City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To:	Community Safety Committee	**Date:**	March 13, 2024
From:	Dave Chauhan Chief Superintendent, Officer in Charge	**File:**	09-5000-01/2024-Vol 01
Re:	**Richmond RCMP Monthly Activity Report – February 2024**		

Recommendation from the OIC

That the report titled "RCMP Monthly Activity Report – February 2024", dated March 13, 2024, from the Officer in Charge, Richmond RCMP Detachment, be received for information.

Dave Chauhan
Chief Superintendent, Officer in Charge
(604-278-1212)

Att. 4

REPORT CONCURRENCE	
CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER	
SENIOR STAFF REPORT REVIEW	**INITIALS:**
APPROVED BY CAO	

Report

Origin

At the request of the Community Safety Committee, the Officer in Charge will keep Council informed on matters pertaining to policing in the Richmond community. This monthly activity report for the RCMP provides information on each of the following areas:

1. Activities and Noteworthy Files
2. Analysis of Police Statistics
3. Crime Trends Across Jurisdictions
4. Block Watch
5. Community Police Station Programs
6. Crime Prevention Unit
7. Road Safety Unit
8. Victim Services
9. Youth Section

This report supports Council's Strategic Plan 2022-2026 Focus Area #1 Proactive in Stakeholder and Civic Engagement:

Proactive stakeholder and civic engagement to foster understanding and involvement and advance Richmond's interests.

Analysis

<u>Activities and Noteworthy Files</u>

Pedestrian Fatality

On February 1, 2024, Richmond RCMP officers responded to the Cambie Road and Bargen Drive area after receiving reports of a pedestrian being struck by a vehicle. The pedestrian, an 80-year-old Richmond resident, was transported to the hospital but later succumbed to his injuries. The vehicle's driver remained at the scene and cooperated with police. The collision is under investigation.

Safe Exchange Zone

On February 9, 2024, the Richmond RCMP issued a media release announcing the launch of the Safe Exchange initiative to help prevent criminal offences associated with online sales. This new program is designed to provide a secure environment within the main Richmond RCMP Detachment for community members to conduct online marketplace transactions.

Arrest

On February 13, 2024, a Richmond RCMP officer was conducting routine patrols in the 3000 block of Great Canadian Way when he observed a stolen vehicle out of Vancouver. The vehicle was stopped, and a woman wanted on a Canada-wide warrant was arrested.

Child Luring

On February 21, 2024, Richmond RCMP officers responded to the 4000 block of Moncton Street after a complainant advised that a man had been communicating with her child online and had asked the child to meet him at a local park. Police arrested the man and have identified additional youths with whom this man may have been in communication. The investigation is ongoing.

Theft Prevention

On February 28, 2024, the Richmond RCMP issued a media release promoting the new "You Etch It. We Catch It" program to combat catalytic converter thefts. In partnership with participating Richmond automotive shops, the initiative invites vehicle owners to have part of their VIN etched onto their catalytic converters during routine maintenance at no extra cost. This etching assists police in tracking stolen property and deterring potential thefts.

Analysis of Police Statistics

Arson

In February 2024, there were 11 reported arsons, which is an increase of nine incidents from the previous month. No patterns or trends have been identified.[1]

In February 2024, there were 3 incidents involving garbage bins/dumpsters being lit on fire.

Assault Serious (Assault with a Weapon)

There were 18 serious assault events in February 2024, which represents a 38 per cent increase from the previous month and an 18 per cent decrease from February 2023. No patterns or trends have been identified. The number of serious assaults this month is above the average range.

Of the incidents reported in February 2024, 50 per cent were domestic assaults.

Auto Theft

In February 2024, there were 17 auto thefts, which represents a 26 per cent decrease from the previous month and a 32 per cent decrease from February 2023. No patterns or trends have been identified. The number of auto thefts this month is within the average range.

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[1] In January 2024, a new Uniform Crime Reporting Survey (UCR) code was introduced related to intentionally set fires that do not meet the *Criminal Code* definition of Arson The new UCR code, 8900-25 Fire – Not Arson, will allow for the more accurate capturing of arson incidents. The introduction of this new UCR code currently prevents comparison to prior year arson counts. Staff will resume reporting trend comparison once sufficient statistically significant data is collected under the new UCR system.

Drugs

In February 2024, there were 16 drug offences, which is a six per cent decrease from the previous month and a 48 per cent decrease from February 2023. No patterns or trends have been identified. The number of drug incidents this month is below the average range.

Mental Health

There were 215 mental health-related incidents in February 2024, representing a nine per cent decrease from the previous month and a 15 per cent decrease from February 2023. No patterns or trends have been identified. The number of mental health-related incidents this month is within the average range.

There were 66 police apprehensions this month, representing a 25 per cent decrease from the previous month, and the average hospital wait time decreased by two per cent to 129 minutes. The extended wait time has been attributed to four files with exceptionally long wait times.

Residential Break and Enter

There were 23 break and enters to residences in February 2024, which represents a 30 per cent decrease from the previous month and a 35 per cent increase from February 2023. No patterns or trends have been identified. The number of residential break and enters this month is within the average range.

Commercial Break and Enter

In February 2024, there were 19 break and enters to businesses, which is more than three times the number reported the previous month and represents a 17 per cent decrease from February 2023.[2] No patterns or trends have been identified. The number of commercial break and enters this month is below the average range.

Robbery

There were eight robberies in February 2024, representing an increase of six incidents from the previous month and an increase of five incidents from February 2023. No patterns or trends have been identified. The number of robberies this month is above the average range.

Three of the robberies reported this month were connected to online marketplace sales. There were also three purse snatchings. The incidents remain under investigation.

