization of crime in certain areas of the community
- Perception that people suffering from mental health are part of the problem and the cause of crime
- Many ministries and agencies service the same client base but within silos

Priorities and Solutions:

- Target prolific offenders (e.g., Prolific Offender Program)
- Partnerships on key initiatives between agencies
- The development of collaborative models
- Identify crime trends and conduct crime analysis
- Send out statistics and information on crime prevention to businesses and the community to help them identify and understand what types of crime are occurring and what preventative measures can be taken

- Restorative Justice initiatives are effective in targeting low level crime and first time offenders through intervention for victims and offenders rather than punishment

- Create community-based crime reduction strategies that place ownership and responsibility in the hands of the municipalities that will empower local police to "own" the strategy

- Integrated police teams such as the gang taskforce are effective in managing serious crimes

- Focus on certain issues collectively through media blitzes or campaigns

- Counselling and referral services for youth through schools

- Appoint a dedicated individual to be committed to addressing a specific community issue such as managing chronic offenders

- Information sharing and records management through PRIME

- Build relationships with members of the community through police visibility and direct interaction

- Use a targeted approach to focus resources on specific issues to address them in a timely manner

- Supportive Housing for people with mental health issues, and with FASD (fetal alcohol spectrum disorder)

- Work with communities in providing crime data and information to support police

- Initiatives to educate the community in preventing situational crime

- Encourage Stakeholders to form committees that come up with effective solutions for addressing issues within the community

- Better protect citizens using public transportation, and understand that public transportation may give criminals easier access to more areas of the community

- The scope of what is defined as a mental health issue needs to be more focused to identify those individuals who are not supported by the system

- Ensure information being provided to the public is accurate and up to date

- Establishing public trust in the criminal justice system requires reforms for the system to operate more effectively so the public can see due-process taking place

- Reward efficient, accountable and effective use of funding with secure long-term funding for crime prevention, restorative justice and victim services

- Focus on the root causes of crime

- Remote communities experience challenges that need to be considered and appropriately addressed

- Establish a provincial centre of excellence that identifies best practices in policing

- Find new solutions to separate mental and social issues from criminal issues

- Keep officers in communities longer to allow time to build relationships and become part of the community

- Recognize that one size does not fit all as each community has varying needs

2. Police Core Responsibilities and Policing and Crime Prevention Resources

Issues:

- The scope and complexity of police responsibilities has grown to the extent it is difficult for both involved stakeholders and the general public to define police core responsibilities. There is confusion as to what police are truly responsible for

- The criminalization of social problems transfers responsibility for a wide range of issues onto police

- Currently, all police receive the same standard training, which does not accurately address the varying needs of communities and the different roles police are required to fill

- There is a need to link crime prevention and policing as a lot of crime prevention is left to volunteers and community

- Police tend to be viewed in a negative light because the media don't typically promote crime prevention and instead focus on negative stories

- Dedicating resources to crime prevention can be difficult to justify as the positive impact it has on communities cannot be immediately observed/measured

- Alternative solutions to incarceration should be explored, especially for first offencesas detention centres are often where offenders become hardened criminals or resign themselves to criminal lifestyle choices

- Law enforcement is focused on short-term responses to criminal activity. The financial and social costs of crime are far greater than the cost of solutions focused on long-term prevention

- Officers promoted to management or leadership positions should be required to take training courses – such as business admin and HR–to better handle these new roles

- Policing needs to be driven by demand and statistical support in determining how to best utilize resources

- Liability and privacy issues inhibit the sharing of information

- Mental health should not be a core policing responsibility: proper services must be in place so that police can concentrate on criminal activity

- The provincial government needs to take on additional responsibility for mental health issues

- Training for police has to be continuously evolving as society and criminal activity evolves

- Define what can be dealt with at the community level versus provincial policing level

- Strategize and look at how resources are deployed in order to be responsive to the needs identified in communities

- Create better information sharing between education, health, and law enforcement resources

- The cost of policing is increasing and should be reviewed to determine why

- The first things to be cut from the policing budget is crime prevention

- There is a need for more volunteers and recreational activities to keep youth engaged

Top Priorities:

- Restorative justice program needs proper referral process and proper funding so that the program isn't so reliant upon volunteers

- Identify desired outcomes for policing and then begin to develop strategies to meet those outcomes and provide appropriate support to do it – strategies need to be developed across agencies and ministries

- Provide more resources to prevention instead of intervention–whether it is crime prevention, health care, education or other

Priorities and Solutions:

- Youth outreach program such as Operation Lodestar which educates parents about youth recruitment in gangs; helps communities to better understand and invest in their youth to prevent them from succumbing to a criminal lifestyle

- Create dedicated units to address specific issues such as domestic violence

- Car 67 (mental health/social worker and police riding in same car) is a successful example of collaboration between different agencies to address key issues such as mental health

- Provide victim services that can support different cultures and demographics within the community

- Immediate responses are needed in addressing youth who engage in crime to instil the understanding that negative behavior is met with negative consequences

- Make sure the right candidates are identified to take part in restorative justice to maintain the credibility of the program

- Agencies that support restorative justice must see positive outcomes from their efforts

- Police need to take time to build relationships and connect with services and agencies in their community so that they know where to go and whom to approach when they have a question or need help

- There is a need to educate citizens about the various ways they can help in their communities

- Should be spending more resources on early intervention and prevention

- The best opportunity for targeting a large number of youth is in schools – it is the best way to reach children effectively

- Create committees from complementary agencies to discuss specific cases of offenders with multiple needs and requiring a large amount of resources and management

- Develop a community court system for Surrey

- Allocate police resources to communicate and build relationships with both victims and offenders to show that they matter and are supported by law enforcement

- Celebrate accomplishments and the good work being done to shape the public's perception to be more positive

- Empower the community to become more involved in crime prevention

- Make sure the public has access to, and is aware of where they can find information on current and past crime initiatives, strategies and results

3. Crime prevention

Issues:

- Silo organizational structures are inhibiting information sharing

- Prohibition of marijuana is ineffective and may only aid in supporting gang activity

- Policing is too reactively focused and needs to be more proactive in looking at the root causes of crime

