

# CITY OF SURREY

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

October 13, 2023

Honourable Mike Farnworth  
Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General  
PO Box 9285 Stn Prov Govt  
Victoria, BC  
V8W 9L5

Transmitted by email: [PSSG.Minister@gov.bc.ca](mailto:PSSG.Minister@gov.bc.ca)

Dear Minister Farnworth,

**Re: Judicial Review of Minister's July 19, 2023 Order**

I am writing to provide you, as a courtesy, the City of Surrey's petition with the Supreme Court of British Columbia for a judicial review of your order from July 19, 2023 to continue with the transition to the Surrey Police Service. This petition will be filed and formally served on the Province shortly.

The City of Surrey cannot support a police transition plan that would see Surrey residents face an excessive and exorbitant double digit tax increase for police costs only and for a police service that will not enhance public safety, and may even compromise it.

While the Police Act states the Minister is responsible for ensuring an adequate and effective level of policing and law enforcement throughout BC, it does not authorize the Minister to choose the model of policing for a municipality. The model of policing is a decision that is the responsibility of the City of Surrey, as set out by the Police Act.

This is a fact that you recognized as recently as February 27, 2020 when you told the Surrey Now-Leader that you "...recognize that there are pieces of legislation underlying the whole process, which is the City of Surrey is responsible for policing. It's laid out in the Police Act. They are the ones who get to decide what kind of model they want."

As such, my Surrey Connect team set out to change the City's decision on policing through the election on October 15, 2022. As you know, the issue of the proposed police transition was the central focus of the campaign, and voters elected me and my team on our pledge to stop the proposed police transition. .../2



**BRENDA LOCKE**  
MAYOR

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We continue to oppose the transition because it is far too expensive and poorly planned. Surrey residents will be asked to fund exorbitant and unnecessary policing costs at a time when cost of living is top of mind, and when the City has other needs and priorities more important than an expensive, disorganized police transition.

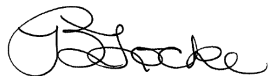
After two years, a significant majority (75%) of Surrey Detachment's frontline officers are members of the RCMP. Accordingly, as of September 16, 2023, the detachment consists of 560 RCMP officers, and only 200 Surrey Police Service ("SPS") officers, for a combined total of 760 officers. The SPS has hired an additional 132 officers that are receiving full compensation but have not been deployed, greatly adding to the significant financial burden faced by the City of Surrey.

That is why the City put forward a sensible and affordable plan earlier this year to end the proposed transition and maintain the RCMP as the police of jurisdiction in Surrey. Our proposed plan would save Surrey taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars in future spending, give the City more influence and control over local policing, and end the disorganized transition.

Your stated concern that remaining with the RCMP will impact policing in BC pales by comparison to the destabilizing impact on policing in the Lower Mainland of BC by continuing with recruitment from other police forces. The RCMP has made it abundantly clear that it can staff Surrey Detachment, to its original complement, by absorbing members of the SPS, receiving its annual intake from the RCMP training academy, and other innovative strategies which were fully and clearly laid out in our reports to you.

Since the police transition was initiated in 2018, much has changed. An affordability crisis has deepened, the recruitment of police officers has proven to be harder than promised, and other priorities like housing, homelessness, and the opioid crisis require more urgent City attention and resources. The City takes seriously our obligation to maintain safe communities for Surrey residents. Keeping the RCMP is more affordable, more reliable, and is the right approach for the public interest.

Sincerely,



Brenda Locke,  
Mayor

c.c. Glen Lewis, Assistant Deputy Minister and Director of Police Services,  
Policing and Security Branch, Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General  
Rob Costanzo, Acting City Manager

Attachment: City of Surrey Petition