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[2] The number of commercial break and enters in January 2024 was the lowest number recorded in over ten years

Sexual Offences

In February 2024, there were 23 sexual offence files, representing a four per cent decrease from the previous month and a 21 per cent increase from February 2023.[3] No patterns or trends have been identified. The number of sexual offences this month is above the average range.

More than half of the offences reported in February 2024 were sexual assaults, and 13 per cent were related to the distribution of child pornography.

Shoplifting

There were 149 reported shoplifting thefts in February 2024, which is a 28 per cent increase from the previous month and a 46 per cent increase from February 2023. No patterns or trends have been identified. The number of shoplifting thefts this month is above the average range.

The top targeted location remained consistent with previous months, and the most frequently stolen items were clothing and accessories. Suspects have been identified in 32 per cent of incidents reported this month.

Theft from Automobile

There were 70 thefts from automobile incidents in February 2024, which is a three per cent decrease from the previous month and a 46 per cent decrease from February 2023. The number of thefts from automobiles this month is below the average range.

Hate Crimes and Incidents

Table 1 presents the number of hate crimes and hate incidents reported between January 1, 2020 and February 29, 2024.[4] A "hate crime" refers to any criminal offence targeting an identifiable group. The criteria for an offence to be considered a hate crime, as per the *Criminal Code*, carries a higher threshold and usually involves one or more criminal offences. A "hate incident" may be motivated by the same factors as a hate crime but does not reach the threshold of being a criminal offence. There was one hate incident reported in February 2024, which was related to racist comments stemming from a verbal altercation.
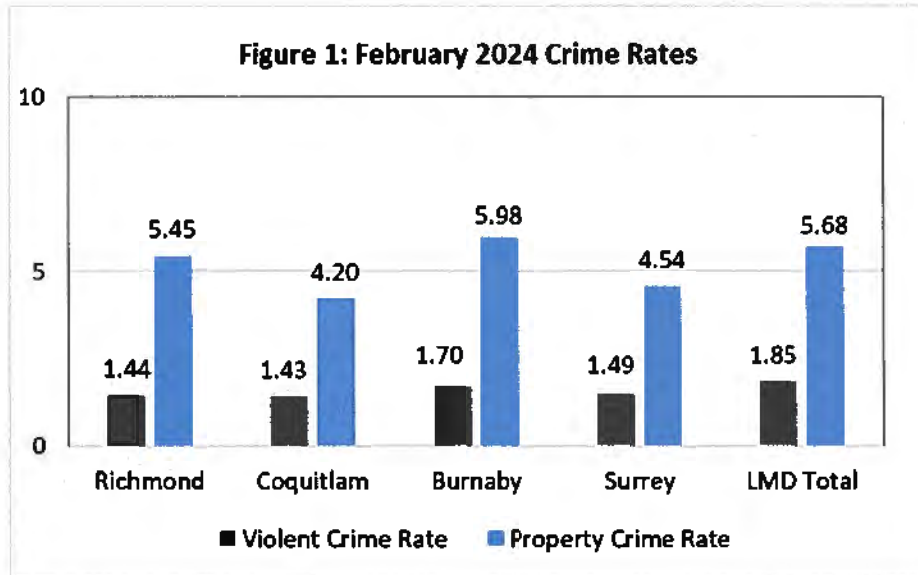
Table 1 – Hate Crimes and Hate Incidents			
Year	Hate Crime Files	Hate Incident Files	Total
2020	21	13	34
2021	21	24	45
2022	8	26	34
2023	6	19	25
2024 (TYD)	0	1	1

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[3] The Sexual Offences category comprises a range of offences including: sexual assault, sexual interference, making and distributing child pornography, possessing and accessing child pornography and indecent acts/exposing.
[4] The BC Hate Crimes Unit uses the terms hate-motivated crime and hate-motivated incident.

Crime Trends Across Jurisdictions

Figure 1 presents data on crime rates for February 2024. Of the four largest municipalities policed by the RCMP in the Lower Mainland District (LMD), Richmond had the second lowest violent crime rate, and the property crime rate was below the LMD average.

Figure 1: February 2024 Crime Rates

Jurisdiction	Violent Crime Rate	Property Crime Rate
Richmond	1.44	5.45
Coquitlam	1.43	4.20
Burnaby	1.70	5.98
Surrey	1.49	4.54
LMD Total	1.85	5.68

■ Violent Crime Rate   ■ Property Crime Rate

Block Watch

At the end of February 2024, the Block Watch program had 305 groups, totalling 7,104 participants. Currently, the program includes 436 captains and co-captains. Block Watch staff participated in a shoplifting awareness campaign at Richmond Centre this month.

Community Police Station Programs

Community police stations continue to enhance the Richmond Detachment's policing services by providing various crime prevention resources and community safety initiatives. City staff and volunteers pursue safety initiatives to improve crime prevention program awareness, community engagement, and police accessibility. These initiatives help reduce anxiety and fear related to crime. The program activities vary from month to month, reflecting weather conditions, seasonal initiatives, and the availability of volunteers.

