



**City of Kingston
Report to Council
Information Report Number 26-133**

To: Mayor and Members of Council
From: Paige Agnew, Commissioner, Growth & Development Services
Resource Staff: Kyle Compeau, Director, Licensing & Enforcement Services
Date of Meeting: June 2, 2026
Subject: Special Constable Program-Operational Approach & Implementation

Council Strategic Plan Alignment:

Theme: Policies & by-laws

Goal: See above

Executive Summary:

This report is provided to Council for information purposes and outlines the scope, intent, and initial implementation approach for the City's Special Constable Program.

The program is being introduced as a targeted, support-based enhancement to existing enforcement services, with an initial focus on *Trespass to Property Act* and by-law enforcement in municipal parks, increased visibility in high-demand areas, and direct support to by-law officers in the field. The intent is to strengthen the City's ability to respond to non-criminal enforcement matters on city property in a timely and coordinated manner.

As the program roll-out draws near, there has been an increase in expectations from the community and stakeholders regarding its role in addressing broader public safety concerns. It is important to emphasize that the program remains in a roll out phase as of July, with a focused and measured scope in year one of its implementation.

The Special Constable Program is not a replacement for policing services. While it enhances the City's operational capacity, the City will continue to rely on Kingston Police to provide effective policing and to ensure the safety and security of person and property in the City of

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Kingston. The report also outlines the service coverage, including the presence of operational gaps, and reinforces the importance of aligning expectations with the program's intended scope during its initial implementation. This report also outlines operational constraints and reinforces that where response by the City's municipal special constables is not appropriate or available, the City and the public will continue to rely on response by Kingston Police.

Recommendation:

This report is for information only.

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Authorizing Signatures:

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY COMMISSIONER

**Paige Agnew, Commissioner,
Growth & Development Services**

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY CHIEF

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

**Lanie Hurdle, Chief
Administrative Officer**

Consultation with the following Members of the Corporate Management Team:

Jennifer Campbell, Commissioner, Community Services

Neil Carbone, Commissioner, Corporate & Emergency Services

p.p.

David Fell, President & CEO, Utilities Kingston

Not required

Desirée Kennedy, Chief Financial Officer & City Treasurer

Not required

Jenna Morley, City Solicitor

Not required

Ian Semple, Commissioner, Transportation & Infrastructure Services

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Options/Discussion:**Program Intent and Rollout**

This report is being provided to Council to clearly outline what the Special Constable Program, in its initial phase, is intended to achieve, how it will be implemented, and, importantly, what it is not intended to be. A key objective of this report is to ensure alignment between program intent and community expectations, particularly as the program is introduced during a period of evolving demand and limited municipal resources.

The Special Constable Program has been developed as a focused and practical enhancement to the City's existing enforcement framework, intended to strengthen the City's ability to respond to non-criminal enforcement matters on municipal property and to provide additional support to by-law enforcement officers operating in the field. The program is not designed to operate as a comprehensive public safety solution, but rather a targeted tool to address specific service gaps identified within municipal enforcement.

The City recognizes that municipal special constables may encounter situations that require enhanced personal protective equipment (PPE) to support officer and public safety. Municipal special constables assigned to the program will be equipped with ballistic vests, communication equipment, and additional PPE tools where appropriate. Municipal special constables have completed training in accordance with provincial standards and legislative requirements.

The City will continue to assess operational risks, environmental hazards, and officer safety considerations as the program evolves to determine whether additional training or PPE enhancements are necessary and proportionate to the duties being performed.

The City's approach remains grounded in communication-first responses, de-escalation practices, and the safe delivery of municipal enforcement services, with municipal special constables intended to support compliance, public safety, and staff safety within the scope of their special constable appointments.

Initial Area of Focus

In its initial implementation, the program will focus on three primary areas.

The first is enforcement support within municipal parks, where there has been an identified need for a more consistent and coordinated enforcement presence. This includes responding to issues such as trespassing and *Parks By-Law* offences. The presence of municipal special constables in these spaces will allow the City to respond more effectively in situations where additional authority or support is required beyond what is typically available through by-law enforcement alone.

The second area of focus is direct support to bylaw officers. Municipal special constables will work alongside by-law enforcement officers to assist with calls for service, provide support in situations that may escalate, and enhance overall officer safety. This is a critical component of

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the program, as it allows by-law enforcement officers to continue to lead enforcement activities while having access to additional support when needed.

The third area is increased visibility in high demand areas where community concerns have been consistently raised. These high-demand periods typically include weekends with scheduled events in the downtown core, statutory holidays, and emerging or trending areas of concern identified through public complaints, calls for service, and operational intelligence. This visible presence is intended to support proactive engagement, deter non-compliant behaviour, and provide reassurance to residents, businesses, and visitors within the community.

