

Staff Report



Community Services Department

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REPORT TO: Community and Infrastructure Services Committee

DATE OF MEETING: February 9, 2026

SUBMITTED BY: Helen Fylactou, Manager, Enforcement, 519-783-8511

PREPARED BY: Helen Fylactou, Manager, Enforcement, 519-783-8511

WARD(S) INVOLVED: N/A

DATE OF REPORT: January 21, 2026

REPORT NO.: CSD-2026-047

SUBJECT: Bylaw Enforcement Dispatch Service Contract with WRPS

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council support entering into a formal agreement with the Waterloo Regional Police Services (WRPS), the City of Waterloo, the City of Cambridge, and the Town of North Dumfries for the provision of dispatch services for Municipal Bylaw Enforcement provided the Cities of Waterloo and Cambridge are participating in the program; and further,

That Council authorize the Mayor and Clerk to execute said agreement for the provision of dispatch services; said agreement to be to the satisfaction of the City Solicitor

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS:

- Recent amendments to the *Police Services Act* permit police services board to recover costs for non-core services, including dispatch services provided to municipal bylaw enforcement.
- A new contract with WRPS will include a dedicated line with dedicated, bylaw-only focused dispatchers to better streamline services and response times.
- Continuing with WRPS dispatch supports enhanced officer safety by providing direct access to police over radio and can provide information around safety of situations.
- The financial implications are approximately \$587,000 annually and are based on current call volume.

BACKGROUND:

Since 1996, City of Kitchener Bylaw Enforcement Services has been on police radio and has relied on WRPS dispatch services to respond to by-law related matters requiring a 24/7 response, such as noise complaints, fireworks, backyard fires, public nuisances, and encampments. Until now, there has been no cost associated with being on dispatch services.

Recent amendments to the *Police Services Act* now permit police service boards to recover costs for the provision of non-core services, including dispatch services provided for municipal

bylaw enforcement. These legislative changes have created the authority for WRPS to formalize existing service arrangements and establish cost-recovery agreements with area municipalities.

As such, in December 2024 WRPS advised area municipalities that they are reviewing the current model for receiving and dispatching bylaw enforcement calls and looking at appropriate cost-sharing models with area municipalities.

REPORT:

WRPS is requiring a formalized, Region-wide approach to dispatching municipal bylaw enforcement calls as a result of legislative changes that permit cost recovery for non-core services. This report outlines the proposed service model, evaluates available options, and identifies the recommended approach for the Kitchener Bylaw Enforcement.

Current Model:

WRPS currently dispatches bylaw related calls requiring a 24/7 response through existing police communication systems. Calls are made by the public through the non-emergency phone number, and are managed alongside police and non-emergency inquiries, with no dedicated bylaw dispatcher or formalized service agreement. There are 2 methods for bylaw enforcement staff to receive calls, which includes: calls through the Corporate Contact Centre (CCC), which include parking calls, or through Police, which include noise, fireworks, backyard fires, and encampments.

Proposed Model:

WRPS has advised that, should municipalities wish to continue receiving police dispatch service for bylaw enforcement, such services will now be provided only through a formal agreement and at a cost to the municipality. Across the region, Bylaw computer-aided dispatch (CAD) calls account for 3.6% of all CAD calls. However, Kitchener accounted for 51.8% of all bylaw calls dispatched by WRPS across the Region. Police have reported that the number of calls has led to an increase in wait times and has hindered their ability to meet the National Emergency Number Association standards for call response times.

Cost of Model:

Under the model identified by WRPS, there will be a cost associated with having a dedicated dispatcher for municipal bylaw divisions through the Region. The costing for the service will be reviewed annually and will be based on the number of calls from each municipality. Based on the current call volume, the anticipated cost for Kitchener is approximately \$587,000. The key components of the proposed model are:

- **Dedicated Bylaw Dispatchers**
 - A 24/7 dispatch position focused exclusively on municipal bylaw enforcement, ensuring calls are prioritized and handing without competing with police emergency calls. Dedicated bylaw dispatch positions will not be utilized to cover police dispatch and will only dispatch calls for the bylaw enforcement.

- **Dedicated Radio Channels**
 - A separate radio channel for bylaw officers to support real-time communication, and faster response times.

- **Centralized Phone Number**
 - A single, region-wide phone number for bylaw enforcement dispatch. This will simplify access for the public and provide consistent service across the Region, without contributing to wait times on police phone lines.

- **Continued Officer Safety Features**
 - Access to police radio if backup or escalation is required. Provide guidance on known safety risks or premise flags and determine whether police should be responding with the officer, or if our officer should attend at all.

Options for Council Consideration:

City staff considered available dispatch models as outlined below:

Option	Description	Benefits	Implications
Option 1 (recommended): Remain on Police Dispatch	Enter into a formal dispatch service agreement with WRPS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Maintain existing service levels ✓ Officer safety ✓ Streamline calls and improve response time ✓ Clear contact for the public 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ High cost ▪ Annual non-static fee
Option 2:	Explore alternative dispatch models (Ex: 2-officer response, Fire dispatch)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Avoid a new contract ✓ Retains municipal control over dispatch functions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Comparable cost ▪ No access to police flags ▪ No police radios ▪ Would have to call 9-1-1 for police assistance vs over the air (delayed response times) ▪ Increase safety risk for officers

Staff recommend proceeding with Option 1, to enter into a formal dispatch services agreement with WRPS. This recommendation is primarily driven by the need to maintain bylaw officer safety. Bylaw enforcement staff routinely respond to situations that involve:

- elevated risk;
- aggressive or violent behaviour;
- interactions with impaired individuals;
- enter private dwellings;
- being in the middle of trails or forest; and
- attend large gatherings late at all hours.

Staying with police dispatch provides critical safety supports for bylaw enforcement staff, including real-time location of officer, access to premise and location-based risk indicators, monitor of calls, direct access to police backup and dispatchers. Pursuing an alternative dispatch model would eliminate or significantly reduce these safeguards, increasing the risk to officers.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

This report supports the delivery of core services.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Operating Budget – The recommendation will have an impact to the annual Bylaw Enforcement operating budget. The proposed dispatch model is not a fixed amount, and the cost will be reviewed annually and allocated based on each municipality's proportion of bylaw calls for service using the most recent full-year data. Based on the current call volumes, Kitchener Bylaw will be responsible for approximately \$586,738 annually. This estimate includes all associated operating costs, including dispatch staff, software, licensing, and supporting technologies.

The current quoted cost is based on Kitchener, Waterloo, Cambridge, and North Dumfries all agreeing to the contract. If one municipality does not go forward, the cost will increase for each of the remaining municipalities. If one of these municipalities makes the decision not to proceed with this change and that decision results in a significant additional cost to the City of Kitchener, staff will report back to Council for further direction as it would become difficult to reconcile even higher costs for this service.

WRPS has indicated they will not start recovering costs until October 1, 2026.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

INFORM – This report has been posted to the City's website with the agenda in advance of the council / committee meeting.

COLLABORATE – The Cities of Kitchener, Waterloo and Cambridge, and the Township of North Dumfries have been working collaboratively to discuss and negotiate with WRPS on their new approach to dispatch services.

PREVIOUS REPORTS/AUTHORITIES:

There are no previous reports/authorities related to this matter.

APPROVED BY: Michael May, General Manager, Community Services and Deputy CAO