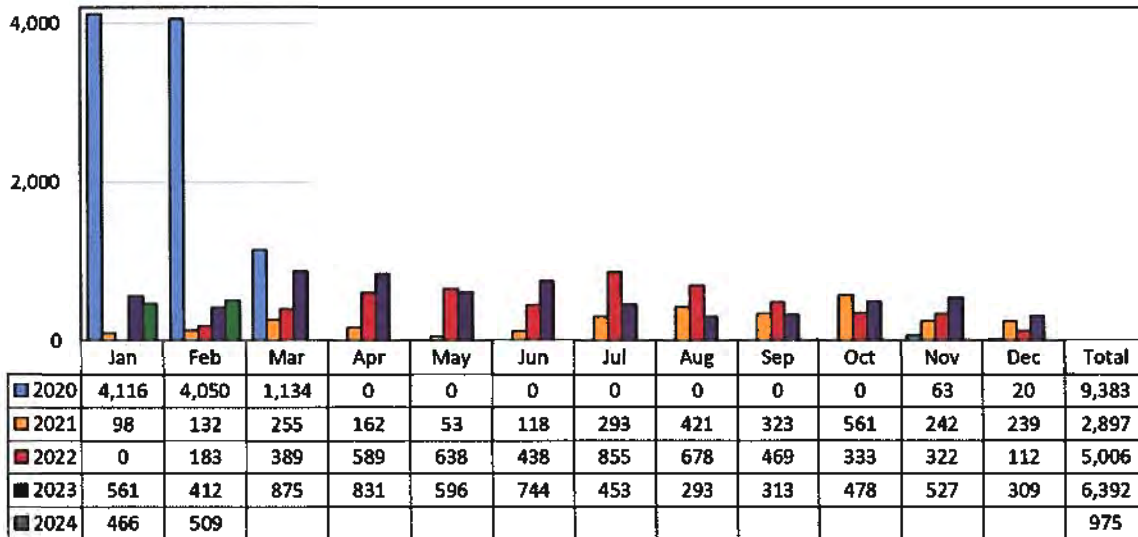During February, volunteer highlights included:

- The deployment of two volunteer foot/van patrols, totalling 10 hours and three bike patrols, totalling 34 hours.
- A total of 20 Fail to Stop deployments took place, resulting in 623 information letters issued.
- There were 36 Lock Out Auto Crime deployments, resulting in 509 information letters issued.
- Speed Watch was conducted on 3,021 vehicles, resulting in 170 information letters issued.

- February 1 – Volunteers conducted a Lock Out Auto Crime deployment at Aberdeen Centre and issued 27 information letters.
- February 6 - Volunteers participated in a Speed Watch deployment at Thomas Kidd Elementary School and issued ten information letters.
- February 7-Volunteers assisted RCMP officers and Block Watch with a Shoplifting awareness event at Richmond Centre Mall. Stores were advised of a rise in organized crime-related thefts. A "Shoplifting Bulletin" was created, which outlines theft deterrence and how to report it to the police. Additional crime prevention resources, including Community Safety App cards, were also distributed.
- February 10 – Volunteers conducted a Lock Out Auto Crime deployment at Richmond Centre and issued 68 information letters.
- February 11 – Volunteers conducted two Fail to Stop deployments in central Richmond and issued 59 information letters.
- February 22 – Volunteers participated in a Shoplifting awareness event at Richmond Centre Mall.

Lock Out Auto Crime

Figure 2 provides a yearly comparison of the number of vehicle notices issued.[5]

Figure 2: Lock Out Auto Crime Vehicles Issued a Notice

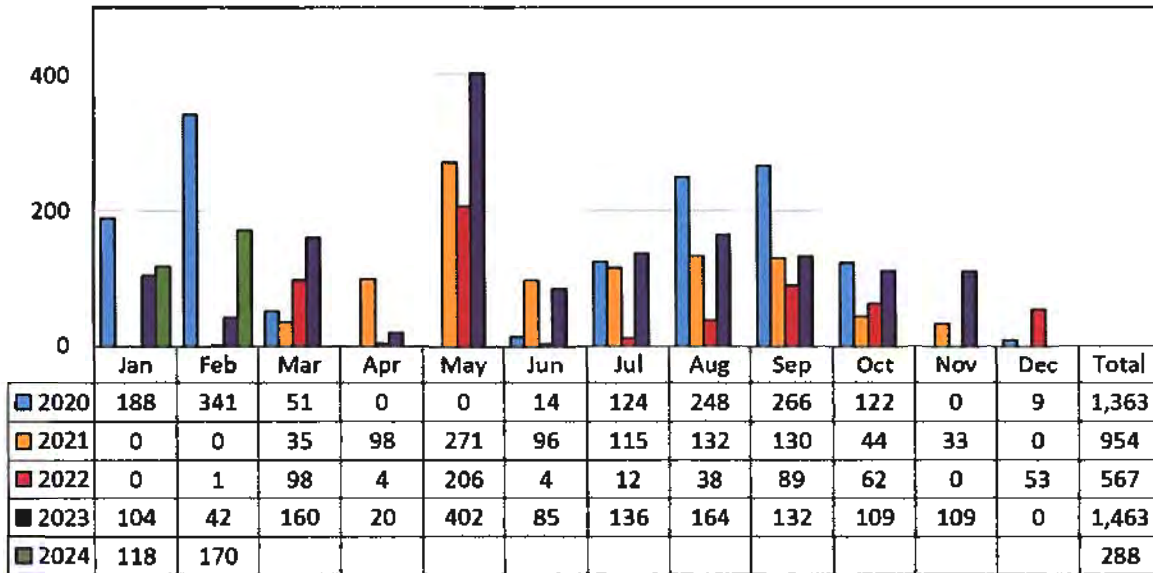|	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
2020	4,116	4,050	1,134	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	63	20	9,383
2021	98	132	255	162	53	118	293	421	323	561	242	239	2,897
2022	0	183	389	589	638	438	855	678	469	333	322	112	5,006
2023	561	412	875	831	596	744	453	293	313	478	527	309	6,392
2024	466	509											975

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[5] Beginning in November 2020, Lock Out Auto Crime letters were issued in place of notices. Letters are only issued to vehicles displaying security vulnerabilities; whereas previously, notices were issued to all vehicles. This has resulted in a significant reduction in the number of letters issued.