Clarifying What the Program Is Not

While these focus areas represent meaningful enhancements to service delivery, it is equally important to clearly define what the program is not intended to be.

The Special Constable Program is not a policing service and does not replace the role of Kingston Police. Municipal special constables are not intended to be responsible for criminal investigations, emergency response, or high-risk situations requiring specialized policing resources. In instances where matters escalate beyond the scope of municipal special constable powers or purposes, the City will continue to rely on Kingston Police for response and support. The program is also not intended to operate as a 24/7 service or as a comprehensive solution to all community safety concerns.

Municipal special constables will not be proactively enforcing the *Criminal Code* and will continue to rely on the expertise and authority of the Kingston Police for criminal investigations, arrests related to criminal matters, and high-risk occurrences.

The program is intended to support municipal enforcement operations through delegated provincial authorities and public safety functions associated with municipal responsibilities. Municipal special constables, under their appointments, will have authority to exercise certain police powers, under the direction of a police officer, to enforce certain parts of the *Trespass to Property Act*, *Mental Health Act*, *Liquor License Act, 2019*, and the *Safe Streets Act*, as directed by the City and in accordance with their certificates of appointment and the *Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019*.

Program Coverage

The Special Constable Program has been developed as a focused enhancement to the City's enforcement framework, with a deliberate emphasis on weekend and evening coverage, when enforcement demand is most acute.

These periods have historically presented challenges in responding to community concerns, particularly in areas such as municipal parks and the downtown core. The introduction of Municipal special constables is intended to improve the City's ability to respond during these peak times by providing additional support to by-law enforcement officers and enhancing on-the-ground presence.

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Municipal special constables will be deployed to support Enforcement Services during key operational periods throughout the week. Specifically, they will be operational Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., and on weekends from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. These hours are intended to align with peak demand periods and enhance the City's ability to respond to community concerns.

There will be periods where Municipal special constables are not available, as well as situations that exceed the scope or capacity of the program. These gaps are a recognized part of the initial implementation and will be monitored as the program evolves.

In circumstances where additional resources or authorities are required, the City will continue to rely on Kingston Police to assist in response and escalation.

Current Resourcing Model and Operational Constraints

At present, the program is being delivered through the City's existing enforcement management team, consisting of six supervisors. These supervisors operate in a hybrid capacity, overseeing property standards, by-law & parking enforcement, and will now act as municipal special constables too. The availability of these supervisors is divided across multiple service areas, limiting the City's ability to provide continuous coverage, particularly during weekends and evenings.

Reliance on Kingston Police and Service Continuity

Given the City's current resource model and the limitations associated with staffing availability, there will continue to be a significant reliance on Kingston Police, particularly during weekends and evenings when demand is highest.

Where municipal special constables are not available, or where situations exceed the scope of municipal enforcement, calls for service will continue to be attended by Kingston Police. This includes:

- Incidents occurring outside of municipal coverage hours
- Matters outside the scope of a municipal special constable's certificate of appointment
- Escalated or high-risk enforcement scenarios

This reliance is not a short-term condition but an expected and necessary component of the program, particularly during its initial rollout phase.

Integration with Outreach Services and Encampment Response

Enforcement Services continues to take a coordinated, service-first approach to encampment response, recognizing that enforcement alone is not an effective or appropriate tool to address complex social needs. By-law enforcement officers are typically the first point of contact when responding to encampment-related concerns and operate in accordance with the City's

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established encampment protocol. This includes an initial focus on engagement, de-escalation, and connecting individuals to appropriate supports before any enforcement action is considered.

A key component of this response model is integration with Street Outreach partners, including Home Base Housing and Addiction and Mental Health Services (AMHS). Street Outreach services are currently available on weekends between 8:30 a.m. and 6:00 p.m., with two dedicated outreach workers available to respond to calls for service. While these resources provide valuable support, it is important to note they are deployed city-wide and are not exclusively assigned to encampment-related calls alongside By-Law Enforcement Services. As such, there are operational limitations in terms of immediacy and availability, particularly during periods of high demand.

By-Law Enforcement Services also continues to support a number of City departments and external community partners when attending encampments and responding to associated health and safety concerns. This includes providing operational support to departments during site visits, inspections, cleanups, and other coordinated responses where staff safety, site conditions, or escalation concerns may be present. These responses are currently supported primarily through by-law enforcement officers. However, the Special Constable Program provides the City with additional flexibility to deploy municipal special constables in situations where the level of risk, complexity, or potential for escalation warrants an enhanced response.

The introduction of the Special Constable Program is expected to strengthen this existing framework by enhancing the City's ability to respond to health and safety concerns, particularly during evenings and weekends when service gaps are more pronounced. Municipal special constables will not replace outreach services, nor will they alter the City's commitment to a compassionate, support-led approach. Rather, their role will be to support by-law enforcement officers in situations where escalation may occur, ensuring that staff can safely and effectively manage circumstances that may otherwise require police intervention.

