

Report to / Rapport au:

**OTTAWA POLICE SERVICE BOARD
COMMISSION DE SERVICE DE POLICE D'OTTAWA**

27 July 2026 / 27 Juillet 2026

Submitted by / Soumis par:

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**SUBJECT: OTTAWA POLICE SERVICE 2023 – 2027 DRIVE² STRATEGY UPDATE
REPORT**

**OBJET: RAPPORT DE MISE À JOUR DE LA STRATÉGIE DRIVE² 2023-2027 DU
SERVICE DE POLICE D'OTTAWA**

REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Ottawa Police Service Board receive this report for information.

RECOMMANDATIONS DU RAPPORT

**Que la Commission de service de police d'Ottawa prenne connaissance du
présent rapport.**

BACKGROUND

Approved by the Ottawa Police Service Board (the Board) in 2023, the Diversity, Respect, Inclusion, Values, Equity, and Engagement (DRIVE²) Strategy is the organization's roadmap for transformational change aimed at improving internal culture and service delivery to the communities we serve.

It was developed in close collaboration with the Community Equity Council (CEC) with significant input from police and community, as well as third-party reviews. It is directly aligned with the Board's 2027 Strategic Direction and the equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) priority area to strengthen human rights.

As part of our commitment to the ongoing implementation and monitoring of the DRIVE² Strategy, regular reports on partnership work for the Strategy's key action items are provided to the Board. A more detailed annual report for 2026 will be provided to the Board in January 2027. Updates and engagement opportunities for the DRIVE² Strategy are available online at ottawapolice.ca/drivetwo.

DISCUSSION

The Ottawa Police Service's (OPS) DRIVE² Strategy is a comprehensive human rights organizational change strategy with shared responsibility for the implementation of equity, diversity, and inclusion across the organization.

This mid-year report highlights progress on key action items for each of the strategy's four focus areas: Community – Service Delivery, Members – Work Environment, Leadership and Accountability, and Connecting and Learning.

Focus Area 1: Community – Service Delivery

OPS builds relationships and develops partnerships with communities to ensure equitable policing services and to build trust. Together, we address and prevent systemic issues in programs, services, projects, operations, and decision-making. We remain focused on reducing violence and victimization and confronting hate against marginalized and vulnerable groups.

Use of Force Community Review Panel – Operational:

Similar to the innovative community case review panel currently in place for review of Intimate Partner Violence and Sexual Assault files, OPS worked closely with the CEC to launch a community case review panel for Use of Force incidents last year.

The panel is doing groundbreaking case reviews to identify systemic issues and make recommendations for improved service delivery, including community engagement, training, and procedures. During this reporting period, the panel members participated in training and their first case review session to review almost 100 cases. The panel members also reviewed and contributed to the draft 2025 Use of Force Report, along with the researchers, CEC, and EDI Committee.

The panel has diverse skills and experience in human rights, community engagement with at-risk and marginalized groups, youth, policy and program development, crime prevention, research and analysis, mental health, communications, committee leadership and board governance. Former CEC Co-Chair Sahada Alolo currently leads the panel. Other current panel members include: Sonya Howard, Nyanquoi Suah,

Michael Tay, Suzanne Valiquet, and Michelle Yu. The panel will be meeting again in the fall to conduct case reviews and make recommendations.

Race-Based Data Collection Strategy – Addressing Disproportionalities:

Race and identity-based data collection is a recognized human rights tool for identifying, monitoring, and addressing systemic racism issues. OPS has been collecting race-based data before it was legislated, resulting in the longest and most comprehensive race-based data collection effort by a police service in Canada. Race and identity-based data collection for Use of Force began in 2020 due to a legislative requirement. The 2025 Annual Use of Force report and presentation were provided to the Board in June of 2026.

Reducing disproportionalities is the main focus of improving service delivery by examining many areas for change, including policies, procedures, training, and deployment. As outlined in the Use of Force report and next steps to the Board last month, this collaborative work includes the related action items currently underway: anti-racism training reviews, consulting and reviewing our racial profiling policy, continuing to operationalize the new Use of Force Community Review Panel, mental health advisory council and strategy work, and creating an organizational race and identity-based data collection strategy to improve data collection, reporting, and action planning.