Speed Watch

Figure 3 compares the number of letters sent to registered vehicle owners yearly.

Figure 3: Speed Watch Letters Sent

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
2020	188	341	51	0	0	14	124	248	266	122	0	9	1,363
2021	0	0	35	98	271	96	115	132	130	44	33	0	954
2022	0	1	98	4	206	4	12	38	89	62	0	53	567
2023	104	42	160	20	402	85	136	164	132	109	109	0	1,463
2024	118	170											288

Crime Prevention Unit

The Crime Prevention Unit reduces crime and enhances community engagement through public awareness and education initiatives. During February, the Crime Prevention Unit participated in the following events/activities:

- Business Outreach
- Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives
- Fraud Awareness Presentations
- Place of Worship Patrols
- Shoplifting Awareness Campaign
- "You Etch It. We Catch It" Program

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<u>Road Safety Unit</u>

The Road Safety Unit makes Richmond's roads safer through evidence-based traffic enforcement, investigation of serious vehicle collisions and public education programs. Table 2 compares statistics for February 2024 to both January 2024 and December 2023. Violation tickets were issued for the following infractions:

Table 2: Violation Tickets Issued

Infraction	December 2023	January 2024	February 2024
Distracted Driving	84	86	64
Driver License	126	168	181
Impaired	19	15	20
Intersection Offences	22	39	39
Moving Infractions[6]	71	89	67
Speeding	117	135	167
Seatbelts	5	12	2
Vehicle-Related[7]	101	119	136
Other[8]	8	12	15
Total	**553**	**675**	**691**

<u>Victim Services</u>

In February 2024, Richmond RCMP Victim Services met with 65 new clients and attended nine crime/trauma scenes after hours. The unit currently maintains an active caseload of 85 files. In February, Victim Services responded to several cases involving medical-related sudden deaths, robberies and frauds.

<u>Youth Section</u>

The Richmond RCMP Detachment's Youth Section focuses on strategies contributing to safe and healthy behaviours essential to developing productive and civic-minded adults. During February, Youth Section highlights included:

- RCMP officers in the Youth Section conducted 66 proactive school visits at secondary schools and 105 visits at elementary schools. Police officers engaged with students during recess, lunch and morning and afternoon supervision.

- DARE classes were delivered to 326 elementary school students in 11 classes.[9]

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[6] Moving infractions refers to unsafe lane change and unsafe passing.

[7] Vehicle related refers to vehicle defects, for example no lights and no insurance.

[8] Other refers to miscellaneous charges including failing to remain at the scene of an accident and failing to stop for police.

[9] In 2024, the acronym for the DARE program was updated to Define Assess, Respond, Evaluate to better reflect the updated curriculum of DARE, which focuses on decision-making techniques.
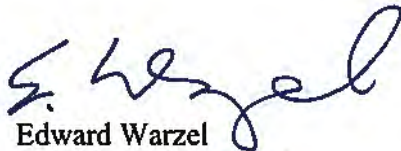
Financial Impact

None.

Conclusion

In February 2024, the Richmond RCMP conducted several noteworthy investigations, including an attempted child luring and a fatal collision involving a pedestrian. Police statistics for this month indicate that some crime types were outside of the average ranges. Serious assaults, sexual assaults, robberies and shoplifting incidents were elevated, while commercial break and enters, thefts from vehicles and drug offences were below average.

In February, Richmond RCMP launched two new crime prevention programs: the Safe Exchange and the You Etch It, We Catch It program. The Community Engagement Team and volunteers continued to promote crime prevention and road safety initiatives. The Officer in Charge of the Richmond RCMP Detachment will continue to ensure that Richmond remains a safe and desirable community.

Edward Warzel
Manager, Police Services
(604-207-4767)

Att. 1: Community Policing Programs
     2: Crime Statistics
     3: Crime Maps
     4: Shoplifting Bulletin

Block Watch

- Community-based crime prevention program aimed at helping neighbors organize themselves to prevent crime.
- Residents can receive email alerts of neighbourhood residential break and enters by registering their email addresses at: blockwatch@richmond.ca
- For more information, visit www.richmond.ca/safety/police/prevention/blockwatch.htm

Distracted Driving Program

- Trained volunteers monitor intersections and observe distracted drivers.
- A letter is sent to the registered owner of the offending vehicle with information on the safety risks associated to the observed behaviour and applicable fine amounts.
- For more information, visit www.richmond.ca/safety/police/prevention/programs.htm

Fail to Stop

- Trained volunteers monitor areas that have been referred to the program by local businesses or residents where drivers are not making a full stop at the stop sign, or running a red light.
- An information letter is sent to the registered owner of the vehicle advising them the date, time and location and applicable fine amounts if the driver received a violation ticket.

Lock Out Auto Crime

- Co-sponsored by the Insurance Corporation of BC (ICBC), volunteers patrol city streets and parking lots looking for automobile security vulnerabilities.
- Notices supplied by ICBC are issued to every vehicle inspected indicating to the owner what issues need to be addressed in order to keep the vehicle and contents secure.
- For more information, visit
- www.richmond.ca/safety/police/personal/vehicle.htm

Project 529

- This program allows riders to easily and securely register their bikes. This up-to-date database of bikes alerts its registrants if a fellow 529 bike is stolen.
- Project 529 is a unique, multi-national registry that holds a database of all registered and stolen bikes.

