



**ABBOTSFORD
POLICE DEPARTMENT**

STRENGTH IN COMMUNITY

AbbyPD targets property offenders during “Project Blitzen v2”

During the busy Christmas season, AbbyPD regularly sees an increase in crime near shopping malls. This year between December 3rd and 12th, the AbbyPD re-ran "Project Blitzen v.2", which targeted theft from shopping centers and other retail outlets.

Patrol Officers partnered with over 20 store owners, mall management and Loss Prevention Officers to implement Project Blitzen. Many of Abbotsford’s businesses have had to close during the pandemic. Businesses that have been able to remain open continue to struggle under COVID-19 restrictions, and retail theft adds another challenge to these already trying times.

During this 10-day project, 18 files were generated. Multiple arrests resulted, and numerous theft attempts were interrupted. In addition to charges for Theft, arrests related to Breach of Conditions, Drug Trafficking and Prohibited Driving were made. Officers were able to identify local property offenders, arrest repeat offenders and recover stolen property.

In one file of note, on Monday, December 7th, officers utilized a “bait bike” in an area where an increase in bicycle theft had been reported. The bait bicycle was stolen within 5 minutes of locking it up at a bike rack; the suspect was arrested. In another file, officers located a male fleeing after committing a theft. The suspect was arrested and found to be the subject of an outstanding BC-wide warrant and was in possession of a large quantity of drugs and cash.

Broadly, property crime is the most frequently reported crime in Abbotsford. Residents and business owners are encouraged to take steps to make themselves less vulnerable to this type of crime.



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AbbyPD Patrol Officer Constable Kim, one of Project Blitzen’s coordinators, notes, “Project Blitzen was successful again this year. Many local store owners and businesses are very grateful for this project, especially this year with pandemic-related loss of revenue. This project yielded impressive results and involved a large number of officers. Project Blitzen is on-going EVERY SINGLE DAY in Abbotsford”.

This project is operated by both uniformed and plain-clothed officers. Though it is difficult to know the full impact of this initiative, it is believed that a significant number of thefts from vehicles and retail outlets were prevented. Project Blitzen is one of the many initiatives AbbyPD undertakes to reduce property crime in our community. We encourage everyone – both shoppers and businesses - to be vigilant during this busy holiday season and to take the necessary precautions. Shoppers – do not leave valuables visible in vehicles and be aware of your surroundings when approaching your vehicle in a parking lot. Keep a lookout for potential thieves and report suspicious activity to mall security or AbbyPD.

Sgt Judy Bird

Abbotsford Police Media Relations Officer

askmedia@abbypd.ca