Supporting these efforts, the Board approved the next phase of body-worn camera (BWC) deployment on June 22, 2026. BWCs enhance transparency, accountability, and public trust, while supporting efforts to address disproportionalities. The pilot demonstrated improvements in policy compliance, evidence collection, and officer efficiency. OPS will now move forward with procurement, training and a phased rollout. Work on these initiatives will be a focus for the second half of the year.

Partnership in Action – Community Engagement:

To align with the new district model, the Community Safety and Wellbeing Branch (CSWB) developed a strategic roadmap to advance our CSWB Framework and establish a robust community relationship management system (CRMS) for the police service. The Partnership in Action portal is also being promoted as a community-policing engagement and communications tool, along with a regularly issued electronic newsletter. While updates on the CSWB Framework and community policing efforts are provided in a full OPS Public Engagement Annual Report to the Board, this update focuses on action items identified in the DRIVE² Strategy.

The Branch and its Strategic Partnerships and Engagement (SPE) and Diversity and Race Relations (DRR) units lead the development of trauma-informed, culturally sensitive public engagement strategies that address diverse community needs. These teams also support Chief Stubbs and senior leadership in conducting public consultations and connecting with community leaders on critical community-police incidents and larger crises that could create local community tensions.

Earlier this year, multiple community sessions were held to raise awareness and obtain feedback on community policing, the community-safety well-being plan, and the new district policing model. This was an important collaboration with the project team and partners who tested the session and related materials last year with CEC, Use of Force Community Review Panel, and the new Mental Health Advisory Council. The feedback and recommendations were reviewed with the CEC and the dedicated committee.

The SPE and DRR teams continue to make progress in strengthening community ties and fostering understanding between diverse cultural groups and the police, which was showcased at the One Ottawa Celebration last month.

One Ottawa Celebration – held on June 24th:

The One Ottawa Celebration event (formerly called the Annual Diversity Celebration) was held on June 24, 2026, at Ottawa Police Headquarters. The annual outdoor event recognizes Multiculturalism Day and Welcoming Ottawa Week by highlighting the contributions of Ottawa's diverse communities. The event included special guests, cultural entertainment, food, and many interactive engagement activities for police and community members.

In partnership with Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada, OPS welcomed 50 people from 15 different countries in a pre-event ceremony where they took the oath to become new Canadian citizens.

Hate Crime Response – Together Against Hate Ottawa Forum Held in May:

The Ottawa Police Service continues to work closely with partners to address rising hate through multiple means and projects. The dedicated Hate and Bias Crime (HBC) Unit leads hate crime-related investigations while promoting awareness, prevention, and reporting of hate crimes and hate incidents. The DRR Unit also supports the HBC Unit by conducting outreach activities, attending events, and hosting community presentations and conversations.

OPS hosted a Together Against Hate Ottawa Forum on Thursday, May 28th that was focused on learning, dialogue, and action against hate. The full-day forum brought together community members, youth, service providers, legal experts, educators, and other partners to explore how we can work together to prevent, report, and respond to hate in all its forms. This forum is part of an expanding multi-pronged anti-hate strategy.

Multi-Language Service – Full Implementation Underway:

To enhance communications and improve service delivery with the diverse communities we serve, the new multi-language service is providing OPS members with immediate access to interpretation and translation services on their smartphones or computers.

As mentioned in a past update report, Languages in Motion was selected as the successful vendor, following a competition process with the City of Ottawa Procurement team. Through an application on their smartphones, OPS members are able to access an interpreter in over 200 languages in under a minute. A multi-phased training and implementation plan is underway, and the new application has been rolled out on all OPS smartphones (service can also be accessed via the web platform or 1-800 phone number). Training and implementation for the first phase with a cross-section of OPS users to test the system and procedures is complete, and the full implementation across OPS is now underway.

