

Ottawa Police Service Audit of Project Management - Highlights



? | Why we did this audit

The Ottawa Police Service (OPS or the Service) undertakes various projects and initiatives towards the achievement of their strategic objectives. As OPS's core mandate is policing rather than project delivery, strong project management practices are essential to ensure projects are executed efficiently and there is prudent use of public funds.

Q | What we found

Our audit noted that, historically, OPS has not had a holistic project management approach in place. As a result, variances in project management rigour were noted across projects sampled of differing sizes and complexity.

OPS introduced a Strategic Project Portfolio Management Policy in 2025, which is a key step to improve project management practices across the Service. While this policy is generally consistent with industry standards, the supporting guidance, tools and templates remain in the early stages of development and, as such, are not available for consistent use by project teams.

OPS does not have a formal oversight function with the authority to support, challenge and report on all strategic projects. Additionally, OPS does not have a formal project intake process to evaluate and prioritize potential strategic projects or an established process to ensure project teams are allocated sufficient resources (e.g., expertise and

budget). This creates risks that projects may proceed without a clear understanding of the resources and funding required to support successful delivery.

Finally, our audit also noted that, although a formal reporting cycle to OPS leadership has been established for the status of strategic projects, recent reporting contained inaccurate information and lacked sufficient detail.

💡 | We made seven recommendations to ensure that:

- A formal oversight function with the authority to oversee and report on all strategic projects is established;
- A formal project management framework, with associated tools and templates are developed and training is provided;
- A formal project intake process is introduced to ensure potential projects are evaluated and prioritized prior to selection;
- Appropriate resources (both project management and project delivery) are allocated to project teams based on a formal assessment;
- Project budgeting and costing is done using a consistent approach and is subject to a formal challenge/validation process; and
- Standardized reporting requirements for all project teams are established.