- The province is downloading responsibilities onto municipalities who are then expected to provide the funding to support crime prevention programs

- There is insufficient funding for Restorative Justice Programs

- Many crime prevention programs are not measured on results or their effectiveness so there are no indicators if they are working or not

- The criminal justice system is not responsive to Domestic Violence and is not adequately equipped to deal with these cases

- There needs to be more coordination and collaboration of crime prevention and victim services as many services and agency mandates overlap

- There is a lack of available programs for offenders in the community

- There are insufficient resources to support high risk youth

- A delay exists between when victims and offenders require services and when those services are available

- Police are called upon to deal with both mental health issues and criminal issues, blurring the distinction between the two and appropriate responses

- Agencies need to communicate better and define what services are needed in the community

- Continually dealing with chronic offenders is extremely time consuming and resource intensive

- Petty crimes

- The legal system is too bureaucratic making it time consuming and costly

Top Priorities

- Sharing of information and funding between agencies

- Address marijuana prohibition

- Programs where kids are identified early as at-risk and supported appropriately

- Mental Health professionals need to be tied more closely with schools and law enforcement

- More crime prevention and education programs

- Sustainable, long term funding for crime prevention – funding over 3-5 years

Priorities and Solutions:

- Create dedicated positions for officers to act as liaisons in both schools and the community

- The management of prolific offenders, mental health and substance abuse through education and collaborative programs such as Car 67 (Mental Health Worker teamed up with RCMP officer and they attend mental health related calls for service)

- Programs that engage community members such as Block Watch that get people active and involved

- Volunteer involvement in crime prevention programs

- Increased police presence such as the DARE program in schools that gets officers out into the community

- Have officers dedicated and responsible for managing specific crime issues such as domestic abuse

- More community based volunteer programs to ease the demand on law enforcement and social services

- Educate the public on how they can get involved and make a difference in their community, and how their time and energy makes a positive impact

- Legalize marijuana: what are the facts, advantages and disadvantages?

- Develop the appropriate communication channel between agencies for sharing best practices at a federal or provincial level

- Province should take more responsibility for the cost of policing

- Utilize available data to aid in program development

- More programs need to be based on the principles of Restorative Justice

- Universal standards are needed and programs need to be continuously evaluated to ensure consistency and effectiveness

- Changing demographics need to be taken into consideration when anticipating future community needs and funding

- More leadership from senior government is needed to create a stronger more focused vision for the public for crime prevention

4. Public Safety

Issues:

- Perceptions of public safety are often not aligned with actual crime patterns
- The average person has no experience interacting with police resulting in public perception being greatly influenced by the media
- Youth education programs targeting high school students are not effective as they have already been influenced by gangs or drugs; programs should start earlier
- There are few indicators for the public that identify that police are doing a good job and increasing public safety in their community
- The changing face of the police officer is one that now must be a strategic and critical thinker and not just a physical presence
- The cycle of poverty
- When the police board consults with communities regarding priorities they hear feedback on issues that directly affect those in attendance, such as increased traffic enforcement in the community. This may not reflect broader community interests or more serious underlying problems
- Public perception is that the courts are too soft on prolific offenders
- For many segments of the population there is a sense of safety and police becoming more engaged in their communities but it's not so for everyone. No public safety for aboriginal women
- People need to be able to have an outlet to voice their concerns on policing issues
- Lack of reporting crime results in inaccurate statistics and misallocation of resources
- Require more supportive housing for the mentally ill and addicted and better coordinated responses in dealing with these individuals
- If people have a negative experience with police, such as not having them respond to a call, it results in a major blow to public confidence in policing
- Consolidate information on policing and crime that can be accessed by different agencies and/or the public
- Increase visibility of police officers
- Creating more volunteer programs such as Citizens on Patrol
- Educating children and youth (engaging parents as well)
- Having outreach program for seniors and special groups
- Understanding that public perceptions about safety is important and affects behaviour
- It is important for police to work with the media and to maintain good media relations
- Recognize generational differences and cultural differences when evaluating how a community perceives safety
- Ministries that operate within the continuum of care are difficult to work with as they operate within silos
- The public feel that the system isn't working
- there are unreasonable expectations of the judicial system and police

Priorities and Solutions:

- Community involvement, people taking ownership and getting involved

- More consultation between public, police boards and police

- Strategies that help the public to get to know police at a personal level and increase media coverage of positive stories and successes

- Increase citizen engagement to deal with community issues

- Work with vulnerable children and youth

- Public education is a critical component in crime prevention and must be an area of focus. Educate people about local crime patterns, actions they can take to protect themselves/their property, how they can get involved, police role

- Identify system efficiencies and areas where technology could be utilized to increase efficiency

- Improve communications and relations between the police and community agencies

- More accountability should be placed on the citizen and not the government

- Engage marginalized members of the community to make them feel included and important

Roundtable # 7 – North Coast & Nechako: June 1, 2012

We want to thank all of the participants in the North Coast & Nechako regional roundtable for taking the time to share their ideas, identify issues and discuss possible solutions to prevent and respond to criminal activity in their communities.

ROUNDTABLE FORMAT

A total of 29 people attended the Seventh BC Policing Plan roundtable in Prince Rupert on June 1st, 2012. Participants included local government representatives, First Nations, victim service and community support organizations and policing agencies. The goal of the roundtable was to capture constructive input from participants towards defining priorities and solutions on policing, crime prevention, and public safety in their community and for the province. To that end, participants were divided into three groups and engaged in six different cafe-style discussions throughout the day, including:

1. Problems with Criminal Activity

2. Responses to Criminal Activity

3. Police Core Responsibilities

4. Crime Prevention

5. Public Safety

6. Policing and Crime Prevention Resources

KEY THEMES

The following key themes emerged from the group discussions:

Awareness and understanding of community and First Nations culture are important in delivering effective responses to criminal activity and crime prevention strategies, as well as promoting positive police-community relationships. Children and youth that are educated in their cultural traditions are less likely to engage in criminal activity and feel more commitment to their community. Many instances of criminal behaviour could be better managed and addressed if the culture and family values of the community were integrated with the methodology and practices of police. RCMP understanding of the Aboriginal political framework is also important in order to build strong and long-lasting relationships with the community.