Body-Worn Cameras – Deployment Expansion Approval:

Following a successful pilot project with 30 body-worn cameras last year, the Board approved the next phase of deployment at last month's Board meeting on June 22, 2026. This expansion will support the delivery of frontline policing to the community, evidence collection, transparency and accountability.

The pilot project reinforced that BWCs:

- Support compliance with policies, including use of force reporting;
- Help maintain high professional standards when providing service to our communities, and when reporting and conducting investigations;
- Improve officer productivity and reduce administrative burden, creating more time for officers to respond to calls and perform proactive work; and
- Provide an objective record that supports transparency, integrity and accountability in our work, strengthening public trust.

In terms of next steps, OPS will proceed with procurement and phased deployment under the delegated authority granted to the Chief of Police. OPS will continue to provide progress reports to the Board. For more information about Body-Worn Cameras, visit ottawapolice.ca/video.

Mental Health Crisis Response – Multiple Initiatives Underway:

The Police Service is committed to continuing to work with partners to improve police responses to mental health crisis-related calls for service. Regular update reports are provided to the Board through the Mental Health Change initiative, which was created to focus on the jury recommendations made during the Coroner's Inquest into the death of Mr. Abdi. Recommendations included the need to create a Mental Health Advisory Council (MHAC) and mental health strategy. Through an intersectional approach with internal and external partners, the Change initiative is doing important work on improving training, creating champions for change, data collection and analysis, updating policies and procedures, and assisting with the piloting and expansion of body-worn cameras.

The OPS continues to be active in supporting the Ottawa Guiding Council for Mental Health and Addictions (Guiding Council) and the Alternative Neighbourhood Response program known as ANCHOR, which expanded its service area during this reporting period.

The OPS also partnered with The Royal Ottawa Mental Health Centre to launch a new Mobile Crisis Response Team (MCRT) last month, an initiative designed to deliver immediate, specialized support to individuals experiencing mental illness or substance use crises in the community. The collaboration pairs a clinical mental health professional from The Royal's Urgent Care Clinic with a specially trained OPS officer from the Mental Health Unit. Together they will respond to calls across the nation's capital by providing immediate on-scene assessment, de-escalation, and direct connections to care and community services.

Building on these collaborative efforts, OPS has partnered with the Youth Services Bureau (YSB) to launch a new Youth Mobile Crisis Response Team. The initiative pairs a specially trained OPS officer with a YSB crisis response worker to respond to youth experiencing mental health crises, providing timely, community-based support while connecting youth and their families to appropriate services. The program was developed in collaboration with the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario (CHEO) and the Kids Come First partnership to strengthen youth-focused crisis response. The YSB Crisis Line is available to youth, parents, and caregivers 24/7. For more information

about the Youth Mobile Crisis Response Team, visit [24/7 Crisis Line & Online Crisis Chat - Youth Services Jeunesse](#).

Annual Human Rights Learning Forum – Save the Date for December 3rd:

Planning is well underway for the 11th Annual Human Rights Learning Forum, which will take place on December 3rd, at the St. Elias Centre this year. This annual event brings police and the community together for a full-day interactive session to learn about human rights and EDI issues, themes, and opportunities for action. It is expected that the 2026 theme and online registration will be launched in September at ottawapolice.ca/hrlf.

Focus Area 2: Members – Work Environment

OPS remains committed to providing an equitable, inclusive, and safe workplace where all members are valued for their unique knowledge, skills, abilities, and experiences. By continuing to remove barriers and improve employment opportunities and programs, OPS remains committed to fostering a culture that promotes respect, inclusion, safety, and wellness for all members.

Safe Workplace Program & New THRIVE Advisory Committee:

In response to several serious incidents involving Ottawa Police members related to gender-based misconduct, sexual offences, and intimate partner violence (historical and recent), a report entitled “Ottawa Police Service Workplace Culture” as well as a presentation on “Rebuilding Trust: Addressing Sexual Harassment, Culture and Accountability – A Long Term Commitment to a Workplace Where Women Feel Safe and Belong” were provided to the Board last month.