Speed Watch

- Co-sponsored by ICBC, promotes safe driving habits by alerting drivers of their speed.
- Trained volunteers are equipped with radar and a speed watch reader board that gives drivers instant feedback regarding their speed.
- Volunteers record the license plate number and the speed, and a letter is sent to the registered owner of the offending vehicle. The letter includes the date, time and location and applicable fine amounts if the driver received a violation ticket.

Spot the Target

- This initiative consists of frequently stolen items being placed in the volunteer van for participants to identify in order to enhance awareness of thefts from automobiles.

Stolen Auto Recovery

- Co-sponsored by ICBC, trained volunteers equipped with portable computers identify stolen vehicles.
- These volunteers recover hundreds of stolen vehicles each year throughout the Lower Mainland.

Volunteer Bike and Foot Patrol Program

- Trained volunteers patrol Richmond neighbourhoods reporting suspicious activities and providing a visible deterrent to crime and public order issues.
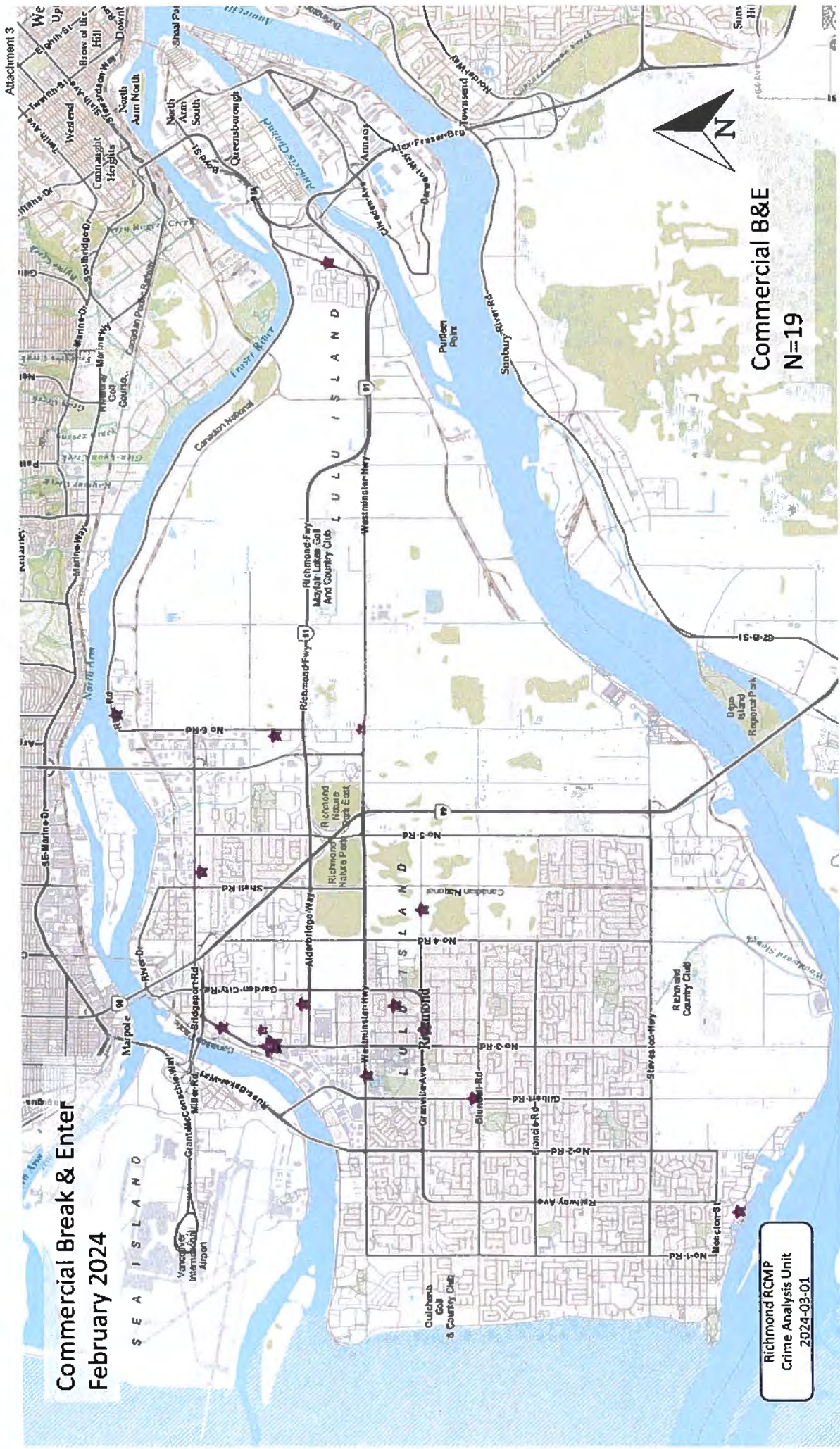
FEBRUARY 2024 STATISTICS

RICHMOND RCMP

The following information is a limited list of select crime-type samples, which does not comprise the entirety or assortment of all crimes captured by the RCMP. The statistics in this chart should be considered independently of the analysis provided as the data is unrelated to the research provided earlier in this report.

This chart identifies the monthly totals for founded Criminal Code incidents, excluding traffic-related Criminal Code incidents. Based on Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) scoring, there are three categories: (1) Violent Crime, (2) Property Crime, and (3) Other Criminal Code. Within each category, particular offence types are highlighted in this chart. In addition, monthly totals for Controlled Drugs and Substances Act (CDSA) incidents and MHA-related calls for service are included. Individual UCR codes are indicated below the specific crime type.