Resources for mental health and addictions are limited and consume a large portion of police resources that could be allocated to other activities that police are better equipped and trained to address. It is especially difficult to dedicate a resource to manage and facilitate collaboration and information sharing between agencies in small remote communities.

Drug and alcohol abuse are significant drivers of criminal behaviour and gang activity in the area. Most rural communities do not have the infrastructure and resources to adequately address drug and alcohol issues. Most resources serve as reactive or short-term services and do not adequately address these health issues within the continuum of care that is needed, particularly among men who have come into contact with the criminal justice system. Many people with drug and alcohol issues are not getting adequate treatment and are often in and out of the criminal justice system. Unmanaged substance abuse in households leads to numerous health and safety related issues and perpetuates a cycle of addiction and violence in families.

Poor economic conditions in remote communities are one of the primary root causes of criminal activity. It was suggested that regionalization and de-centralization initiatives by the Provincial Government to base services in these areas would help to create jobs and stimulate the local economy.

Supporting youth and healthy living through recreational facilities and organized sport was identified as a priority. Educating youth on the benefits of leading a healthy active lifestyle, and providing a positive environment help at-risk youth to be more resilient against negative influences.

Limited resources are available across the spectrum of police, mental health, justice system and social services in rural and remote areas. Many services operate on a limited capacity over a large geographical area and few communities have the ability to coordinate services to address the root causes of crime. Police are doing a good job but cannot adequately meet all the needs that rural communities are facing for criminal activity and public safety. Creative solutions must be found in order to address these unique needs such as through crime prevention through environmental design and the engagement of community members as auxiliary support for these services.

There is disillusionment with the justice system. This is the result of the community failing to see due process take place because of inefficiencies and delays and the inability of the system to properly sentence and rehabilitate prolific offenders. As a result, members of the community are less likely to report crimes or work with police.

SUMMARY BY TOPIC

For each topic, participants were asked to identify key issues, solutions and priorities.

1. Problems with Criminal Activity

Issues:

- The fear induced in the community by gangs and violence is stopping people from reporting crimes and working with police

- Domestic violence and sexual abuse are major issues that often occur behind closed doors, which either go unreported or are reported years later, which can create challenges to investigating these cases

- The level of communication between law enforcement and the community is not effective in emphasizing the magnitude of community issues such as drugs

- Addiction and the cycle of addiction in families due to the lack of support or rehabilitation services

- The accessibility of drugs and the emerging prevalence of new and dangerous chemical-based drugs in the community

- Sexual assaults/sexual abuse of young girls related to drug and alcohol use

- Petty street crime, vandalism and B & E's related to drug and alcohol use and poor economic conditions

- Emerging (and little understood) crimes such as elder abuse, human trafficking, internet luring, cyber bullying and web/internet scams – participants unsure of the scope of these issues in their communities

- There is a lack of resources in providing social services which include programs such as counselling, safe houses, and social workers to educate and work with families. Also lack of services for offenders

- Frustration with legal system that takes too long for cases to be concluded, and that is seen as a revolving door that does not rehabilitate or support individuals who are likely to reoffend

- A culture of close family ties and fear of children being taken into care of Ministry of Children and Family Development, notably in the aboriginal community that results in a code of silence resulting in poor communication with police

- Youth are not supported effectively, which perpetuates the cycle of social disorder in families and the community. Youth have to break the law before they can be referred to services and by then it is already too late

- Criminalization of people who are just trying to meet their basic needs, instead of aiding them in meeting those needs

- The evolution of technology is changing how criminals operate and the public is not being educated to protect themselves from cybercrime

- The perception that there is no incentive to report issues within the community due to how ineffective the justice system is

- As the community begins to feel less safe, the sense of community and relationships break down as people retreat within their homes

- Awareness that crime problems in Prince Rupert may worsen with expansion of port activities and need to be thinking forward

Priorities

- Addressing the root causes of criminal activity including economic conditions and the lack of opportunities, mental health issues, and addiction

- Share information with the community about crime trends and problems

- Equip people with the life skills they need to take advantage of opportunities and be successful through education

- Increase resources to process cases through the justice system more quickly and include treatment/ resources the offender needs to address underlying causes of their criminal behaviour

- Localize more resources: regionalization of jobs and opportunities

- Establish cross cultural programming in communities

- Provide treatment facilities and services for men and youth

2. Responses to Criminal Activity

Issues:

- Funding programs based on population is not the most appropriate means of allocating resources to address domestic violence issues

- RCMP posting of two years is too short to build strong relationships with the communities they are stationed in

- There are not enough resources in the justice system to adequately respond to the issues they are dealing with such as mental health and addictions

- The charge approval process is challenging for police officers and often times charges are not approved

- There is a lack of offender support programs, as well as a consistent presence of a community probation officers to manage these individuals

- Victim Service programs are competing with other programs for resources, which compromises the consistency and effectiveness of the programs

- First Nations communities are subject to both federal and provincial laws which at times are not aligned
- Bootlegging is a major issue on reserves

Top Priorities:

- Deal with hard drug issues
- Focus on youth education and prevention and develop a long term vision on crime prevention
- Build community awareness
- Address capacity issues with the court process
- Focus on the root causes of crime, specifically alcohol abuse
- Address the bootlegging of alcohol
- Provide youth offenders with support so that they can be effectively rehabilitated
- Address the RCMP funding cut backs and the effects they have had on northern communities
- Provide cross cultural and sensitivity training for all the justice system resources
- Support initiatives that will allow police to build or enhance trust in communities at the local level
- Mandate domestic violence training for Police
- Address the lack of affordable housing and support facilities available for marginalized individuals
- Support and fund alternatives to the court process such as Restorative Justice
- Domestic violence initiatives that leave the family in the home and have the abuser removed
- Work on building better communication practices between the Provincial government and communities

Priorities and Solutions:

- Build strong relationship with RCMP and work with local media for public awareness around drug abuse and alcohol abuse
- Develop Offender Management programs such as curfew management in support of trying to positively shape the behavior of offenders
- Establish youth empowerment programs to get youth involved so that are less likely to become involved with drugs, crime or alcohol abuse
- Establish DARE programs in schools and policing on the streets
- Support community initiatives that coordinate police and community members working together to respond to criminal activity
- Support approaches such as Violence Against Women In Relationships Committees. These committees are effective in communicating across the sectors and developing an understanding of the continuum of service being delivered and coordinated for victims
- RCMP need to focus on being more integrated and connected within the community and bring experienced officers into the community
- Provide new RCMP personnel with background information and insight on the communities they are transferring to
- Work on violence prevention issues through youth prevention
- Provide alternatives to the criminal justice process
- Police training needs to be evaluated and adjusted to fit the specific community's needs
- Explore the feasibility of crime prevention techniques through environmental and social design

- Focus on Aboriginal Youth Justice programs around drug awareness

3. Policing and Crime Prevention Resources

Issues:

- Police are not equipped to deal with mental health issues
- There is a shortage of resources to deal with mental health and addictions
- Takes too long to get people the support services they require
- Health and Justice are closely related ministries that operate in silos
- Remote communities have poor access to the resources they need to address community issues
- There is a lack of consistency in program delivery when there are position changes in leadership roles in the RCMP
- Technology for personal communications are inadequate – cell phones often don't work due to lack of support infrastructure
- RCMP resources are stretched too thin to provide fulltime policing to all small communities
- Provincial support programs are offered through multiple ministries but there is no cohesion between them
- There is a need for long term investments in programs and stable funding
- Need to build trust and strong relationships with police

Top Priorities:

- Maintain an aboriginal community liaison position
- Establish support services and housing for mentally ill and those with substance abuse issues
- Educate and involve the community in teaching and raising children and youth
- Build a sense of community through teaching about culture and traditions
- Provide more Provincial policing resources in Prince Rupert area to support outlying communities
- Improve justice process to increase confidence amongst the public
- Establish longer terms for resident workers such as the RCMP

Priorities and Solutions:

- Incorporate the culture of the community into the services being provided
- Empower communities to help themselves
- Establish shelters similar to the Damp Shelter – where someone is intoxicated and not violent can stay overnight to sober up
- Establish DARE programs in all communities
- Provide communities with adequate recreation programs for youth
- Have individuals in law enforcement dedicated to key areas such as crime prevention
- Establish citizen groups like Citizens on Patrol to provide eyes and ears for the community
- Support School and Aboriginal liaison positions which are working well

4. Crime Prevention

Issues:

- Violence is an issue in the community, especially amongst youth
- Elder abuse is not being adequately addressed
- The impact that unhealthy living has on communities such as the proliferation of diabetes
- Poverty is one of the root causes driving youth to crime
- No preventative or educational programs are available to help abusive men
- Services are not available in a timely manner for women who are affected by violence
- There is a disconnect between the family values and culture in the community and the laws the justice system are enforcing
- The community tends to wait for the government to lead action on community issues – the community needs to take responsibility and action on community issues
- There is a failure to notify the community and the victims when offenders are released
- The community is not entirely aware of the crime prevention initiatives that are taking place

Top Priorities:

- Create school programs for youth
- Focus on parenting skills emphasizing training for first-time parents
- Providing education and awareness on personal wellbeing, community issues, and crime prevention for all members of the community is key
- Provide support options and alternatives for both victims and offenders
- Build relationships and a mutual understanding between the community and police
- Utilize resources more effectively when dealing with the root causes of crime such as drugs and alcohol
- Look at expanding the Urban Aboriginal Justice Strategy
- Regionalize opportunities and growth by the government to better support smaller communities in the province
- Ensure that initiatives are results driven
- Commitment by law enforcement to accountability and reporting to stakeholders
- Increase Police visibility
- Focus on the safety of seniors and preventing elder abuse
- Address mental health issues
- The Provincial Government really needs to see firsthand the challenges faced by remote communities
- Share best practices and programs that have proven to be effective
- Create a paid position within communities as a resource whose mandate is crime prevention

Priorities and Solutions:

- Support sports programs which keep community members busy and improve quality of life by promoting fitness and bringing the community together
- Identify the root cause of crime and criminal behaviour to address the underlying problems
- Establish bike patrols, they work well as increasing the officer's visibility in the community

- Establish programs such as CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) which has been proven to be effective when crime prevention resources are limited
- Build cultural awareness to strengthen communities
- Focus on prolific offenders
- Establish committees such as the Violence Against Women In Relationships committee which is working well in our community through open communication
- Work with children and parents on preventing sexual abuse – also tells the community we are watching over the children
- Increase referrals from Crown to Aboriginal Justice Program – this increases the value offenders place in themselves and increases their connection to the community
- Identify youth who are at risk of involvement in criminal behaviors early and provide supports and interventions. The NCPC funded project Building and Sharing Culturally Responsive Crime Prevention Approaches in Aboriginal Communities is a great example of a program to help communities implement culturally relevant crime prevention programming
- Support increased visibility initiatives, police also need to show that they respect and believe in the community
- Focus on increasing volunteer numbers to supplement policing resources
- The RCMP should not be expected to create solutions for all community issues
- Build transparency and trust between community and police
- Support crime prevention by educating the community on healthy living and lifestyle choices

5. Public Safety

Issues:

- A sense of public safety is a matter of context and perception; the majority of the time people feel safe in their communities depending on the area and time of day
- There are isolated rural areas and the communities there do not have good communication or awareness on initiatives pertaining to public safety
- The leniency criminals experience in the justice system enables them to continue to be prolific offenders and does nothing to prevent them from reoffending
- Fear of retribution is a major issue in obtaining witnesses to crime

Top Priorities:

- Support Community Policing and enhance police visibility in the community
- Increase community awareness on issues and the initiatives and services available to address them; encourage community volunteerism and involvement in public safety initiatives to ease the demands on police to administer these programs
- Strengthen and enforce enhanced sentencing through Court Services; Ensure court orders are actively monitored
- Increase resources and funding to policing
- Use resources effectively to meet the needs of northern communities and the unique challenges they face
- Become more aware of the benefits of Aboriginal Policing in remote Aboriginal communities
- Increase training for officers on sensitivity and dealing with family related issues

- Plan and improve the physical environment to discourage criminal activity
- Provide more resources and options to deal with drug dealers to get them off the street