The report detailed the multiple reviews and actions taken by the police service to address these concerns, including recent improvements to the Safe Workplace Program. The presentation emphasized the commitment to continue working towards change with five public commitments and an accountability structure. A new THRIVE Advisory Committee will publish a twelve-month action plan with owners, timelines, reporting dates, and measurement indicators. While this action item is placed in Focus Area 2: Members – Work Environment, it is clear that this work is also focused on improving service delivery.

Employment Systems Review:

The Employment Systems Review (ESR) is a large multi-year project to ensure equity in employment opportunities and benefits for all OPS members. An ESR examines human resources systems from an employment equity perspective by assessing current

processes and practices across nine employment systems: recruitment, selection, hiring, promotion, retention, training, development, termination, and accommodation. An ESR seeks to identify systemic inequities to address barriers and implement meaningful change.

The focus of the Service's multi-year ESR is shifting from Phase 1 (Recruitment, Selection, Hiring, and Promotions employment systems) to Phase 2 (Retention, Training, and Development) - with recognition that work in both phases will overlap as we continue to address systemic change. Additionally, it's important to note that work to address barriers is happening alongside the ESR (as opposed to implementing improvements at the conclusion of the undertaking).

Highlights from the Phase 1 analysis include the following:

- Analysis of workforce data, established as a baseline for the ESR, revealed:
 - o Women and racialized persons remain under-represented at OPS, but over the course this phase representation of racialized persons has increased substantially (from 17.5% as at February 2025 to 21.6% as at March 2026).
 - o The baseline data indicated that close to three-quarters (71.8%) of the OPS workforce were employed in sworn roles.
 - o While there was some significant under-representation of racialized persons in two predominantly civilian directorates, the majority of significant under-representation of both women and racialized persons was noted across four predominantly sworn directorates – most notably in more specialized roles, underscoring the need to examine recruitment, selection, and promotional opportunities in these areas. For this reason, the ESR focused more specifically on Sworn recruitment, selection, hiring, and promotions processes.
- The ESR reviewed close to 100 documents - covering recruitment, selection, hiring, and promotions related policies, programs, processes, procedures, and guidelines. The review highlighted specific areas requiring updating, application of an EDI Lens, and/or formal documentation.
- During this phase, the Service introduced and improved application of an EDI Lens to sworn transfers and promotions processes and conducted an analysis of sworn promotions data for the past five years. The total percentage of promotions for women, racialized persons, and Indigenous peoples over the past five years is relatively well aligned with each group's internal representation rate. For women and racialized persons, the percentages (19.9% and 20.3% respectively) are relatively aligned with

current corresponding representation rates (23.7% and 21.6% respectively).

Additionally, the total percentage of promotions for Indigenous peoples exceeds the corresponding internal representation rate of 4.2%.

- As part of phase 1, the Service is also improving data reporting with respect to hires and departures, incorporating analysis in terms of historically under-represented population groups.
- During this phase of the ESR the Service also launched the 30Forward initiative (a national initiative designed to advance the representation of women in law enforcement), focused on staff stabilization efforts, and developed a Recruitment and Retention Strategy which is discussed further below.

As we continue with analysis and implementation of phase 1 into 2026 (final steps in analysis, assignment, and implementation of corrective actions), we will begin work on Phase 2 of the ESR, which will focus on Retention, Training, and Development and is expected to address some of the barriers identified in the first phase.

Self-Identification Data Collection:

During phase 1 of the ESR, in-house ability and expertise (albeit manual) to collect employment equity-related workforce data on the two under-represented population groups at the OPS (women and racialized persons) was leveraged to allow the Service to better understand the current landscape and begin to identify and address system barriers to equity within the employment realm. This has provided the advantage of better informing action plans (for example, specific HR initiatives in areas where significant under-representation exists).

