

**Strathcona County Citizens On Patrol Society**  
**presentation to County Council**  
**July 11, 2023**

Good afternoon Mr. Mayor and Councillors,

My name is Valerie Rusnak, the current president of the Strathcona County Citizens On Patrol Society, commonly known by the acronym SCCOPS.

Owing largely to the Covid pandemic and its worldwide impact on “all things normal” it has been almost three years since we last had an opportunity to present Council with an update on our many activities contributing to the safety, security and well-being of the residents of Strathcona County. It is now my pleasure to highlight our 2022 operating-year achievements as we recovered from our Covid interlude.

In 2022, there were 53 COP groups under the Alberta Citizens On Patrol Association (ACOPA) banner operating throughout Alberta. SCCOPS continues to be one of the largest groups in the province with an active membership in the range of 40 volunteers serving as “extra eyes and ears” in support of the RCMP and Enforcement Services here in Strathcona County. Among our many community-oriented activities, our members are back to patrolling throughout the urban and rural neighbourhoods of the county to “detect and deter criminal activity”.

To be more specific, in 2022, our members put in just short of 550 hours of patrol activity and covered almost 7600 kilometres of urban and rural streets and roads throughout the county. As in the past, hundreds of observations were recorded, including many sightings reported to the RCMP dispatch centre for discretionary follow-up investigation by law enforcement personnel. In addition, we committed some 550 hours towards our in-house program administration and training activities. Support for community-based events added up to another 1300 hours. Our Speed Watch teams put in just over 280 hours from May through September in close association with Enforcement Services. Upon reflection, we realize that these time commitments fall short of our pre-Covid totals, but, as I mentioned, 2022 was a recovery year.

During 2022 our membership participated in a wide array of community events when called upon to provide public safety and security assistance. These included the County's Canada Day and New Years eve events, the Celebration of Lights, the CPR Christmas train at Josephburg, the Highland Games, the RCMP bike rodeo, the Terry Fox Run, the Chamber of Commerce Trade Fair, a special Halloween patrol, the Ardrossan Agri Days and summer parade, and the South Cooking Lake parade. Additionally, in 2022, we hosted the ACOPA Annual General meeting and workshop gathering in October. We were also granted an opportunity to benefit from the proceeds of an AGLC casino in December. Collectively, these undertakings called for the above-mentioned 1300 hours of member input.

Unfortunately, our recently introduced Impaired Driver Demonstration project saw very little activity in 2022. However, this project is off and running in 2023 as we are seeing a growing number of opportunities to better target our young drivers through this project – in the interests of informing vehicle operators of the perils of driving while under the influence of alcohol. We have also partnered with MADD (Mothers Against Drunk Driving) in several of our presentations this year.

As I bring this presentation to a close, I would like to express our sincerest thanks and gratitude to Council for your continuing moral and financial support to our organization. SCCOPS is particularly grateful for the \$6000 in Council Priority Funding that allowed our organization to sponsor the 2022 ACOPA AGM wind-up banquet. This generosity was heartily acknowledged by all those in attendance, and greatly eased the budgetary constraints faced by ACOPA and the event organizers. And, it goes without saying, our group is immensely thankful for the County's yearly \$5000 grant that enables us to cover a portion of our annual operating expenses. This generosity, along with our solid working relationship with the RCMP and Enforcement Services, provides our membership with the capacity to fulfill their volunteer commitment towards making Strathcona County a safer and more secure community.

We, the Strathcona County Citizens On Patrol will continue to do our small part in making Strathcona County “Canada's most livable community”, where we strive to contribute to our citizens' desires to enjoy physical, mental and spiritual safety and well-being in their chosen community. We look forward to many more years of mutually beneficial collaboration for the benefit of our residents and our volunteer members alike.

As we have noted during similar presentations in the past, we are continually on the lookout for new and enthusiastic members. To these ends, we are always available to attend community events that you, as councillors, may convene in your wards where our interaction with residents will not only be informative, but potentially attract new volunteers.

Thank you for your attention. We look forward to your continuing support in the years ahead.

Respectfully submitted,

Valerie Rusnak – President  
on behalf of the Strathcona County Citizens On Patrol