Priorities and Solutions

- Increase RCMP visibility in the neighborhoods
- Support infrastructure through home inspections and education on better practices to create safe home environments
- Provide timely response to emergency calls
- Provide safe shelters to ensure safe environments for citizens in need
- Identify and remove the drug dealers from the community
- Support Citizens on Patrol, Police Bike Squad, and Community Policing which all work well
- Provide individual safety planning for victims escaping domestic violence
- Increase visibility of police in targeted areas where there are public safety issues and criminal activity occurring
- Increase cross cultural awareness to de-escalate the potential for tensions between different youth from different cultural backgrounds
- Communities need to be more proactive and involved in countering drug dealers and following through with commitment to testify against charged drug dealers
- Utilize citizens on patrol members to support police
- Police services must use community resources and information in remote areas to be effective as they do not have a permanent presence
- Public acknowledgement of citizens who do good work in their community
- Increase access to some form of affordable public transportation for remote communities

6. Policing Core Responsibilities

Issues:

- Police are spending a great deal of time with individuals with mental health and drug and alcohol addictions issues simply because no other facilities exist to support them, or they are not available when they are needed
- Police are expected to fulfill a number of roles in the community. As a result, they are unable to focus and excel at key duties within their traditional core responsibilities
- The expectations on police are somewhat unrealistic
- Having officers transferred every 2-3 years creates major setbacks in the development of community relationships
- The major delays that exist in the court system translate into delay and waste of police resources
- RCMP programs for mentoring youth need to be better coordinated
- The amount of administrative work officers are required to do in relation to their policing is taking away from the time they can spend in the community
- Programs are being cut, even if they are proven to work and be effective

Priorities and Solutions:

- Develop partnerships between the RCMP and the community

- Establish more effective communication channels between the RCMP and the community on identifying issues and creating solutions

- Develop a holistic approach to better manage mental health issues and addictions; ensure hours of service are aligned with needs

- Define where the services agencies offer overlap, or are redundant, and where there is collaboration or opportunity for collaboration

- RCMP should conduct annual performance plans with the local community to determine local priorities

- Provide cultural sensitivity training for RCMP to better relate to the cultural groups in remote communities

- Provide an accessible list to the public on what services are available for them, what their purpose is, and what the benefits are

- Take a tougher stance in dealing with major issues within the community, such as using the forfeiture act when prosecuting drug dealers

- Justice reform initiatives that will address the system delays and lack of consequences; quicker processing would improve resources available for policing

- Increase commitment and dedication towards the community tri-partite agreement by all parties to increase its effectiveness

- Get the right First Nations candidates into RCMP positions

- RCMP need to support programs that are already in place in communities

- Clarify the core responsibilities of police for both the police and the public; anything police do should have a public safety focus/element

- Seek methods to ensure RCMP detachments have a mix of more experienced members and new recruits

- Ensure new RCMP members receive adequate field training, without providing a strain on local detachment resources

- Empower the community to invest in themselves through volunteering and participation

- Expand the role and capabilities of Social Services to take responsibilities back from police so that the Police can focus on their scope of practice

Roundtable # 8 – Kootenay: June 8, 2012

We want to thank all of the participants in the Kootenay roundtable for taking the time to share their ideas, identify issues and discuss possible solutions to prevent and respond to criminal activity in their communities.

ROUNDTABLE FORMAT

A total of 36 people attended the eighth BC Policing Plan roundtable in Cranbrook on June 8th, 2012. Participants included local government and community representatives, victim services, community support organizations and policing agencies. The goal of the roundtable was to capture constructive input from participants towards defining priorities and solutions on policing, crime prevention, and public safety in their community and for the province. To that end, participants were divided into groups and engaged in four different cafe-style discussions throughout the day, including:

1. Problems with and Responses to Criminal Activity

2. Police Core Responsibilities

3. Policing and Crime Prevention Resources

4. Crime Prevention and Public Safety

KEY THEMES

The following key themes emerged from the group discussions:

Engaging the community through initiatives such as restorative justice, community court and community circles programs are an effective form of localized justice that encourages community support. These programs allow the community to play a role in developing programs and initiatives to address local problems. Engaging the community in working with police to identify problems and contribute their ideas to developing solutions generates positive results. This helps to educate and engage the public on what they can do to help policing efforts and enhance public safety. Effective relationships are developed through strong communication among police, community, and governments at the provincial and federal levels.

Rural areas face unique challenges due to the large geographical area, infrastructure, sparse population, and the diverse roles and responsibilities that law enforcement is expected to play. To combat these challenges, a solid information gathering process is needed to ensure that key issues are accurately identified by the community ensuring available resources are being used effectively. Limited police resources and often inaccessible services could be further mitigated through enhanced use of community or volunteer led initiatives and crime prevention through environmental design. Traditional metrics such as case burdens and calls for service do not take into account the geographic size of rural policing jurisdictions and the differences in resources available to police in rural areas as compared to urban policing detachments/agencies.

Education for children and youth through programs such as Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) and Sexual Abuse Intervention Program (SAIP) to support crime prevention and awareness are effective in rural communities. Police involvement in schools helps raise awareness, make connections and promote community policing. The recruitment of youth into organized crime needs to be addressed more effectively.

Increased resources for social services are needed to address the current situation where police are required to act as all things to all people, taking away from their core responsibilities. Support services managing mental health issues, poverty and personal wellbeing would not only support police, but

also address the root causes of crime in the community. Social support for domestic violence, safe home programs and outreach providing extra resources helps to prevent crime from reoccurring.

Explore expanded roles for others on the law enforcement continuum to ease the demands on police officers. Examples included by-law officers, auxiliaries, reservists and sheriffs.

Support innovative strategies that have demonstrated effectiveness such as integrated specialized response and case management teams for calls involving domestic violence, and mental health issues; the new impaired driving legislation; and the use of reservists to cover leaves and seasonal demands for increased policing.

Support from Provincial government on recommendations voiced by municipalities. The Province should take a leadership role in defining core policing responsibilities in the province. A cost benefit analysis needs to be conducted to determine if programs and initiatives should be implemented at the community, regional, or provincial level. Federal and provincial levels of government need to consider the impacts on local governments when implementing policy changes.