In tandem with data collection efforts, the OPS began working to implement improved workforce self-identification survey capabilities, including independent and in-depth reporting functionality. It is expected that this reporting will ultimately be similar to federal requirements, allowing for workforce analysis by National Occupational Classification Code for improved analysis and comparison with Census of Canada data at the occupational level.

The first half of 2026 has been productive, with system builds to collect and provide first-level reporting information with respect to self-identification surveys. The changes are currently in development mode, with testing underway to ensure reporting needs can be met. We expect to launch the survey across the organization, for both sworn and civilian members, in Q3 2026.

Employee Resource Groups:

The OPS continues to support the Employee Resource Group (ERG) Program with improved communications and access to resources and training initiatives.

Each ERG is carrying out its 2026 work plan, which includes many action items including: acknowledging international dates of significance, attending or providing workshops, hosting awareness-raising events, leading special initiatives, providing input and feedback on OPS processes and policies, and/or participating in training.

The recommendations from the New Member Experience Survey that was led by the Ethno-Cultural and Religious Diversity ERG were delegated to the Superintendent of the Training, Equity, and Development Directorate for review. During this period, the directorate's leadership team met to review and triage the list of recommendations to assigned leads for action. The majority of the recommendations are being integrated into the Recruitment Strategy, which has been added as a new DRIVE² Strategy action item below.

Also during this period, a new South Asian ERG was formed by interested members, and they are currently holding a voting process for the leadership positions for this new ERG. There has also been a leadership change with Ethno-Cultural and Religious Diversity ERG as a result of an election process. A detailed report of activities and accomplishments will be provided by each ERG in the DRIVE² annual report to the Board in January 2027.

Recruitment & Retention Strategy 2026 – 2029:

As Ottawa evolves, we must continue to attract, develop, and retain talented people who bring diverse perspectives, lived experiences, and a commitment to public service. The OPS Recruitment and Retention Strategy outlines a comprehensive approach to attract, select, and retain a high-caliber workforce that is reflective of, and responsive to, the diverse needs of Ottawa's many communities.

The Ottawa Police Service is grounded in the values of Honour, Courage, and Service, which guide the actions, professionalism, and decision-making of our members. These values shape our recruiting approach; attracting individuals who are committed to ethical conduct, resilient in the face of challenge, and dedicated to serving diverse communities.

A new action item added to the DRIVE² Strategy during this reporting period, the Recruiting & Retention Strategy aligns with, and aims to advance, the Board's 2024–2027 Strategic Direction to build trust through strong partnerships, enhance community

safety, advance and support a resilient, thriving membership, and strengthen our commitment to human rights through equity, diversity, and inclusion. It responds to the relevant recommendations in the recent New Member Experience Survey report. In February, OPS also officially adopted the national *30Forward Pledge* aimed at improving representation of women and under-represented groups in policing. The adoption requires the implementation of an action plan focused on improving recruiting efforts and processes, retention strategies, and wellness programs, mentorship initiatives, and building a culture of allyship and inclusion.

With an expected fall completion date, we are working closely with the CEC and its committees to finalize the Recruitment and Retention Strategy and will be consulting key internal and external partners throughout the summer.

Multi-Year Accessibility Plan:

Work on the Service's next multi-year Accessibility Plan (Plan) involved reviewing and incorporating both internal and external feedback received on the draft Plan (shared in December 2025) into the revised version, which was published in June. We note that the 2026-2030 Plan is an iterative document that will continue to adjust to ensure we are providing accessible environments and meet the accessibility requirements of persons with disabilities in a timely, respectful, and proactive manner. We thank everyone who provided input on the draft Plan and invite you to view the 2026-2030 Accessibility Plan online at ottawapolice.ca/accessibility.

Focus Area 3: Leadership and Accountability

The DRIVE² Strategy builds on the strong governance, collaboration, and accountability framework established during its development and design. With the Chief of Police as the Executive Sponsor for the Strategy, regular quarterly meetings have been scheduled for updates ahead of the mid-year and end-of-year updates to the Board.