The 5 year average is based on activity within a single month over the past 5 years. If the current monthly total for an offence falls outside the the 5 year range (using one standard deviation) due to crime trends, patterns, or spikes, it will be noted in red if higher and blue if below. If the current monthly total for an offence is above the 5 year range due to primarily non-operational reasons such as the new UCR

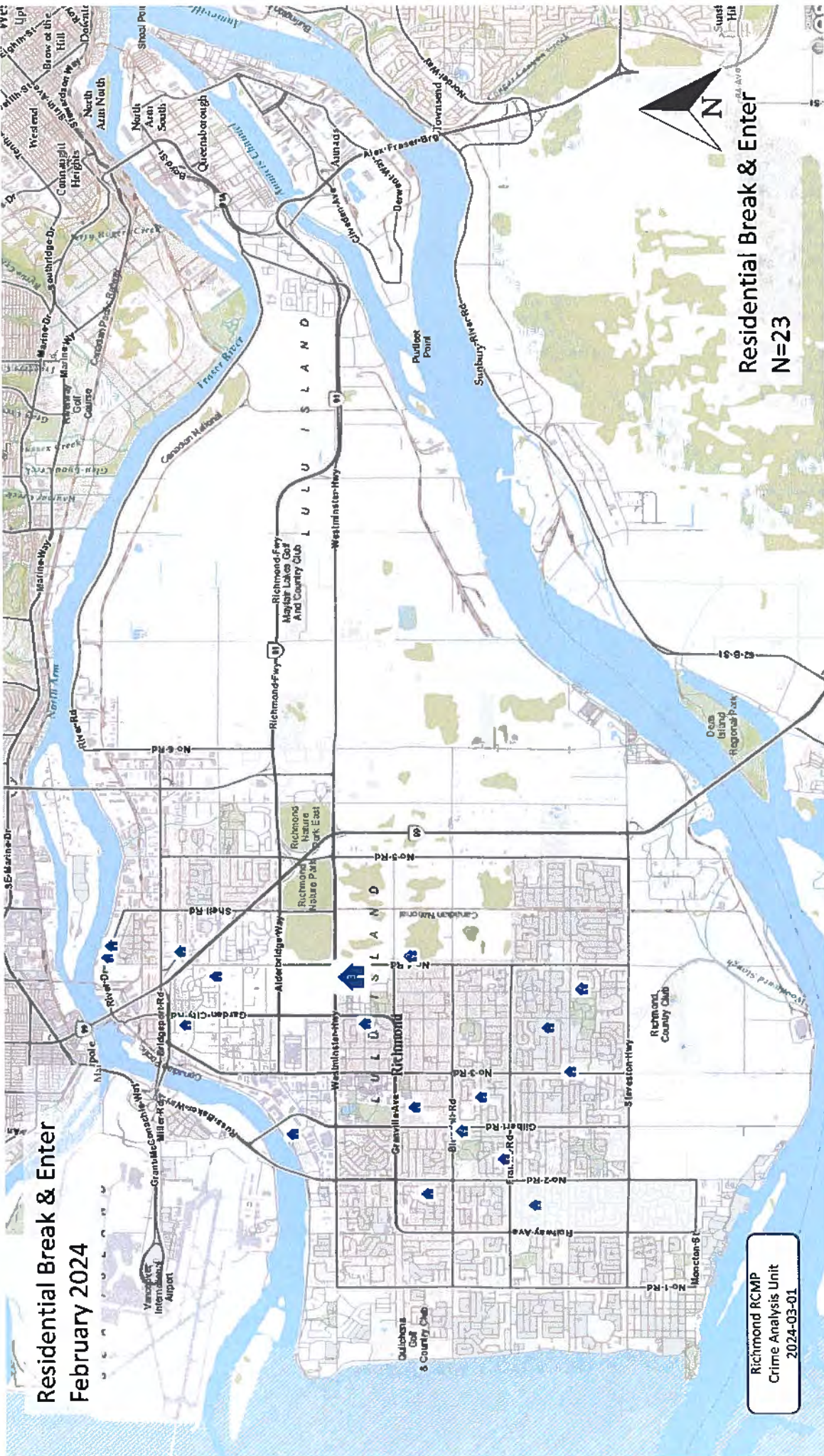|	Month	5-Yr Avg	5-Yr Range	Year to Date Totals			
	Feb - 24	February		2023	2024	% Change	# Change
VIOLENT CRIME (UCR 1000-Series Offences)	169	131.4	124-139	298	306	3%	8
Robbery	8	4.2	2-7	4	10	150%	6
Assault Common	52	46.4	43-50	95	101	6%	6
Assault Serious	18	11.0	5-17	39	31	-21%	-8
Sexual Offences	23	14.8	13-22	40	47	18%	7
PROPERTY CRIME (UCR 2000-Series Offences)	588	560.6	505-617	1301	1161	-11%	-140
Business B&E	19	29.0	23-35	62	24	-61%	-38
Residential B&E	23	40.6	21-60	42	56	33%	14
Auto Theft	17	20.2	17-23	46	40	-13%	-6
Theft from Auto	70	133.4	109-158	307	142	-54%	-165
Theft	89	76.8	64-89	202	203	0%	1
Shoplifting	149	71.8	56-88	179	265	48%	86
Fraud	93	74.2	68-80	167	185	11%	18
OTHER CRIMINAL CODE (UCR 3000-Series Offences)	296	194.6	172-217	518	575	11%	57
Arson	11	n/c	n/c	n/c	13	n/c	n/c
SUBTOTAL CC OFFENCES (UCR 1000 to 3000 Series)	1062	886.8	825-948	2117	2052	-3%	-65
DRUGS (UCR 4000-Series Offences)	16	41.8	29-55	57	33	-42%	-24
MHA RELATED CALLS (MHA files or Mental Health flag)	215	240.0	210-270	515	450	-13%	-65

Prepared by Richmond RCMP CAU. Data collected from PRIME on 2024-03-01. Published 2024-03-01. Data subject to change. This document is not to be copied, reproduced, used in whole or part or disseminated to any other person or agency without the consent of the originator(s).