SUMMARY BY TOPIC

For each topic, participants were asked to identify key issues, solutions and priorities.

1. **Problems with Criminal Activity and Responses for Criminal Activity**

Issues:

- Crime that goes unreported
- Criminals moving between different jurisdictions
- Drugs and alcohol abuse and addiction
- Drug trafficking and associated violence
- Domestic violence
- Impaired driving
- Organized crime and the recruitment of youth into organized crime
- Property crime such as minor thefts and vandalism
- Civil disobedience and public disorder
- Repeat and prolific offenders
- Weapons related crime
- Bullying and cyber bullying
- Mental health issues and homelessness
- White collar crime

Top Priorities:

- Greater focus on identifying and rehabilitating repeat offenders to free up resources in the legal system
- Increase capacity and support for the court system by adding additional resources
- Focus community education programs on youth
- Need stronger political leadership and endorsement
- Support health and personal wellbeing initiatives that address the root causes of crime

- Infrastructure and facilities need to be in place that complement the justice system by providing adequate social services in support of marginalized members of the community

- More community involvement through Integrated Case Assessment Teams (ICAT)

- Ensure police are aware of, and able to focus on their core responsibilities

- Priorities and Solutions:

- Specialized policing units that are responsible for dealing with key issues such as crime prevention or narcotics

- Education for youth through programs that include Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) and Sexual Abuse Intervention Program (SAIP) that support crime prevention and awareness

- Develop strong relationships between the continuum of social services and the communities they support

- Regular communication between law enforcement and local media

- Community coordination in the development of community protocols to address local issues

- Social support programs for domestic violence, safe home programs and outreach providing extra resources

- Alternative justice initiatives including restorative justice, community court and community circles programs

- Create opportunities for employment to address social inequality

2. Policing Core Responsibilities

Issues:

- Police are required to fill the gaps created by inadequate social services which puts a strain on existing resources

- Police have become the default organization for the public to contact for any problem which takes away their ability to manage their core responsibilities

- There is a gap between where police services begin and mental health supports and services end

- Support services and other agencies such as conservation officers and mental health workers are generally only open Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm or they have been cut completely, making police the only reliable and accessible service available 24/7

- There is more administrative work required for police to perform their duties now than ever before

- The government and police need to educate the public on what realistic expectations of police services are

- There is no accountability at the provincial level for managing the impact of reducing funding to programs which results in municipalities being affected and held accountable for continuing to provide these services

- There needs to be a process in place for assessing financial and social costs and benefits from services across different levels of governments

- Privacy laws are inhibiting agencies from effectively sharing information, even though they provide services to the same clients

- Rural RCMP face the challenge of covering huge geographical areas with a small number of staff

- Due to amalgamation, there are fewer services available directly to the remote regions of certain jurisdictions

- The current funding model for policing creates inequality as it is based on population, and does not factor in the geographic region or temporary population increases through tourism

- An external body needs to be designated for investigating police and managing public complaints as they both currently require a great deal of police resources; the mandate of the Independent Investigations Office should be expanded and the complaint process streamlined

- There is a lack of community-based victim services and as a result, existing services end up managing more than the program is funded to do

- There are a lack of resources and training opportunities for police officers and nurses to provide effective response to sexual assaults

- A repercussion for not being able to address crimes effectively is that the public will lose trust in policing services and not bother to report crimes at all

- The amount of time police spend in the field is reduced by the large amount of training that is required

- Police do not want to see the BC Policing Plan lead to a greater detrimental impact on the time police are able to spend in the field, such as further training requirements or new administrative/reporting requirements

- Federal government policy decisions, such as the updated requirements for providing backup, can have a dramatic impact on areas with a small number of officers

Top Priorities:

- Implement a holistic approach to support persons with mental health challenges, those in poverty or in abusive situations–with policing role limited to ensuring public safety

- Clearly define what the core responsibilities of policing are for the benefit of officers, local governments and the public

- More funding is needed for policing and support services

- Develop a provincial traffic patrol so that RCMP can focus on contract policing duties

- Allocate more resources to crime investigation and traffic safety

- Support programs related to alcohol abuse and drug prevention

- Create community awareness programs to promote volunteering in the community

- Allow police to focus on their core responsibilities

- Formalize a partnership between the Ministries of Justice and Health Services

- Generate greater police involvement in the community through community based policing

Priorities and Solutions:

- Investigate criminal activity

- Promote community safety and crime prevention

- Serve the community by identifying the needs of the community through engagement

- Road and traffic safety enforcement

- Quick and effective responses to emerging or escalating problems in the community

- Hire reservists in areas with high seasonal variation in policing requirements

- Establish working relationships between agencies, such as the ability for police to be able to call a mental health worker to assist with calls

- Inclusive community programs that bring people together in addressing sensitive issues such as suicide and abuse

- The Prolific Offender Programs are working to keep offenders off the street because of good communications among policing jurisdictions

- Increase officer presence in youth programs and the community

- Find ways to collaborate with other agencies such as with traffic bylaw officers in managing traffic related issues

- Set requirements at the provincial level for mandatory training

- Identify what should be done by non-policing resources and community volunteers

- More emphasis must be placed on mentoring and supporting new policing recruits

- Identify different methods for engaging different communities as demographics should determine the approach

- More crime analysis to support in identifying where resources need to be allocated to be most effective

- Look for creative ways to generate revenue, such using the proceeds of crime

3. Policing and Crime Prevention Resources

Issues:

- Criminal activities that fall under Federal policing responsibilities are not always being acted upon, resulting in increased pressure on provincial and municipal level polices for enforcement responses.

- There is an increase in administrative work required to have successful charges

- Disputes for minor misdemeanors such as traffic tickets are taking up a significant amount of police resources

- Even if a detachment is fully staffed, they are never operating at full capacity (sick leave, vacations, maternity leave, etc.)