The Senior Leadership Team and the CEC receive regular updates and feedback opportunities. In addition, the mandate of the CEC EDI Committee is to ensure the ongoing monitoring of the implementation and evaluation of the Strategy. The CEC EDI Committee also supported the development of a detailed Measurement Framework and Baseline Overview for the DRIVE² Strategy to ensure meaningful and measurable progress.

Focus Area 4: Connecting and Learning

The Ottawa Police Service remains committed to EDI as a journey, rather than a destination, that requires continuous action, meaningful engagement, regular communications, ongoing learning, and measuring progress.

The internal and external communications plan to support awareness and engagement for the DRIVE² Strategy continued for this period. In addition to ongoing presentations, events, social media and other updates, an internal website was created for OPS members.

The OPS continues to invest in employee learning and development and has been very active this period in making enhancements to existing training and adding new leadership learning opportunities. These include:

- The *SkillSets* online platform for self-directed learning was launched in March.
- The International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) First-Line Leadership training program was offered again in March to a group of front-line supervisors.
- A new one-day workshop dedicated to “Leading Conversations Beyond Conflict” was launched this year with multiple sessions available this year.
- A new six-day leadership program is being developed with Schulich ExecEd for middle managers and is expected to be launched in September.
- The first OPS Mentorship program that was launched in October 2025 wrapped up in March 2026 with 66 matches and a plan to hold the next program in the fall.
- Several enhancements were made to the Field Training Officer program for those officers to sign up to provide the in-field coaching to new officers. Enhancements included: new handbook, e-learning, progress report rubric for assessments, online resource centre, and field training accreditation.
- The Professional Development Centre also outlined several training improvements and new offerings for last month’s Use of Force report and presentation to the Board, including, but not limited to, launching new human rights thematic training modules and expanded Use of Force requalification training with additional mental health components.

OPS is committed to measuring and tracking our progress against available benchmarks and metrics to determine if we are reaching the short- and long-term target outcomes.

Built on a continuous improvement model like the DRIVE² Strategy, the focus for 2026 includes implementing the measurement framework activities to ensure meaningful and measurable progress toward our 2027 goals and objectives. The internationally

recognized Global Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Benchmarks form the foundation for the key performance indicators (KPIs) and measurement framework that will help track progress against our broader vision for EDI at OPS. This includes working with CEC to conduct a strategy assessment as we prepare to implement the last year of the strategy in 2027 and look toward the next human rights and EDI strategy for the organization.

CONSULTATION

The OPS DRIVE² Strategy was developed in close collaboration with the Community Equity Council and is directly aligned with the Board's 2024 - 2027 Strategic Direction. Significant inputs from both community and police members, feedback from multiple community engagements, and third-party reviews identified changes needed to improve both internal culture and service delivery.

As demonstrated throughout this report, human rights and EDI work is a shared responsibility for meaningful collective action and lasting change. Community engagement and partnerships continue to be critically important for the ongoing implementation, monitoring, and measurement of the DRIVE² Strategy.

Community members can get involved by visiting the Community Equity Council at opscommunityequitycouncil.com or contacting the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Unit at EDI@ottawapolice.ca.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The majority of the DRIVE² Strategy work and projects are included within operational budgets of the various units leading this important change work. An assessment of new budget needs for 2027 will be conducted during the annual OPS budget planning process.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Document 1: Ottawa Police Service 2023 – 2027 DRIVE² Strategy (Version 5)

CONCLUSION

The DRIVE² Strategy encompasses four key focus areas, comprising over thirty action items that aim to enhance the internal culture for members and improve service delivery to the communities we serve. This report provides a mid-year update by highlighting progress on key action items. There is ongoing momentum with significant progress achieved again this reporting period – critically important for the lasting change we are seeking.

The Community Equity Council continues to be instrumental in providing guidance and input into the ongoing design, implementation, monitoring, and measurement of the OPS DRIVE² Strategy. The Ottawa Police Service is grateful to the Community Equity Council and various community partners for their important contributions to this ongoing DRIVE² Strategy work and our continued journey towards greater equity within service delivery and our work environment.