Commercial Break & Enter
February 2024

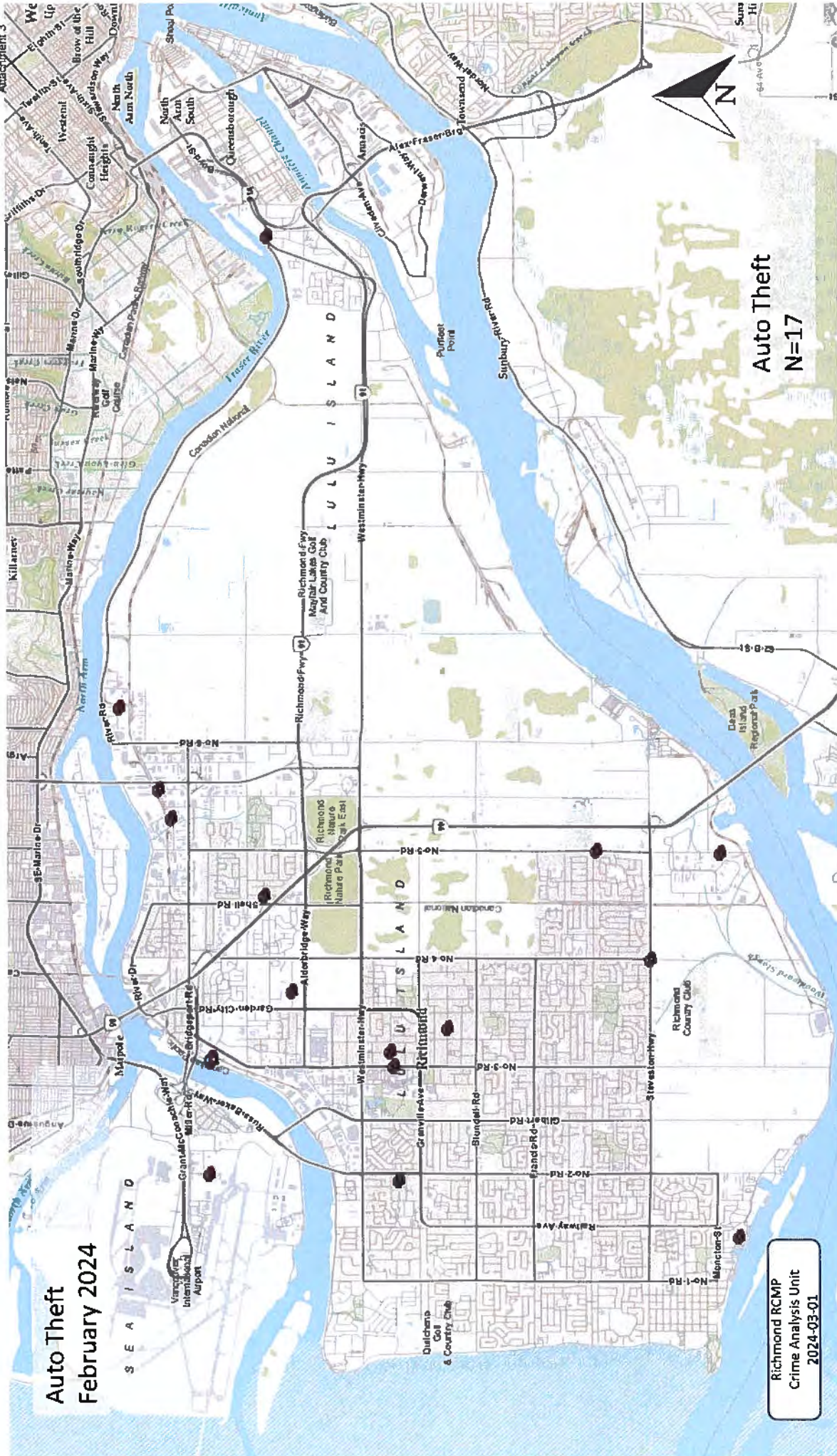Commercial B&E
N=19

Richmond RCMP
Crime Analysis Unit
2024-03-01

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Residential Break & Enter
February 2024