- Policing facilities are dated and do not meet the current needs

- Officers don't always have time available to spend time acting as community liaisons

- Disagreement with decisions to amalgamate detachments

- The current funding formula for policing does not work well

- Due to the large administrative process that accompanies crimes such as domestic violence, officers are in some cases charging individuals under different crimes to avoid this burden

Top Priorities:

- Collaboration between communities and law enforcement

- Reduce legislative requirements that restrict officers or increase administrative burden

- Information sharing between agencies

- Streamline procedures to improve efficiency and use of resources

- Identify priorities through collaboration

- Accountability for all parties

- Increase funding and staff resources

- Support from Provincial government on recommendations voiced by municipalities on what is best for them

- Continue to educate the public on role police play as that role evolves over time
- Define core policing from the provincial and municipal levels

Priorities and Solutions:

- Provide resources for a new detachment building and cells
- Increase crime analysis capacity in communities
- Create a staffing strategy to manage officer leaves (maternity, long-term leaves)
- Set up Case Management Teams that support every community
- Greater collaboration at the local level on community based programs
- Implement LEAN thinking methodology in police processes
- Utilize By-Law Officers
- Municipalities need to be consulted by the province on strategies to deal with cuts or changes to programs
- Educate the public on what they can do to help policing efforts
- Provide more support for other agencies to get involved – police should be there to manage criminal and safety issues not social issues
- Agencies should be mandated by government to work together through the sharing of resources, services and information
- DARE program is working well
- Need to intervene quickly in cases of domestic violence before the problem escalates
- A streamlined complaint evaluation process is necessary in filtering through what internal investigations need to be pursued and which are baseless
- Take a proactive approach to funding programs focused on crime prevention
- Clearly define the core policing responsibilities and ensure resources are adequate for managing them
- Implement immediate consequences such as fines to free up more court resources
- Funding should be allocated to a community coordinator position to oversee volunteer initiatives
- Hire crime analysts to identify statistically what the real issues are and develop appropriate responses
- Restorative Justice Program, Citizens on Patrol Program and Housing and Poverty Committee are all working well
- Officers involved in community liaison programs focusing on working with youth
- Community awareness that members can talk openly with police about deficits in the community
- Planning ahead with multiple agencies to prepare responses to anticipated issues
- Restorative justice and victim services get their own grants and funding which takes pressure off of police

4. **Crime Prevention and Public Safety**

Issues:

- Youth involved in criminal activity
- Drug and alcohol abuse
- Domestic Violence
- Priorities vary between the municipality, police and community

- The perception of crime created by the media is negative and does not accurately reflect the reality of crime in the community

- Delays that exist in the court system

- Police are not effectively managing sensitive situations such as domestic disputes

- Victims of crime feel unsafe due to lack of understanding of the criminal justice process

- The lack of communication with law enforcement providers also breeds a lack of trust within the community

- Displacement and lack of facilities for people with mental health issues

- Need to have a solid information gathering process to ensure that the key issues identified by the community are in fact the major issues, and not just perception

- Unique challenges faced when policing rural areas due to the large geographical area, poorer infrastructure, sparse population, and the diverse role and responsibilities that law enforcement is expected to play

Top Priorities:

- Provide education on drugs and alcohol abuse and the far reaching effects it has on the community

- Increase police visibility in the community

- Engage the community in working with police to identify problems and contribute their ideas to developing solutions

- Community policing continuum that offers collaborative services from the areas of justice, education and health

- Align resources with the needs of different agencies

- Effective community relations that include police, community, as well as provincial and federal representation

Priorities and Solutions:

- Use restorative justice initiatives as they are a good form of education and effectively teach that undesirable actions have consequences

- Police visibility and involvement in the community

- Communication with citizens is key to effective community policing

- The community needs to play a role in developing programs and initiatives to address community problems

- Educating the public on what services are available for the community to utilize

- Comprehensive crime analysis is a huge benefit to the community

- Community safety is a shared responsibility between law enforcement and members of the community

- The ability to inform or advise community of a violent sexual offender through media

- Crime prevention through environmental design

Roundtable # 9 – Northeast & Cariboo (Fort St. John): June 14, 2012

We want to thank all of the participants in our second of two roundtables in the Northeast & Cariboo for taking the time to share their ideas, identify issues and discuss possible solutions to prevent and respond to criminal activity in their communities.

ROUNDTABLE FORMAT

A total of 13 people attended the ninth BC Policing Plan roundtable held in Fort St. John on June 14th, 2012. Participants included local government, aboriginal representatives, victim services and community support organizations and policing agencies. The goal of the roundtable was to capture constructive input from participants towards defining priorities and solutions on policing, crime prevention, and public safety in their community and for the province. To that end, participants were divided into four groups and engaged in four different cafe-style discussions throughout the day, including:

1. Problems with and Responses to Criminal Activity
2. Police Core Responsibilities
3. Crime Prevention and Public Safety
4. Policing and Crime Prevention Resources

KEY THEMES

The following key themes emerged from the group discussions:

Private investment in community services is required to aid local agencies in providing adequate services, law enforcement, and traffic safety to the community. Large local industries are driving community growth which is creating new challenges related to the influx in residents and the strain created on local infrastructure and facilities that require additional resources to support.

Specialized policing services dedicated to addressing specific issues in the community are needed. Specialized services would provide consistent and accountable support for crime prevention, domestic violence, unsafe driving, prostitution and drugs.

Drugs and drug trafficking are directly related to a large proportion of crime committed in the community. Due to the booming population, and the wealth generated by local industries, illicit drugs are in high demand. Managing the accessibility of drugs is difficult for law enforcement, as a large number of unsecured chartered flights transport workers to work camps in the region. Cooperation between local agencies and private companies are needed to address these drug channels into the community

Resources for proactive policing such as Bike Patrol help to promote engagement between the officers and the community and build upon the public's perception of safety. Due to the administrative burden facing officers and the large number of additional responsibilities they are tasked with, it is difficult to allocate resources to crime prevention and proactive initiatives.

Increased communication between stakeholders which include local law enforcement and support agencies, the provincial government, media, community members and private industries. This would allow for more accurate information sharing and education on what is currently working well in the community, what the key issues are, and how they can be most effectively addressed. By allowing for representation from all parties, buy-in from the entire community on key initiatives will be easier to obtain and successfully implement.

For each topic, participants were asked to identify key issues, solutions and priorities.