Importantly, the presence of municipal special constables will improve the City's ability to take appropriate action in situations where individuals decline support services and where there are clear and immediate health and safety risks. This includes providing additional capacity to address encampment-related concerns on weekend Tds, aligning enforcement actions more closely with the availability of Street Outreach supports. In doing so, the program enhances the City's ability to balance compassion with compliance, ensuring individuals are offered support while also maintaining public safety and the appropriate use of municipal space.

Overall, this integrated approach reinforces that encampment response in Kingston is not solely an enforcement function, but a coordinated effort between By-Law Enforcement Services, Street Outreach providers, and community partners, where municipal special constables serve as an additional tool to support safe, consistent, and responsive service delivery.

Reliance on Public Works

Public Works has typically assisted By-Law Enforcement Services with the clean-up of an encampment after an individual has been directed to move along. A rapid clean-up of remaining

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materials is the most effective way to prevent individuals from returning to the location and ensuring any hazardous materials or safety risks have been addressed. However, Public Works staffing levels vary seasonally and throughout the week and limited off-peak resourcing often makes it infeasible to redeploy staff quickly to support these clean-ups.

Public Works staff also frequently request support with encampments on weekends in the City's staffed parks. During the summer season, eight parks are staffed on weekends, which allows staff to assist with clean-ups in those specific locations more quickly. Outside of these staffed parks—and during evenings, weekends, and other off-peak periods—response times are significantly constrained, and timely clean-ups are often not possible.

A practical example of where municipal special constables may support municipal operations is during coordinated public works, health and safety, or encampment related clean-ups on municipal property. In circumstances where enforcement action is required, particularly on weekends or during periods where limited staffing and policing resources may be available, the presence of municipal special constables can assist in maintaining safe operational conditions for staff, contractors, outreach partners, and members of the public.

From an enforcement and operational perspective, maintaining a visible and coordinated cleanup presence is important to ensuring compliance efforts are effective. Where structures, debris, refuse, or abandoned materials remain following enforcement activity, there is a higher likelihood of reoccupation occurring shortly thereafter, which can create ongoing health and safety concerns and undermine the effectiveness of the original enforcement action. As a result, coordinated public works and cleanup operations are often directly connected to the overall encampment response.

Additional enforcement resources during evenings and weekends is intended to allow better coordination with existing Public Works teams scheduled during these times and where existing Public Works resources can be shifted to support a clean-up effort.

Defining Success in Year One

Throughout the first year of implementation, staff will focus on evaluating the program's effectiveness based on:

- Improved enforcement response during weekends and evenings when resources are available
- Enhanced support to by-law enforcement officers
- Increased visibility in priority areas
- Appropriate use of special constable police powers

At the same time, it is recognized that service gaps will continue to exist, and success will also be measured by how effectively the city coordinates with Kingston Police to ensure continuity of service.

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Public Engagement

At this stage, the program has been developed based on:

- Operational experience within By-Law Enforcement Services
- Identified service gaps in municipal response
- Internal consultation across departments

While formal public consultation is not a legislated requirement, staff recognise the importance of community engagement.

Further engagement will include:

- Public education on the role of municipal special constables
- Interest groups, including community groups
- Targeted engagement with vulnerable populations and advocacy organizations

Feedback gathered through these processes will inform future program adjustments and expansion considerations.

Indigenization, Inclusion, Diversity, Equity & Accessibility (IIDEA) Considerations

The Special Constable Program has been developed with consideration for equitable service delivery and community impact.

Key considerations include:

- Ensuring enforcement practices are applied consistently and fairly
- Supporting inclusive engagement approaches in public spaces
- Recognizing the potential impact on vulnerable populations, including individuals experiencing homelessness
- Aligning the City's IIDEA Strategy and Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

In addition to legislated and operational training requirements, all municipal special constables assigned to the program will receive training grounded in Inclusion, Indigeneity, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility principles. This training will support staff in carrying out their duties in a professional, respectful, and community-focused manner while recognizing the diverse needs and lived experiences of individuals encountered during enforcement interactions. The City recognizes the importance of culturally informed and trauma-aware approaches, particularly when responding to vulnerable populations, encampment-related matters, accessibility concerns, and community safety issues. Ongoing IIDEA-focused learning will form part of the program's commitment to accountability, public trust, and service excellence.

Training and operational protocols will continue to evolve to reflect these commitments

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Existing Policy/By-Law

This program operates within existing legislative authorities, including:

- *Trespass to Property Act*
- *Municipal Act, 2001*
- Relevant City by-laws

Financial Considerations

The program is currently being delivered within existing operating budgets, utilizing current staff resources. Any future budget impacts will be brought forward through the annual budget process.

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Exhibits Attached:

None