Residential Break & Enter
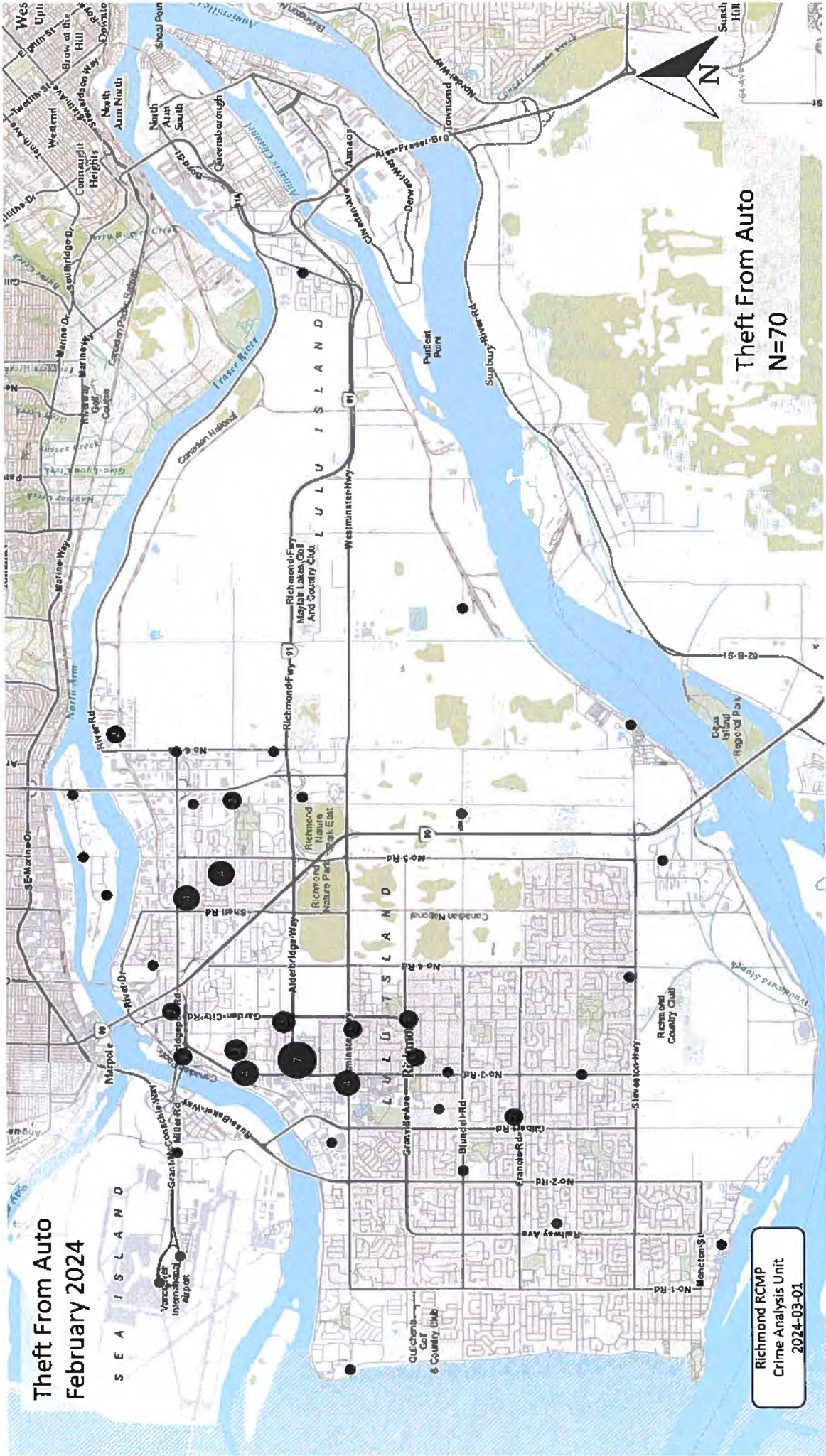
N=23

Richmond RCMP
Crime Analysis Unit
2024-03-01

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Auto Theft
February 2024

Auto Theft
N=17

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Theft From Auto
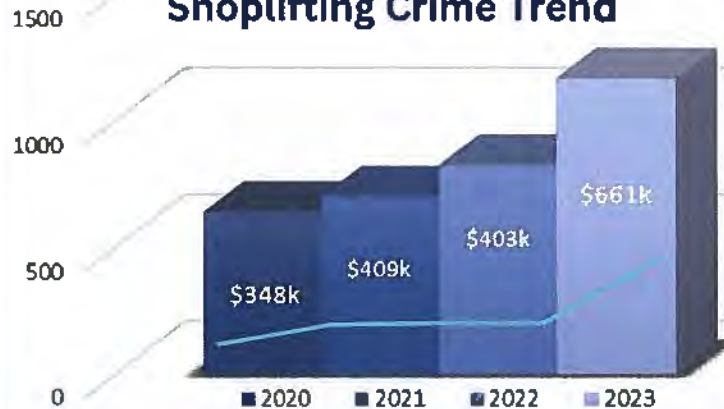February 2024

Theft From Auto
N=70

Richmond RCMP
Crime Analysis Unit
2024-03-01

Attachment 3

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CRIME AWARENESS BULLETIN

Organized Retail Crime Costs Us All

Retail theft is a serious, widespread problem, that goes beyond just spontaneous individual thefts. Shoplifting today involves organized retail crime that entails careful planning, deliberate targeting of retailers and high-level coordination amongst offenders to steal merchandise. Retail crime networks use their unlawful gains to fund other criminal activities such as the illicit drug trade and fraud. Of particular concern is that offenders are not afraid to introduce violence against innocent employees and customers who stand in their way.

Shoplifting Crime Trend

- $348k (2020)
- $409k (2021)
- $403k (2022)
- $661k (2023)

How You Can Deter Thefts

Policies & Reporting Procedures
Clearly display signage and adhere to a zero tolerance policy towards shoplifting. Work closely with Richmond RCMP and ensure timely reporting to aid in the apprehension and prosecution of shoplifters.

Inventory Control
Implement highly efficient inventory management techniques that require unique logins with limited access to edit inventory data. Perform inventory audits on a regular basis.

Proper Surveillance
Install mirrors and cameras around your store to eliminate blind spots.

Staff Training
Train staff on standard anti-theft protocols and how to spot scams. Staff should be aware of common ways shoplifters use to flee, and they should be trained on how to deal with shoplifters once spotted.

Store Layout & Design
Place customer checkouts near the entrance/exit of the store. Keep product displays below eye level and secure expensive merchandise behind locked cabinets.

If You See Something, Say Something

Visit www.richmond.ca/businesslink to learn about Business Link, crime prevention strategies to protect your business, and to request a free security assessment.

Contact Us
604-207-4829

Richmond_Business_Link@richmond.ca

Richmond