1.   Problems with Criminal Activity and Responses for Criminal Activity

Issues:

- Violent offences including homicide, assault, kidnappings linked to the drug trade
- Family (domestic) violence
- Mental health issues
- Vandalism and property crime
- Average age of population is 29; making a lot of money with little life skills
- There is a high cost of living in the community
- Addictions to gambling, drugs, or alcohol that instigate crime
- Although industry (which fuel the economy of the region) have security measures to prohibit drug and alcohol use and abuse on company property, they are ineffective in preventing the problem
- Franchise gangs tied to larger criminal organizations from urban centres
- Sexual exploitation of women and youth
- The demographics of the community and significant disposable income is driving the increase on the demand for drugs
- Drugs and trafficking are able to grow because of ineffective security on transportation
- Drugs are arriving in the communities on chartered flights and transport trucks on highways
- Youth violence and glamorization of fighting including the posting of fight videos on social media sites
- Vehicle related issues more specifically in Fort St. John including unsafe driving practices, impaired driving, speeding, pedestrian accidents; not being effectively enforced
- Currently there are not enough resources and support services in the community to deal with addictions or marginalized people in need of assistance
- Communities such as Profit River are dysfunctional in part because the community is not supported with programs and services, but also community members lack skills and supports to manage their income and money is spent on drugs and alcohol. There is money but a lack of programming available to help this community
- Police are having to act as social workers which takes them away from their core duties
- The senior community is vulnerable to crime but does not receive additional support

Priorities

- Work with First Nations leadership to build life skills for members of First Nations communities such as developing budgets and creating good spending habits to improve quality of life
- Local industries need to take a far more active role in supporting community programs, living standards and issues created by their industry
- An example of an effective industry-based initiative is providing an individual for community development that invests time and resources in youth programs such as DARE (Drug Awareness Resistance Education) and PARTY (Preventing Alcohol Related Trauma in Youth)

- Partnerships between police and companies are important to obtain necessary funding and resources to support the community

- Multi-year funding is required to ensure long-term sustainability of programs and give programs a chance to evolve

- More social infrastructure such as youth centers and transitional housing facilities are required to help prevent crime

- Traditional Culture Camps and traditional justice that support cultural learning for people who have come through the justice system should be available

- Fund an interdiction drug enforcement unit that can aid in combating the transportation of drugs to the community and through to more northern regions

- Legalize marijuana, tax it and use the proceeds to invest into preventative programs

- The CVAP (Crime Victim Assistance Program) needs to be explored–service providers need to have a clear understanding of the benefits available to victims of crime so they can provide the best possible assistance to clients

- Community policing partnerships are needed to accurately address public safety issues

- RCMP conducting bike patrols during the summer months increases police visibility and reassures the public

- There is a need to get more positive messages communicated through the media to the public

2. Police Core Responsibilities

Issues

- Policing is currently reactive not proactive

- There is a shortage of officers

- There is too much administrative work required for officers to perform their duties which takes them away from active duty

- Too many things are being asked of police services

Top Priorities:

- Increase the visibility of police in the community

- Commitment to adequate long-term funding

- Community safety

- A Violence against Women unit is needed – we need to develop police officers and increase their capacity to address issues related to violence against women

- Focus on organized crime

- Well trained officers are needed – currently, there are many junior/rookie police officers deployed in this region

- Tests like Meyers Briggs should be a required during police training at Depot

Priorities and Solutions:

- Spend effort, time and funding on public safety and protection

- Educate the public about the role of police and set expectations appropriately – sometimes the public have unrealistic expectations of the police

- Look at using social media more effectively and take ownership of the messages that go out to the public about police
- Utilize ICE (Integrated Child Exploitation) Unit and target criminals the community is not necessarily aware of
- Continuous education for policing to keep them aligned with community needs
- Define and focus on core activities
- Put in place rigorous testing for recruits
- Work to build the positive image of the RCMP
- Keep RCMP members in the same community for a longer period of time for more effective relationship building

3. Crime Prevention and Public Safety

Top Priorities:

- A dedicated police unit for crime prevention
- Support frontline policing
- Public education around crime prevention
- Engage the public on community issues
- Provide access to more police resources when needed in the community
- Work with public to identify needs

Priorities and Solutions:

- Keep refreshing and sustaining the many programs which are already available in the communities including Speed Watch, Citizens on Patrol, Rural Crime Watch, DARE, PARTY, and the Restorative Justice Program
- Engage the public through roundtables and consulting as to what is needed and what will work
- Evidence-based community programs are needed that are supported by data and results
- Stiffer sentences are required to unclog the courts – especially for repeat offenders
- Solar powered speed reader boards will reduce speeding
- Implement a long-term crime prevention unit that is fully funded
- Increase police visibility to create a sense of safety in the community through initiatives such as bike patrols

4. Policing and Crime Prevention Resources

Issues:

- Currently there are not enough members for managing seasonal work in the local detachment resulting in having to draw resources from specialized sections just to be able to respond to calls
- Adequate resources exist to respond to crime but police are being taken away from general duty to be put in Crime Reduction Units.
- There is little support for crime prevention and crime reduction initiatives
- Communication is limited as information sharing across agencies is challenging

Top Priorities:

- Develop a long term crime prevention strategy with the appropriate funding allocation

- With the newly developed crime prevention strategy, identify crime reduction initiatives
- Recruit a community liaison person to work with people and communities to help build strategies and interventions in collaboration with law enforcement
- Focus on collaboration to develop cooperative responses to the major issues in the community
- Design a program to coordinate relationship building between new and existing officers with other support services and the community
- Create a Violence in Relationships Unit
- Dedicate resources for drug enforcement
- Combat root causes of crime such as drug addiction
- The community would like to see positive actionable outcomes from the roundtable sessions

Priorities and Solutions:

- Crime reduction initiatives are working well in North District which focus on prolific offender management and crime hot spots in communities
- Policing resources could be used more effectively if there were more efficiencies or support staff for completing necessary paperwork
- Keep the Bike Patrol program because it is working very well
- Maintain the Restorative Justice program. It is working very well and diverts cases away from courts
- Hold large community events that bring everyone together
- Continue with the successful program of Blueberry River Against Gangs (BRAG) which supports youth who are vulnerable to gang recruitment
- Explore technology and equipment upgrades to help streamlining policing processes
- Create support facilities for youth that provide drug rehabilitation and a safe place to live